

EXPOSITIONS ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

VOLUMES I-VI. PSALMS 1-150.

TRANSLATED BY JOHN HENRY PARKER.

OXFORD, JOHN HENRY PARKER; F. AND J. RIVINGTON, LONDON 1847.

A LIBRARY OF FATHERS OF THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, ANTERIOR TO THE
DIVISION OF THE EAST AND WEST.

TRANSLATED BY MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

YET SHALL NOT THY TEACHERS BE REMOVED INTO A CORNER ANY MORE BUT
THINE EYES SHALL SEE THY TEACHERS. ISAIAH 30:20.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD WILLIAM LORD ARCHBISHOP OF
CANTERBURY, PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, FORMERLY REGIUS PROFESSOR OF
DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, THIS LIBRARY OF ANCIENT BISHOPS,
FATHERS, DOCTORS, MARTYRS, CONFESSORS, OF CHRIST'S HOLY CATHOLIC
CHURCH, IS WITH HIS GRACE'S PERMISSION RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN
OF REVERENCE FOR HIS PERSON AND SACRED OFFICE, AND OF GRATITUDE FOR HIS
EPISCOPAL KINDNESS.

CONTENTS

[EXPOSITIONS ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS](#)

[PREFACE](#)

[ST. AUGUSTINE ON THE PSALMS](#)

[PSALM 1](#)

[PSALM 2](#)

[PSALM 3](#)

[PSALM 4](#)

[PSALM 5](#)

[PSALM 6](#)

[PSALM 7](#)

[PSALM 8](#)

[PSALM 9](#)

[PSALM 11](#)

[PSALM 12](#)

[PSALM 13](#)

[PSALM 14](#)

[PSALM 15](#)

[PSALM 16](#)

[PSALM 17](#)

[PSALM 18](#)

[PSALM 19](#)

[PSALM 20](#)

[PSALM 21](#)

[PSALM 22](#)

[PSALM 23](#)

[PSALM 24](#)

[PSALM 25](#)

[PSALM 26](#)

[PSALM 27](#)

[PSALM 28](#)

[PSALM 29](#)

[PSALM 30](#)

[PSALM 31](#)

[PSALM 32](#)

[PSALM 33](#)

[PSALM 34](#)

[PSALM 35](#)

[PSALM 36](#)

[PSALM 37](#)

[PSALM 37](#)

[PSALM 38](#)

[PSALM 39](#)

[PSALM 40](#)

[PSALM 41](#)

[PSALM 42](#)

[PSALM 43](#)

[PSALM 44](#)

[PSALM 45](#)

[PSALM 46](#)

[PSALM 47](#)

[PSALM 48](#)

[PSALM 49](#)

[PSALM 50](#)

[PSALM 51](#)

[PSALM 52](#)

[PSALM 53](#)

[PSALM 53](#)

[PSALM 54](#)

[PSALM 55](#)

[PSALM 56](#)

[PSALM 57](#)

[PSALM 58](#)

[PSALM 59](#)

[PSALM 60](#)

[PSALM 61](#)

[PSALM 62](#)

[PSALM 63](#)

[PSALM 64](#)

[PSALM 65](#)

[PSALM 66](#)

[PSALM 67](#)

[PSALM 68](#)

[PSALM 69](#)

[PSALM 70](#)

[PSALM 71](#)

[PSALM 71](#)

[PSALM 72](#)

[PSALM 73](#)

[PSALM 74](#)

[PSALM 75](#)

[PSALM 76](#)

[PSALM 77](#)

[PSALM 78](#)

[PSALM 79](#)

[PSALM 80](#)

[PSALM 81](#)

[PSALM 82](#)

[PSALM 83](#)

[PSALM 84](#)

[PSALM 85](#)

[PSALM 86](#)

[PSALM 87](#)

[PSALM 88](#)

[PSALM 89](#)

[PSALM 89](#)

[PSALM 90](#)

[PSALM 91](#)

[PSALM 92](#)

[PSALM 93](#)

[PSALM 94](#)

[PSALM 95](#)

[PSALM 96](#)

[PSALM 97](#)

[PSALM 98](#)

[PSALM 99](#)

[PSALM 100](#)

[PSALM 101](#)

[PSALM 102](#)

[PSALM 103](#)

[PSALM 104](#)

[PSALM 105](#)

[PSALM 106](#)

[PSALM 107](#)

[PSALM 108](#)

[PSALM 109](#)

[PSALM 110](#)

[PSALM 111](#)

[PSALM 112](#)

[PSALM 113](#)

[PSALM 114](#)

[PSALM 115](#)

[PSALM 116](#)

[PSALM 117](#)

[PSALM 118](#)

[PSALM 119](#)

[PSALM 120](#)

[PSALM 121](#)

[PSALM 122](#)

[PSALM 123](#)

[PSALM 124](#)

[PSALM 125](#)

[PSALM 126](#)

[PSALM 127](#)

[PSALM 128](#)

[PSALM 129](#)

[PSALM 130](#)

[PSALM 131](#)

[PSALM 132](#)

[PSALM 133](#)

[PSALM 134](#)

[PSALM 135](#)

[PSALM 136](#)

[PSALM 137](#)

[PSALM 138](#)

[PSALM 139](#)

[PSALM 140](#)

[PSALM 141](#)

[PSALM 142](#)

[PSALM 143](#)

[PSALM 144](#)

[PSALM 145](#)

[PSALM 146](#)

[PSALM 147](#)

[PSALM 147 PART II](#)

[PSALM 148](#)

[PSALM 149](#)

[PSALM 150](#)

[PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE](#)

PREFACE

In any Commentary on a portion of the Old Testament by a writer unacquainted with Hebrew, exact criticism, and freedom from mistake, must not be expected. But the Psalms have been so in the mouth and in the heart of God's people in all languages, that it has been necessary often to find an explanation suitable to imperfect translations. And no doubt it is intended that we should use such explanations for the purpose of edification, when we are unable to be more accurate, though in proving doctrine it is necessary always to remember and allow for any want of acquaintance with the original, or uncertainty with respect to its actual meaning. However, the main scope and bearing of the Text is rarely affected by such points as vary in different translations, and the analogy of the faith is sufficient to prevent a Catholic mind from adopting any error in consequence of a text seeming to bear a heterodox meaning. Perhaps the errors of translation in the existing versions may have led the Fathers to adopt rules of interpretation ranging too far from the simple and literal; but having such translations, they could hardly use them otherwise. Meanwhile St. Augustine will be found to excel in the intense apprehension of those great truths which pervade the whole of Sacred Writ, and in the vivid and powerful exposition of what bears upon them. It is hardly possible to read his practical and forcible applications of Holy Scripture, without feeling those truths by the faith of which we ought to live brought home to the heart in a wonderful manner. His was a mind that strove earnestly to solve the great problems of human life, and after exhausting the resources, and discovering the emptiness, of erroneous systems, found truth and rest at last in Catholic Christianity, in the religion of the Bible as expounded by St. Ambrose. And though we must look to his Confessions for the full view of all his cravings after real good, and their ultimate satisfaction, yet throughout his works we have the benefit of the earnestness with which he sought to feed on the 'sincere milk of the word.'

His mystical and allegorical interpretation, in spite of occasional mistakes, which belong rather to the translation than to himself, will be found in general of great value. It is to a considerable extent systematic, and the same interpretation of the same symbols is repeated throughout the work, and is indeed often common to him with other Fathers. The ‘feet’ taken for the affections, ‘clouds’ for the Apostles, and many other instances, are of very frequent occurrence. And it is evident that a few such general interpretations must be a great help to those who wish to make an allegorical use of those portions of Holy Scripture, which are adapted for it. Nor are they adhered to with such strictness as to deprive the reader of the benefit of other explanations, where it appears that some other metaphor or allegory was intended. Both St. Augustine and St. Gregory acknowledge, and at times impress on their readers, that metaphorical language is used in Holy Scripture with various meanings under the same symbol.

The discourses on the Psalms are not carried throughout on the same plan, but still are tolerably complete as a commentary, since the longer expositions furnish the means of filling out the shorter notices, in thought at least, to the attentive reader of the whole. They were not delivered continuously, nor all at the same place. Occasionally the Author is led by the circumstances of the time into long discussions of a controversial character, especially with respect to the Donatists, against whose narrow and exclusive views he urges strongly the prophecies relating to the universality of the Church. Occasionally a Psalm is first reviewed briefly, so as to give a general clue to its interpretation, and then enlarged upon in several discourses.

For the present Translation, as far as the first thirty Psalms, the Editors are indebted to a friend who conceals his name; for the remainder of the Volume, with part of the next which is to appear, to the Rev. J. E. Tweed, M.A. of Exeter College, Oxford. It is hoped that the whole of St. Augustine on the Psalms may come out in Volumes at intervals not much exceeding half a year.

C. M.

Oxford,

S. Augustine of Canterbury,
1847.

ST. AUGUSTINE ON THE PSALMS

PSALM 1

1. Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly. This is to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Man. Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, as the man of earth did, who consented to his wife deceived by the serpent, to the transgressing the commandment of God. Nor stood in the way of sinners. For He came indeed in the way of sinners, by being born as sinners are; but He stood not therein, for that the enticements of the world held Him not. And hath not sat in the seat of pestilence. He willed not an earthly kingdom, with pride, which is well taken for the seat of pestilence; for that there is hardly any one who is free from the love of rule, and craves not human glory. For a pestilence is disease widely spread, and involving all or nearly all. Yet the seat of pestilence may be more appropriately understood of hurtful doctrine; whose word spreadeth as a canker. The order too of the words must be considered: went away, stood, sat. For he went away, when he drew back from God. He stood, when he took pleasure in sin. He sat, when, confirmed in his pride, he could not go back, unless set free by Him, Who neither hath gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of pestilence.

2. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate by day and by night. The law is not made for a righteous man, says the Apostle. But it is one thing to be in the law, another under the law. Whoso is in the law, acteth according to the law; whoso is under the law, is acted upon according to the law: the one therefore is free, the other a slave. Again, the law, which is written and imposed upon the servant, is one thing; the law, which is mentally discerned by him who needeth not its letter, is another thing. He will meditate by day and by night, is to be understood either as without ceasing; or by day in joy, by night in tribulations. For it is

said, Abraham saw my day, and was glad: and of tribulation it is said, my reins also have instructed me, even unto the night.

3. And he shall be like a tree planted hard by the running streams of waters; that is either, Very Wisdom, Which vouchsafed to assume man's nature for our salvation; that as man He might be the tree planted hard by the running streams of waters; for in this sense can that too be taken which is said in another Psalm, the river of God is full of water. Or, by the Holy Ghost, of Whom it is said, He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost; and again, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink; and again, If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that asketh water of thee, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water, of which whoso drinketh shall never thirst, but it shall be made in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Or, by the running streams of waters may be by the sins of the people, because first the waters are called peoples in the Apocalypse; and again, by running stream is not unreasonably understood fall, which hath relation to sin. That tree then, that is, our Lord, from the running streams of water, that is, from the sinful people's drawing them by the way into the roots of His discipline, will bring forth fruit, that is, will establish Churches; in His season, that is, after He hath been glorified by His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. For then, by the sending of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, and by the confirming of their faith in Him, and their mission to the world, He made the Churches to bring forth fruit. His leaf also shall not fall, that is, His Word shall not be in vain. For, all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And whatsoever He doeth shall prosper, that is, whatsoever that tree shall bear; which all must be taken of fruit and leaves, that is, deeds and words.

4. The ungodly are not so, they are not so, but are like the dust which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth. The earth is here to be taken as that stedfastness in God, with a view to which it is said, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, yea, I have a goodly heritage. With a view to this it is said, Wait on the Lord and keep His ways, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the earth. With a view to this it is said, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. A comparison too is derived hence, for as this

visible earth supports and contains the outer man, so that earth invisible the inner man. From the face of which earth the wind casteth forth the ungodly, that is, pride, in that it puffeth him up. On his guard against which he, who was inebriated by the richness of the house of the Lord, and drunken of the torrent stream of its pleasures, saith, Let not the foot of pride come against me. From this earth pride cast forth him who said, I will place my seat in the north, and I will be like the Most High. From the face of the earth it cast forth him also who, after that he had consented and tasted of the forbidden tree that he might be as God, hid himself from the Face of God. That this earth has reference to the inner man, and that man is cast forth thence by pride, may be particularly seen in that which is written, Why is earth and ashes proud? Because, in his life, he cast forth his bowels. For, whence he hath been cast forth, he is not unreasonably said to have cast forth himself.

5. Therefore the ungodly rise not in the judgment: therefore, namely, because as dust they are cast forth from the face of the earth. And well did he say that this should be taken away from them, which in their pride they court, namely, that they may judge: so that this same idea is more clearly expressed in the following sentence, nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous. For it is usual for what goes before, to be thus repeated more clearly. So that by sinners should be understood the ungodly; what is before in the judgment, should be here in the counsel of the righteous. Or if indeed the ungodly are one thing, and sinners another, so that although every ungodly man is a sinner, yet every sinner is not ungodly; The ungodly rise not in the judgment, that is, they shall rise indeed, but not that they should be judged, for they are already appointed to most certain punishment. But sinners do not rise in the counsel of the just, that is, that they may judge, but peradventure that they may be judged; so as of these it were said, The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall then suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

6. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. As it is said, medicine knows health, but knows not disease, and yet disease is recognised by the art of medicine. In like manner can it be said that the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly He knoweth not. Not that the

Lord is ignorant of any thing, and yet He says to sinners, I never knew you. But the way of the ungodly shall perish; is the same as if it were said, the way of the ungodly the Lord knoweth not. But it is expressed more plainly that this should be not to be known of the Lord, namely, to perish; and this to be known of the Lord, namely, to abide; so as that to be should appertain to the knowledge of God, but to His not knowing not to be. For the Lord saith, I AM that I AM, and, I AM hath sent me.

PSALM 2

1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people meditate vain things? The kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. It is said, why? as if it were said, in vain. For what they wished, namely, Christ's destruction, they accomplished not; for this is spoken of our Lord's persecutors, of whom also mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles.

2. Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us. Although it admits of another acceptation, yet is it more fitly understood as in the person of those, who are said to meditate vain things. So that let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us, may be, let us do our endeavour, that the Christian religion do not bind us, nor be imposed upon us.

3. He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall have them in derision. The sentence is repeated; for He who dwelleth in the heavens, is afterwards put, the Lord; and for shall laugh them to scorn, is afterwards put, shall have them in derision. Nothing of this however must be taken in a carnal sort, as if God either laugheth with cheek, or derideth with nostril; but it is to be understood of that power which He giveth to His saints, that they seeing things to come, namely, that the Name and rule of Christ is to pervade posterity and possess all nations, should understand that those men meditate a vain thing. For this power whereby these things are foreknown is God's laughter and derision. He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn. If by heavens we understand holy souls, by these God, as foreknowing what is to come, will laugh them to scorn, and have them in derision.

4. Then He shall speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. For shewing more clearly how He will speak unto them, he

added, He will vex them; so that in His wrath, is, in His sore displeasure. But by the wrath and sore displeasure of the Lord God must not be understood any mental perturbation; but the might whereby He most justly avengeth, by the subjection of all creation to His service. For that is to be observed and remembered which is written in the Wisdom of Solomon, But Thou, Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity, and with great favour orderest us. The wrath of God then is an emotion which is produced in the soul which knoweth the law of God, when it sees this same law transgressed by the sinner. For by this emotion of righteous souls many things are avenged. Although the wrath of God can be well understood of that darkening of the mind, which overtakes those who transgress the law of God.

5. Yet am I set by Him as King upon Sion, His holy hill, preaching His decree. This is clearly spoken in the Person of the very Lord our Saviour Christ. But if Sion signify, as some interpret, beholding, we must not understand it of any thing rather than of the Church, where daily is the desire raised of beholding the bright glory of God, according to that of the Apostle, but we with open face beholding the glory of the Lord. Therefore the meaning of this is, Yet I am set by Him as King over His holy Church; which for its eminence and stability He calleth a mountain. Yet I am set by Him as King. I, that is, whose bands they were meditating to break asunder, and whose yoke to cast away. Preaching His decree. Who doth not see the meaning of this, seeing it is daily practised?

6. The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee. Although that day may also seem to be prophetically spoken of, on which Jesus Christ was born according to the flesh; yet as to-day intimates presentiality, (and in eternity there is nothing past as if it had ceased to be, nor future as if it were not yet, but present only; since whatever is eternal, always is,) a divine interpretation is given to that expression, To-day have I begotten Thee, whereby the uncorrupt and Catholic faith proclaims the eternal generation of the Power and Wisdom of God, Who is the Only-begotten Son.

7. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance. This has at once a temporal sense with reference to the Manhood which He took

on Himself, Who offered up Himself as a Sacrifice in the stead of all sacrifices, Who also maketh intercession for us; so that the words, ask of Me, may be referred to all this temporal dispensation, which has been instituted for mankind, namely, that the nations should be joined to the Name of Christ, and so be redeemed from death, and possessed by God. I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, which so possess them for their salvation, and to bear unto Thee spiritual fruit. And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. The same repeated, The uttermost parts of the earth, is put for the nations; but more clearly, that we might understand all the nations. And Thy possession stands for Thine inheritance.

8. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, with inflexible justice, and Thou shalt break them like a potter's vessel; that is, Thou shalt break in them earthly lusts, and the filthy doings of the old man, and whatsoever hath been derived and inured from the sinful clay. And now understand, ye kings. And now; that is, being now renewed, your covering of clay worn out, that is, the carnal vessels of error, which belong to your past life, now understand, ye who now are kings; that is, able now to govern all that is servile and brutish in you, able now too to fight, not as they who beat the air, but chastening your bodies, and bringing them into subjection. Be instructed, all ye who judge the earth. This again is a repetition; Be instructed is instead of understand; and ye who judge the earth instead of ye kings. For He signifies the spiritual by those who judge the earth. For whatsoever we judge, is below us; and whatsoever is below the spiritual man, is with good reason called the earth; because it is defiled with earthly corruption.

9. Serve the Lord with fear; lest what is said, Ye kings and judges of the earth, turn into pride: And rejoice with trembling. Very excellently is rejoice added, lest serve the Lord with fear should seem to tend to misery. But again, lest this same rejoicing should run on to unrestrained inconsiderateness, there is added with trembling, that it might avail for a warning, and for the careful guarding of holiness. It can also be taken thus, And now ye kings understand; that is, And now that I am set as King, be ye not sad, kings of the earth, as if your excellency were taken from you, but rather understand and be instructed. For it is expedient for you, that ye should be under Him, by Whom understanding and instruction are given

you. And this is expedient for you, that ye lord it not with rashness, but that ye serve the Lord of all with fear, and rejoice in bliss most sure and most pure, with all caution and carefulness, lest ye fall therefrom into pride.

10. Lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way. This is the same as, understand, and, be instructed. For to understand and be instructed, this is to lay hold of discipline. Still in that it is said, lay hold of, it is plainly enough intimated that there is some protection and defence against all things which might do hurt unless with so great carefulness it be laid hold of. Lest at any time the Lord be angry, is expressed with a doubt, not as regards the vision of the prophet to whom it is certain, but as regards those who are warned; for they, to whom it is not openly revealed, are wont to think with doubt of the anger of God. This then they ought to say to themselves, let us lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and we perish from the righteous way. Now, how the Lord be angry is to be taken, has been said above. And ye perish from the righteous way. This is a great punishment, and dreaded by those who have had any perception of the sweetness of righteousness; for he who perisheth from the way of righteousness, in much misery will wander through the ways of unrighteousness.

11. When His anger shall be shortly kindled, blessed are all they who put their trust in Him; that is, when the vengeance shall come which is prepared for the ungodly and for sinners, not only will it not light on those who put their trust in the Lord, but it will even avail for the foundation and exaltation of a kingdom for them. For he said not, When His anger shall be shortly kindled, safe are all they who put their trust in Him, as though they should have this only thereby, to be exempt from punishment; but he said, blessed; in which there is the sum and accumulation of all good things. Now the meaning of shortly I suppose to be this, that it will be something sudden, whilst sinners will deem it far off and long to come.

PSALM 3

A Psalm of David, when he fled from the face of Absalom his son.

1. The words, I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up, lead us to believe that this Psalm is to be understood as in the Person of Christ; for they sound more applicable to the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, than to that history in which David's flight is described from the face of his rebellious son. And, since it is written of Christ's disciples, The sons of the bridegroom fast not as long as the bridegroom is with them; it is no wonder if by his undutiful son be here meant, that undutiful disciple who betrayed Him. From whose face although it may be understood historically that He fled, when on his departure He withdrew with the rest to the mountain; yet in a spiritual sense, when the Son of God, that is the Power and Wisdom of God, abandoned the mind of Judas; when the Devil wholly occupied him; as it is written, The Devil entered into his heart, may it be well understood that Christ fled from his face; not that Christ gave place to the Devil, but that on Christ's departure the Devil took possession. Which departure, I suppose, is called a flight in this Psalm, because of its quickness; which is indicated also by the word of our Lord, saying, That thou doest, do quickly. So even in common conversation we say of any thing that does not come to mind, it has fled from me; and of a man of much learning we say, nothing flies from him. Wherefore truth fled from the mind of Judas, when it ceased to enlighten him. But Absalom, as some interpret, in the Latin tongue signifies, Patris pax, a father's peace. And it may seem strange, whether in the history of the kings, when Absalom carried on war against his father; or in the history of the New Testament, when Judas was the betrayer of our Lord; how "father's peace" can be understood. But both in the former place they who read carefully, see that David in that war was at peace with his son, who even with sore grief lamented his death, saying, O Absalom, my son, would God I had died for

thee! And in the history of the New Testament by that so great and so wonderful forbearance of our Lord; in that He bore so long with him as if good, when He was not ignorant of his thoughts; in that He admitted him to the Supper in which He committed and delivered to His disciples the figure of His Body and Blood; finally, in that He received the kiss of peace at the very time of His betrayal; it is easily understood how Christ shewed peace to His betrayer, although he was laid waste by the intestine war of so abominable a device. And therefore is Absalom called “father’s peace,” because his father had the peace, which he had not.

2. O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! So multiplied indeed were they, that one even from the number of His disciples was not wanting, who was added to the number of His persecutors. Many rise up against me; many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. It is clear that if they had had any idea that He would rise again, assuredly they would not have slain Him. To this end are those speeches, Let Him come down from the cross, if He be the Son of God; and again, He saved others, Himself He cannot save. Therefore, neither would Judas have betrayed Him, if he had not been of the number of those who despised Christ, saying, There is no salvation for Him in His God.

3. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker. It is said to God in the nature of man, for the taking of man is, the Word made Flesh. My glory. Even He calls God his glory, whom the Word of God so took, that God became one with Him. Let the proud learn, who unwillingly hear, when it is said to them, For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? And the lifter up of my head. I think that this should be here taken of the human mind, which is not unreasonably called the head of the soul; which so inhered in, and in a sort coalesced with, the supereminent excellency of the Word taking man, that it was not laid aside by so great humiliation of the Passion.

4. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord; that is, not with the voice of the body, which is drawn out with the sound of the reverberation of the air; but with the voice of the heart, which to men speaks not, but with God sounds as a cry. By this voice Susanna was heard; and with this voice the Lord Himself commanded that prayer should be made in closets, that is, in

the recesses of the heart noiselessly. Nor would one easily say that prayer is not made with this voice, if no sound of words is uttered from the body; since even when in silence we pray within the heart, if thoughts interpose alien from the mind of one praying, it cannot yet be said, With my voice have I cried unto the Lord. Nor is this rightly said, save when the soul alone, taking to itself nothing of the flesh, and nothing of the aims of the flesh, in prayer, speaks to God, where He only hears. But even this is called a cry by reason of the strength of its intention. And He heard me out of His holy mountain. We have the Lord Himself called a mountain by the Prophet, as it is written, The stone that was cut out without hands grew to the size of a mountain. But this cannot be taken of His Person, unless peradventure He would speak thus, out of myself, as of His holy mountain He heard me, when He dwelt in me, that is, in this very mountain. But it is more plain and unembarrassed, if we understand that God out of His justice heard. For it was just, that He should raise again from the dead the Innocent Who was slain, and to Whom evil had been recompensed for good, and that He should render to the persecutor a meet reward, who repaid Him evil for good. For we read, Thy justice is as the mountains of God.

5. I slept, and took rest. It may be not unsuitably remarked, that it is expressly said, I, to signify that of His own Will He underwent death, according to that, Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. Therefore, saith He, you have not taken Me as though against My will, and slain Me; but I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Scripture contains numberless instances of sleep being put for death; as the Apostle says, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep. Nor need we make any question, why it is added, took rest, seeing that it has already been said, I slept. Repetitions of this kind are usual in Scripture, as we have pointed out many in the second Psalm. But some copies have, I slept, and was cast into a deep sleep. And different copies express it differently, according to the possible renderings of the Greek words, ἐγὼ δὲ ἐκοιμήθην καὶ ὑπνώσα. Unless perhaps sleeping may be taken of one dying, but sleep of one dead: so that sleeping may be the transition into sleep, as awakening is the transition into wakefulness. Let us

not deem these repetitions in the sacred writings empty ornaments of speech. I slept, and took rest, is therefore well understood as “I gave Myself up to My Passion, and death ensued.” And I rose, for the Lord will take Me up. This is the more to be remarked, how that in one sentence the Psalmist has used a verb of past and future time. For he has said, both I rose, which is the past, and will take Me up, which is the future; seeing that assuredly the rising again could not be without that taking up. But in prophecy the future is well joined to the past, whereby both are signified. Since things which are prophesied of as yet to come in reference to time are future; but in reference to the knowledge of those who prophesy they are already to be viewed as done. Verbs of the present tense are also mixed in, which shall be treated of in their proper place when they occur.

6. I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me. It is written in the Gospels how great a multitude stood around Him as He was suffering, and on the cross. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. It is not said to God, Arise, as if asleep or lying down, but it is usual in holy Scripture to attribute to God what He doeth in us; not indeed universally, but where it can be done suitably; as when He is said to speak, when by His gift Prophets speak, and Apostles, or whatsoever messengers of the truth. Hence that text, Would you have proof of Christ, Who speaketh in me? For he doth not say, of Christ, by Whose enlightening or order I speak; but he attributes at once the speaking itself to Him, by Whose gift he spake.

7. Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. It is not to be pointed as if it were one sentence, Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God; since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. For He did not therefore save Him, because He smote His enemies; but rather He being saved, He smote them. Therefore it belongs to what follows, so that the sense is this; Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners; that is, thereby hast Thou broken the teeth of the sinners, since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me. It is forsooth the punishment of the opposers, whereby their teeth have been broken, that is, the words of sinners rending with their cursing the Son of God, brought to nought, as it were to dust; so that we may understand teeth thus, as words of cursing. Of which teeth the Apostle speaks, If ye bite one

another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. The teeth of sinners can also be taken as the chiefs of sinners; by whose authority each one is cut off from the fellowship of godly livers, and as it were incorporated with evil livers. To these teeth are opposed the Church's teeth, by whose authority believers are cut off from the error of the Gentiles and divers opinions, and are translated into that fellowship which is the body of Christ. With these teeth Peter was told to eat the animals when they had been killed, that is, by killing in the Gentiles what they were, and changing them into what he was himself. Of these teeth too of the Church it is said, Thy teeth are as a flock of shorn sheep, coming up from the bath, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. These are they who prescribe rightly, and as they prescribe, live; who do what is written, Let your works shine before men, that they may bless your Father which is in heaven. For moved by their authority, they believe God Who speaketh and worketh through these men; and separated from the world, to which they were once conformed, they pass over into the members of the Church. And rightly therefore are they, through whom such things are done, called teeth like to shorn sheep; for they have laid aside the burdens of earthly cares, and coming up from the bath, from the washing away of the filth of the world by the Sacrament of Baptism, every one beareth twins. For they fulfil the two commandments, of which it is said, On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets; loving God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and their neighbour as themselves. There is not one barren among them, for much fruit they render unto God. According to this sense then it is to be thus understood, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners, that is, Thou hast brought the chiefs of the sinners to nought, by smiting all who oppose Me without a cause. For the chiefs according to the Gospel history persecuted Him, whilst the lower people honoured Him.

8. Salvation is of the Lord; and upon Thy people be Thy blessing. In one sentence the Psalmist has enjoined men what to believe, and has prayed for believers. For when it is said, Salvation is of the Lord, the words are addressed to men. Nor does it follow, And upon Thy people be Thy blessing, in such wise as that the whole is spoken to men, but there is a change into prayer addressed to God Himself, for the very people to whom

it was said, Salvation is of the Lord. What else then doth he say but this? Let no man presume on himself, seeing that it is of the Lord to save from the death of sin; for, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But do Thou, O Lord, bless Thy people, who look for salvation from Thee.

9. This Psalm can be taken as in the Person of Christ another way; which is that whole Christ should speak. I mean by whole, with His body, of which He is the Head, according to the Apostle, who says, Ye are the body of Christ, and the members. He therefore is the Head of this body; wherefore in another place he saith, But doing the truth in love, we may increase in Him in all things, Who is the Head, Christ, from Whom the whole body is joined together and compacted. In the Prophet then at once the Church, and her Head, (the Church founded amidst the storms of persecution throughout the whole world, which we know already to have come to pass,) speaks, O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me; wishing to exterminate the Christian name. Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. For they would not otherwise hope that they could destroy the Church, branching out so very far and wide, unless they believed that God had no care thereof. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker; in Christ of course. For into that flesh the Church too hath been taken by the Word, Who was made flesh, and dwelt in us; for that, In heavenly places hath He made us to sit together with Him. When the Head goes before, the other members will follow; for, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Justly then does the Church say, Thou art my taker. My glory; for she doth not attribute her excellency to herself, seeing that she knoweth by Whose grace and mercy she is what she is. And the lifter up of my head, of Him, namely, Who, the First-born from the dead, ascended up into heaven. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. This is the prayer of all the Saints, the odour of sweetness, which ascends up in the sight of the Lord. For now the Church is heard out of this mountain, which is also her head; or, out of that justice of God, by which both His elect are set free, and their persecutors punished. Let the people of God also say, I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up; that they may be joined, and cleave to their Head. For to this people is it said, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall lay

hold on thee. Since they are taken out of sinners, of whom it is said generally, But they that sleep, sleep in the night. Let them say moreover, I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me; of the heathen verily that compass me about to extinguish every where, if they could, the Christian name. But how should they be feared, when by the blood of the martyrs in Christ, as by oil, the ardour of love is inflamed? Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. The body can address this to its own Head. For at His rising the body was saved; Who ascended up on high, led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men. For this is said by the Prophet, in the secret purpose of God, until that ripe harvest which is spoken of in the Gospel, whose salvation is in His Resurrection, Who vouchsafed to die for us, shed out our Lord to the earth. Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Now while the Church hath rule, the enemies of the Christian name are smitten with confusion; and, whether their curses or their chiefs, brought to nought. Believe then, O man, that salvation is of the Lord: and, Thou, O Lord, may Thy blessing be upon Thy people.

10. Each one too of us may say, when a multitude of vices and lusts leads the resisting mind in the law of sin, O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me. And, since despair of recovery generally creeps in through the accumulation of vices, as though these same vices were mocking the soul, or even as though the Devil and his angels through their poisonous suggestions were at work to make us despair, it is said with great truth, Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker. For this is our hope, that He hath vouchsafed to take the nature of man in Christ. My glory; according to that rule, that no one should ascribe ought to himself. And the lifter up of my head; either of Him, Who is the Head of us all, or of the spirit of each several one of us, which is the head of the soul and body. For the head of the woman is the man, and the head of the man is Christ. But the mind is lifted up, when it can be said already, With the mind I serve the law of God; that the rest of man may be reduced to peaceable submission, when in the resurrection of the flesh death is swallowed up in victory. With my voice I have cried unto the Lord; with that most inward and intensive voice. And He heard me out of His holy mountain; Him, through Whom He hath

succoured us, through Whose mediation He heareth us. I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Who of the faithful is not able to say this, when he calls to mind the death of his sins, and the gift of regeneration? I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me. Besides those which the Church universally hath borne and beareth, each one also hath temptations, by which, when compassed about, he may speak these words, Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: that is, make me to arise. Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause: it is well in God's determinate purpose said of the Devil and his angels; who rage not only against the whole body of Christ, but also against each one in particular. Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Each man hath those that revile him, he hath too the prime authors of vice, who strive to cut him off from the body of Christ. But salvation is of the Lord. Pride is to be guarded against, and we must say, My soul cleaved after Thee. And upon Thy people be Thy blessing: that is, upon each one of us.

PSALM 4

To the end, a Psalm Song to David.

1. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For this end signifies perfection, not consumption. Now it may be a question, whether every Song be a Psalm, or rather every Psalm a Song; whether there are some Songs which cannot be called Psalms, and some Psalms which cannot be called Songs. But the Scripture must be attended to, if haply “Song” do not denote a joyful theme. But those are called Psalms which are sung to the Psaltery; which the history as a high mystery declares the Prophet David to have used. Of which matter this is not the place to discourse; for it requires prolonged inquiry, and much discussion. Now meanwhile we must look either for the words of the Lord Man after the Resurrection, or of man in the Church believing and hoping on Him.

2. Ver. 1. When I called, the God of my righteousness heard me. When I called, God heard me, the Psalmist says, of Whom is my righteousness. In tribulation Thou hast enlarged me. Thou hast led me from the straits of sadness into the broad ways of joy. For, tribulation and straitness is on every soul of man that doeth evil. But he who says, We rejoice in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; up to that where he says, Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us; he hath no straits of heart, they be heaped on him outwardly by them that persecute him. Now the change of person, for that from the third person, where he says, He heard, he passes at once to the second, where he says, Thou hast enlarged me; if it be not done for the sake of variety and grace, it is strange why the Psalmist should first wish to declare to men that he had been heard, and afterwards address Him Who heard him. Unless perchance, when he had declared how he was heard, in this very enlargement of heart he preferred to speak with God; that he might even in this way shew what it is to be enlarged in heart, that is, to have God

already shed abroad in the heart, with Whom he might hold converse interiorly. Which is rightly understood as spoken in the person of him who, believing on Christ, has been enlightened; but in that of the very Lord Man, Whom the Wisdom of God took, I do not see how this can be suitable. For He was never deserted by It. But as His very prayer against trouble is a sign rather of our infirmity, so also of that sudden enlargement of heart the same Lord may speak for His faithful ones, whom He has personated also when He said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink, and so forth. Wherefore here also He can say, Thou hast enlarged me, for one of the least of His, holding converse with God, Whose love he has shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. Why does he again ask, when already he declared that he had been heard and enlarged? It is for our sakes, of whom it is said, But if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience; or is it, that in him who has believed that which is begun may be perfected?

3. Ver. 2. O ye sons of men, how long heavy in heart. Let your error, says he, have lasted at least up to the coming of the Son of God; why then any longer are ye heavy in heart? When will ye make an end of crafty wiles, if now when the truth is present ye make it not? Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie? Why would ye be blessed by the lowest things? Truth alone, from which all things are true, maketh blessed. For, vanity is of deceivers, and all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour, wherewith he laboureth under the sun? Why then are ye held back by the love of things temporal? Why follow ye after the last things, as though the first, which is vanity and a lie? For you would have them abide with you, which all pass away, as doth a shadow.

4. Ver. 3. And know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One. Whom but Him, Whom He raised up from below, and placed in heaven at His right hand? Therefore doth he chide mankind, that they would turn at length from the love of this world to Him. But if the addition of the conjunction (for he says, and know ye) is to any a difficulty, he may easily observe in Scripture that this manner of speech is usual in that language, in which the Prophets spoke. For you often find this beginning, And the Lord said unto him, And

the word of the Lord came to him. Which joining by a conjunction, when no sentence has gone before, to which the following one may be annexed, peradventure admirably conveys to us, that the utterance of the truth in words is connected with that vision which goes on in the heart. Although in this place it may be said, that the former sentence, Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie? is as if it were written, Do not love vanity, and seek a lie. And being thus read, it follows in the most direct construction, and know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One. But the interposition of the Diapsalma, forbids our joining this sentence with the preceding one. For whether this be a Hebrew word, as some would have it, which means, so be it; or a Greek word, which marks a pause in the psalmody: (so as that Psalma should be what is sung in psalmody, but Diapsalma an interval of silence in the psalmody; that as the coupling of voices in singing is called Sympsalma, so their separation Diapsalma, where a certain pause of interrupted continuity is marked:) whether I say it be the former, or the latter, or something else, this at least is probable, that the sense cannot rightly be continued and joined, where the Diapsalma intervenes.

5. The Lord will hear me, when I cry unto Him. I believe that we are here warned, that with great earnestness of heart, that is, with an inward and incorporeal cry, we should implore help of God. For as we must give thanks for enlightenment in this life, so must we pray for rest after this life. Wherefore in the person, either of the faithful preacher of the Gospel, or of our Lord Himself, it may be taken, as if it were written, the Lord will hear you, when you cry unto Him.

6. Ver. 4. Be ye angry, and sin not. For the thought occurred, Who is worthy to be heard? or how shall the sinner not cry in vain unto the Lord? Therefore, Be ye angry, saith he, and sin not. Which may be taken two ways: either, even if ye be angry, do not sin; that is, even if there arise an emotion in the soul, which now by reason of the punishment of sin is not in our power, at least let not the reason and the mind, which is after God regenerated within, that with the mind we should serve the law of God, although with the flesh we as yet serve the law of sin, consent thereunto; or, repent ye, that is, be ye angry with yourselves for your past sins, and henceforth cease to sin. What you say in your hearts: there is understood,

say ye: so that the complete sentence is, What ye say in your hearts, that say ye; that is, be ye not the people of whom it is said, with their lips they honour Me, but their heart is far from Me. In your chambers be ye pricked. This is what has been expressed already in heart. For this is the chamber, of which our Lord warns us, that we should pray within, with closed doors. But, be ye pricked, refers either to the pain of repentance, that the soul in punishment should prick itself, that it be not condemned and tormented in God's judgment; or, to arousing, that we should awake to behold the light of Christ, as if pricks were made use of. But some say that not, be ye pricked, but, be ye opened, is the better reading; because in the Greek Psalter it is *κατανύγητε*, which refers to that enlargement of the heart, in order that the shedding abroad of love by the Holy Ghost may be received.

7. Ver. 5. Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord. He says the same in another Psalm, the sacrifice for God is a troubled spirit. Wherefore that this is the sacrifice of righteousness which is offered through repentance it is not unreasonably here understood. For what more righteous, than that each one should be angry with his own sins, rather than those of others, and that in self-punishment he should sacrifice himself unto God? Or are righteous works after repentance the sacrifice of righteousness? For the interposition of *Diapsalma* not unreasonably perhaps intimates even a transition from the old life to the new life: that on the old man being destroyed or weakened by repentance, the sacrifice of righteousness, according to the regeneration of the new man, may be offered to God; when the soul now cleansed offers and places itself on the altar of faith, to be encompassed by heavenly fire, that is, by the Holy Ghost. So that this may be the meaning, Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord; that is, live uprightly, and hope for the gift of the Holy Ghost, that the truth, in which you have believed, may shine upon you.

8. But yet, hope in the Lord, is as yet expressed without explanation. Now what is hoped for, but good things? But since each one would obtain from God that good, which he loves; and they are not easy to be found who love interior goods, that is, which belong to the inward man, which alone should be loved, but the rest are to be used for necessity, not to be enjoyed for

pleasure; excellently did he subjoin, when he had said, hope in the Lord, (ver. 6.) Many say, who sheweth us good things? This is the speech, and this the daily inquiry of all the foolish, and unrighteous; whether of those who long for the peace and quiet of a worldly life, and from the frowardness of mankind find it not; who even in their blindness dare to find fault with the order of events, when involved in their own deservings they deem the times worse than these which are past: or, of those who doubt and despair of that future life, which is promised us; who are often saying, Who knows if it's true? or, who ever came from below, to tell us this? Very exquisitely then, and briefly, he shews, (to those, that is, who have interior sight,) what good things are to be sought; answering their question, who say, Who sheweth us good things? The light of Thy countenance, saith he, is stamped on us, O Lord. This light is the whole and true good of man, which is seen not with the eye, but with the mind. But he says, stamped on us, as a penny is stamped with the king's image. For man was made after the image and likeness of God, which he defaced by sin: therefore it is his true and eternal good, if by a new birth he be stamped. And I believe this to be the bearing of that which some understand skilfully; I mean, what the Lord said on seeing Cæsar's tribute money, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God the things that are God's. As if He had said, in like manner as Cæsar exacts from you the impression of his image, so also does God: that as the tribute money is rendered to him, so should the soul to God, illumined and stamped with the light of His countenance. (Ver. 7.) Thou hast put gladness into my heart. Gladness then is not to be sought without by them, who, being still heavy in heart, love vanity, and seek a lie; but within, where the light of God's countenance is stamped. For Christ dwelleth in the inner man, as the Apostle says; for to Him doth it appertain to see truth, since He hath said, I am the truth. And again, when He spake in the Apostle, saying, Would you receive a proof of Christ, Who speaketh in me? He spake not of course from without to him, but in his very heart, that is, in that chamber where we are to pray.

9. But men (who doubtless are many) who follow after things temporal, know not to say aught else, than, who sheweth us good things? when the true and certain good within their very selves they cannot see. Of these accordingly is most justly said, what he adds next; From the time of His

corn, of wine, and oil, they have been multiplied. For the addition of His, is not superfluous. For the corn is God's: inasmuch as He is the living bread Which came down from heaven. The wine too is God's: for, they shall be inebriated, he says, with the fatness of Thine house. The oil too is God's: of which it is said, Thou hast fattened my head with oil. But those many, who say, Who sheweth us good things? and who see not that the kingdom of heaven is within them: these, from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, are multiplied. For multiplication does not always betoken plentifulness, and not, generally, scantiness: when the soul, given up to temporal pleasures, burns ever with desire, and cannot be satisfied; and, distracted with manifold and anxious thought, is not permitted to see the simple good. Such is the soul of which it is said, for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things. A soul like this, by the departure and succession of temporal goods, that is, from the time of His corn, wine, and oil, filled with numberless idle fancies, is so multiplied, that it cannot do that which is commanded, think on the Lord in goodness, and in simplicity of heart seek Him. For this multiplicity is strongly opposed to that simplicity. And therefore leaving these, who are many, multiplied, that is, by the desire of things temporal, and who say, Who sheweth us good things? which are to be sought not with the eyes without, but with simplicity of heart within, the faithful man rejoices and says, (ver. 8.) In peace, together, I will sleep, and take rest. For such men justly hope for all manner of estrangement of mind from things mortal, and forgetfulness of this world's miseries; which is beautifully and prophetically signified under the name of sleep and rest, where the most perfect peace cannot be interrupted by any tumult. But this is not had now in this life, but is to be hoped for after this life. This even the words themselves, which are in the future tense, shew us. For it is not said, either, I have slept, and taken rest; or, I do sleep, and take rest; but, I will sleep, and take rest. Then shall this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; then shall death be swallowed up in victory. Hence it is said, but if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience.

10. Wherefore, consistently with this, he adds the last words, and says, Since Thou, O Lord, in singleness hast made me dwell in hope. Here he

does not say, wilt make; but, hast made. In whom then this hope now is, there will be assuredly that which is hoped for. And well does he say, in singleness. For this may refer in opposition to those many, who being multiplied from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, say, Who sheweth us good things? For this multiplicity perishes, and singleness is observed among the Saints: of whom it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, and of the multitude of them that believed, there was one soul, and one heart. In singleness, then, and simplicity, removed, that is, from the multitude and crowd of things, that are born and die, we ought to be lovers of eternity, and unity, if we desire to cleave to the one God and our Lord.

PSALM 5

1. The title of the Psalm is, For her who receiveth the inheritance. The Church then is signified, who receiveth for her inheritance eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ; that she may possess God Himself, in cleaving to Whom she may be blessed, according to that, Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth. What earth, but that of which it is said, Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living? And again more clearly, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup. And conversely the word Church is said to be God's inheritance according to that, Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance. Therefore is God said to be our inheritance, because He feedeth and sustaineth us: and we are said to be God's inheritance, because He ordereth and ruleth us. Wherefore it is the voice of the Church in this Psalm called to her inheritance, that she too may herself become the inheritance of the Lord.

2. Ver. 1. Hear my words, O Lord. Being called she calleth upon the Lord; that the same Lord being her helper, she may pass through the wickedness of this world, and attain unto Him. Understand my cry. The Psalmist well shews what this cry is; how from within, from the chamber of the heart, without the body's utterance, it reaches unto God: for the bodily voice is heard, but the spiritual is understood. Although this too may be God's hearing, not with carnal ear, but in the omnipresence of His Majesty.

3. Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication; that is, to that voice, which he maketh request that God would understand: of which what the nature is, he hath already intimated, when he said, (ver. 2.) Understand my cry. Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication, my King, and my God. Although both the Son is God, and the Father God, and the Father and the Son together One God; and if asked of the Holy Ghost, we must give no other answer than that He is God; and when the Father, and the Son, and the

Holy Ghost are mentioned together, we must understand nothing else, than One God; nevertheless Scripture is wont to give the appellation of King to the Son. According then to that which is said, By Me man cometh to the Father, rightly is it first, my King; and then, my God. And yet has not the Psalmist said, Attend ye; but, Attend Thou. For the Catholic faith preaches not two or three Gods, but the Very Trinity, One God. Not that the same Trinity can be together, now the Father, now the Son, now the Holy Ghost, as Sabellius believed: but that the Father must be none but the Father, and the Son none but the Son, and the Holy Ghost none but the Holy Ghost, and this Trinity but One God. Hence when the Apostle had said, Of Whom are all things, by Whom are all things, in Whom are all things, he is believed to have conveyed an intimation of the Very Trinity; and yet he did not add, to Them be glory; but, to Him be glory.

4. Because I will pray unto Thee, (ver. 3.) O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. What does that, which he said above, Hear Thou, mean, as if he desired to be heard immediately? But now he saith, in the morning Thou wilt hear; not, hear Thou: and, I will pray unto Thee; not, I do pray unto Thee: and, as follows, in the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see; not, I do stand by Thee, and do see. Unless perhaps his former prayer marks the invocation itself: but being in darkness amidst the storms of this world, he perceives that he does not see what he desires, and yet does not cease to hope, For hope that is seen, is not hope. Nevertheless, he understands why he does not see, because the night is not yet past, that is, the darkness which our sins have merited. He says therefore, Because I will pray unto Thee, O Lord; that is, because Thou art so mighty to Whom I shall make my prayer, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. Thou art not He, he says, That can be seen by those, from whose eyes the night of sins is not yet withdrawn: when the night then of my error is past, and the darkness gone, which by my sins I have brought upon myself, then Thou wilt hear my voice. Why then did he say above not, Thou wilt hear, but, hear Thou? Is it that after the Church cried out, hear Thou, and was not heard, she perceived what must needs pass away to enable her to be heard? Or is it that she was heard above, but doth not yet understand that she was heard, because she doth not yet see by Whom she hath been heard; and what she now says, In the morning Thou wilt hear, she would have thus taken, In the morning I shall

understand that I have been heard? Such is that expression, Arise, O Lord, that is, make me arise. But this latter is taken of Christ's resurrection: but at all events that Scripture, The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know whether ye love Him, cannot be taken in any other sense, than, that ye by Him may know, and that it may be made evident to yourselves, what progress ye have made in His love.

5. In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see. What is, I will stand, but, "I will not lie down?" Now what else is to lie down, but to take rest on the earth, which is a seeking happiness in earthly pleasures? I will stand by, he says, and will see. We must not then cleave to things earthly, if we would see God, Who is beheld by a clean heart. (Ver. 5, 6.) For Thou art not a God Who hast pleasure in iniquity. The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee, nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes. Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate. Iniquity, malignity, lying, homicide, craft, and all the like, are the night of which we speak: on the passing away of which, the morning dawns, that God may be seen. He has unfolded the reason, then, why he will stand by in the morning, and see: For, he says, Thou art not a God Who hast pleasure in iniquity. For if He were a God Who had pleasure in iniquity, He could be seen even by the iniquitous, so that He would not be seen in the morning, that is, when the night of iniquity is over.

6. The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee: that is, he shall not so see, as to cleave to Thee. Hence follows, Nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes. For their eyes, that is, their mind is beaten back by the light of truth, because of the darkness of their sins; by the habitual practice of which they are not able to sustain the brightness of right understanding. Therefore even they who see sometimes, that is, who understand the truth, are yet still unrighteous, they abide not therein through love of those things, which turn away from the truth. For they carry about with them their night, that is, not only the habit, but even the love, of sinning. But if this night shall pass away, that is, if they shall cease to sin, and this love and habit thereof be put to flight, the morning dawns, so that they not only understand, but also cleave to the truth.

7. Thou hast hated all that work iniquity. God's hatred may be understood from that form of expression, by which every sinner hates the truth. For it seems that she too hates those, whom she suffers not to abide in her. Now they do not abide, who cannot bear the truth. Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. For this is the opposite to truth. But lest any one should suppose that any substance or nature is opposite to truth, let him understand that a lie has relation to that which is not, not to that which is. For if that which is be spoken, truth is spoken: but if that which is not be spoken, it is a lie. Therefore saith he, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie; because drawing back from that which is, they turn aside to that which is not. Many lies indeed seem to be for some one's safety or advantage, spoken not in malice, but in kindness: such was that of those midwives in Exodus, who gave a false report to Pharaoh, to the end that the infants of the children of Israel might not be slain. But even these are praised not for the fact, but for the disposition shewn; since those who only lie in this way, will attain in time to a freedom from all lying. For in those that are perfect, not even these lies are found. For to these it is said, Let there be in your mouth, yea, yea; nay, nay; whatsoever is more, is of evil. Nor is it without reason written in another place, The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul: lest any should imagine that the perfect and spiritual man ought to lie for this temporal life, in the death of which no soul is slain, neither his own, nor another's. But since it is one thing to lie, another to conceal the truth; (if indeed it be one thing to say what is false, another not to say what is true,) if haply one does not wish to give a man up even to this visible death, he should be prepared to conceal what is true, not to say what is false; so that he may neither give him up, nor a lie, lest he slay his own soul for another's body. But if he cannot yet do this, let him at all events admit only lies of such necessity, that he may attain to be freed even from these, if they alone remain, and receive the strength of the Holy Ghost, whereby he may despise all that must be suffered for the truth's sake. In fine, there are two kinds of lies, in which there is no great fault, and yet they are not without fault, either when we are in jest, or when we lie that we may do good. That first kind, in jest, is for this reason not very hurtful, because there is no deception. For he to whom it is said knows that it is said for the sake of the jest. But the second kind is for this reason the more inoffensive, because it carries with it some kindly intention. And to say truth, that which has no duplicity, cannot even be

called a lie. As if, for example, a sword be intrusted to any one, and he promises to return it, when he who intrusted it to him shall demand it: if he chance to require his sword when in a fit of madness, it is clear it must not be returned then, lest he kill either himself or others, until soundness of mind be restored to him. Here then is no duplicity, because he, to whom the sword was intrusted, when he promised that he would return it at the other's demand, did not imagine that he could require it when in a fit of madness. But even the Lord concealed the truth, when He said to the disciples, not yet strong enough, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: and the Apostle Paul, when he said, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Whence it is clear that it is not blameable, sometimes not to speak what is true. But to say what is false, is not found to have been allowed to the perfect.

8. The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate. What he said above, Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie, may well seem to be repeated here: so that one may refer the man of blood to the worker of iniquity, and the crafty man to the lie. For it is craft, when one thing is done, another pretended. He used an apt word too, when he said, will abominate. For the disinherited are usually called abominated. Now this Psalm is, for her who receiveth the inheritance; and she adds the exulting joy of her hope, in saying, (ver. 7.) But I, in the multitude of Thy mercy, will enter into Thine house. In the multitude of mercy: perhaps he means in the multitude of perfected and blessed men, of whom that city shall consist, of which the Church is now in travail, and is bearing few by few. Now that many men regenerated and perfected, are rightly called the multitude of God's mercy, who can deny; when it is most truly said, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? I will enter into Thine house: as a stone into a building, I suppose, is the meaning. For what else is the house of God than the Temple of God, of which it is said, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are? Of which building He is the corner-stone, Whom the Power and Wisdom of God coeternal with the Father assumed.

9. I will worship at Thy holy temple, in Thy fear. At the temple, we understand as, near the temple. For he does not say, I will worship in Thy

holy temple; but, I will worship at Thy holy temple. It must be understood too to be spoken not of perfection, but of progress toward perfection: so that the words, I will enter into Thine house, should signify perfection. But that this may come to a happy issue, I will first, he says, worship at Thy holy temple. And perhaps on this account he added, in Thy fear; which is a great defence to those that are advancing toward salvation. But when any one shall have arrived there, in him comes to pass that which is written, perfect love casteth out fear. For they do not fear Him Who is now their friend, to whom it is said, henceforth I will not call you servants, but friends, when they have been brought through to that which was promised.

10. Ver. 8. O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of mine enemies. He has here sufficiently plainly declared that he is on his onward road, that is, in progress toward perfection, not yet in perfection itself, when he desires eagerly that he may be led forth. But, in Thy justice, not in that which seems so to men. For to return evil for evil seems justice: but it is not His justice of Whom it is said, He maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the evil: for even when God punishes sinners, He does not inflict His evil on them, but leaves them to their own evil. Behold, the Psalmist says, he travailed with injustice, he hath conceived toil, and brought forth iniquity: he hath opened a ditch, and digged it, and hath fallen into the pit which he wrought: his pains shall be turned on his own head, and his iniquity shall descend on his own pate. When then God punishes, He punishes as a judge those that transgress the law, not by bringing evil upon them from Himself, but driving them on to that which they have chosen, to fill up the sum of their misery. But man, when he returns evil for evil, does it with an evil will: and on this account is himself first evil, when he would punish evil.

11. Direct in Thy sight my way. Nothing is clearer, than that he here sets forth that time, in which he is journeying onward. For this is a way which is traversed not in any regions of the earth, but in the affections of the heart. In Thy sight, he says, direct my way: that is, where no man sees; who are not to be trusted in their praise or blame. For they can in no wise judge of another man's conscience, wherein the way toward God is traversed. Hence it is added, (ver. 9.) for truth is not in their mouth. To whose judgment of

course then there is no trusting, and therefore must we fly within to conscience, and the sight of God. Their heart is vain. How then can truth be in their mouth, whose heart is deceived by sin, and the punishment of sin? Whence men are called back by that voice, Wherefore do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?

12. Their throat is an open sepulchre. It may be referred to signify gluttony, for the sake of which men very often lie by flattery. And admirably has he said, an open sepulchre: for this gluttony is ever gaping with open mouth, not as sepulchres, which, on the reception of corpses, are closed up. This also may be understood hereby, that with lying and blind flattery men draw to themselves those, whom they entice to sin; and as it were devour them, when they turn them to their own way of living. And when this happens to them, since by sin they die, those, by whom they are led along, are rightly called open sepulchres: for themselves too are in a manner lifeless, being destitute of the life of truth; and they take in to themselves dead men, whom having slain by lying words and a vain heart, they turn unto themselves. With their own tongues they dealt craftily: that is, with evil tongues. For this seems to be signified, when he says their own. For the evil have evil tongues, that is, they speak evil, when they speak craftily. To whom the Lord saith, How can ye, being evil, speak good things?

13. Ver. 10. Judge them, O God: let them fall from their own thoughts. It is a prophecy, not a curse. For he does not wish that it should come to pass; but he perceives what will come to pass. For this happens to them, not because he appears to have wished for it, but because they are such as to deserve that it should happen. For so also what he says afterwards, Let all that hope in Thee rejoice, he says by way of prophecy; since he perceives that they will rejoice. Likewise is it said prophetically, Stir up Thy strength, and come: for he saw that He would come. Although the words, let them fall from their own thoughts, may be taken thus also, that it may rather be believed to be a wish for their good by the Psalmist, whilst they fall from their evil thoughts, that is, that they may no more think evil. But what follows, drive them out, forbids this interpretation. For it can in no wise be taken in a favourable sense, that one is driven out by God. Wherefore it is understood to be said prophetically, and not of ill will; when this is said,

which must necessarily happen to such as chose to persevere in those sins, which have been mentioned. Let them, therefore, fall from their own thoughts, is, let them fall by their self-accusing thoughts, their own conscience also bearing witness, as the Apostle says, and their thoughts accusing or excusing, in the revelation of the just judgment of God.

14. According to the multitude of their ungodlinesses drive them out: that is, drive them out far away. For this is according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses, that they should be driven out far away. The ungodly then are driven out from that inheritance, which is possessed by knowing and seeing God: as diseased eyes are driven out from the shining of the light, when what is gladness to others is pain to them. Therefore these shall not stand in the morning, and see. And that expression is as great a punishment, as that which is said, But for me it is good to cleave to the Lord, is a great reward. To this punishment is opposed, Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord; for similar to this expulsion is, Cast him into outer darkness.

15. Since they have embittered Thee, O Lord: I am, saith He, the Bread which came down from heaven; again, Labour for the meat which wasteth not; again, Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. But to sinners the bread of truth is bitter. Whence they hate the mouth of him that speaketh the truth. These then have embittered God, who by sin have fallen into such a state of sickness, that the food of truth, in which healthy souls delight, as if it were bitter as gall, they cannot bear.

16. Ver. 11. And let all rejoice that hope in Thee; those of course to whose taste the Lord is sweet. They will exult for evermore, and Thou wilt dwell in them. This will be the exultation for evermore, when the just become the Temple of God, and He, their Indweller, will be their joy. And all that love Thy name shall glory in Thee: as when what they love is present for them to enjoy. And well is it said, in Thee, as if in possession of the inheritance, of which the title of the Psalm speaks: when they too are His inheritance, which is intimated by, Thou wilt dwell in them. From which good they are kept back, whom God, according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses, driveth out.

17. Ver. 12. For Thou wilt bless the just man. This is blessing, to glory in God, and to be inhabited by God. Such sanctification is given to the just. But that they may be justified, a calling goes before: which is not of merit, but of the grace of God. For all have sinned, and want the glory of God. For whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Since then calling is not of our merit, but of the goodness and mercy of God, he went on to say, O Lord, as with the shield of Thy good will Thou hast crowned us. For God's good will goes before our good will, to call sinners to repentance. And these are the arms whereby the enemy is overcome, against whom it is said, Who will bring accusation against God's elect? Again, if God be for us, who can be against us? Who spared not His Only Son, but delivered Him up for us all. For if, when we were enemies, Christ died for us; much more being reconciled, shall we be saved from wrath through Him. This is that unconquerable shield, whereby the enemy is driven back, when he suggests despair of our salvation through the multitude of tribulations and temptations.

18. The whole contents of the Psalm, then, are a prayer that she may be heard, from the words, hear my words, O Lord, unto, my King, and my God. Then follows a view of those things which hinder the sight of God, that is, a knowledge that she is heard, from the words, because I shall pray unto Thee, O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice, unto, the man of blood and the crafty man the Lord will abominate. Thirdly, she hopes that she, who is to be the house of God, even now begins to draw near to Him in fear, before that perfection which casteth out fear, from the words, but I in the multitude of Thy mercy, unto, I will worship at Thy holy temple in Thy fear. Fourthly, as she is progressing and advancing amongst those very things which she feels to hinder her, she prays that she may be assisted within, where no man seeth, lest she be turned aside by evil tongues, for the words, O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of my enemies, unto, with their tongues they dealt craftily. Fifthly, is a prophecy of what punishment awaits the ungodly, when the just man shall scarcely be saved; and of what reward the just shall obtain, who, when they were called, came, and bore all things manfully, till they were brought to the end, from the words, judge them, O God, unto the end of the Psalm.

PSALM 6

To the end, in the hymns of the eighth, a Psalm to David.

1. Of the eighth, seems here obscure. For the rest of this title is more clear. Now it has seemed to some to intimate the day of judgment, that is, the time of the coming of our Lord, when He will come to judge the quick and dead. Which coming, it is believed, is to be, after reckoning the years from Adam, seven thousand years: so as that seven thousand years should pass as seven days, and afterwards that time arrive as it were the eighth day. But since it has been said by the Lord, It is not yours to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power: and, But of the day and that hour knoweth no man, no, neither angel, nor Power, neither the Son, but the Father alone: and again, that which is written, that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief, shews clearly enough that no man should arrogate to himself the knowledge of that time, by any computation of years. For if that day is to come after seven thousand years, every man could learn its advent by reckoning the years. What comes then of the Son's even not knowing this? Which of course is said with this meaning, that men do not learn this by the Son, not that He by Himself doth not know it: according to that form of speech, the Lord your God trieth you that He may know; that is, that He may make you know: and, arise, O Lord; that is, make us arise. When therefore the Son is thus said not to know this day; not because He knoweth it not, but because He causeth those to know it not, for whom it is not expedient to know it, that is, He doth not shew it to them; what does that strange presumption mean, which, by a reckoning up of years, expects the day of the Lord as most certain after seven thousand years?

2. Be we then willingly ignorant of that which the Lord would not have us know: and let us inquire what this title, of the eighth, means. The day of judgment may indeed, even without any rash computation of years, be understood by the eighth, for that immediately after the end of this world,

life eternal being attained, the souls of the righteous will not then be subject unto times: and, since all times have their revolution in a repetition of those seven days, that peradventure is called the eighth day, which will not have this variety. There is another reason, which may be here not unreasonably accepted, why the judgment should be called the eighth, because it will take place after two generations, one relating to the body, the other to the soul. For from Adam unto Moses the human race lived of the body, that is, according to the flesh: which is called the outward and the old man, and to which the Old Testament was given, that it might prefigure the spiritual things to come by operations, albeit religious, yet carnal. Through this entire season, when men lived according to the body, death reigned, as the Apostle saith, even over those that had not sinned. Now it reigned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, as the same Apostle saith; for it must be taken of the period up to Moses, up to which time the works of the law, that is, those sacraments of carnal observance, held even those bound, for the sake of a certain mystery, who were subject to the One God. But from the coming of the Lord, from Whom there was a transition from the circumcision of the flesh to the circumcision of the heart, the call was made, that man should live according to the soul, that is, according to the inner man, who is also called the new man by reason of the new birth and the renewing of spiritual conversation. Now it is plain that the number four has relation to the body, from the four well-known elements of which it consists, and the four qualities, of dry, humid, warm, cold. Hence too it is administered by four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, winter. All this is very well known. For of the number four relating to the body we have treated elsewhere somewhat subtilly, but obscurely: which must be avoided in this discourse, which we would have accommodated to the unlearned. But that the number three has relation to the mind may be understood from this, that we are commanded to love God after a threefold manner, with the whole heart, with the whole soul, with the whole mind: of each of which severally we must treat, not in the Psalms, but in the Gospels: for the present, for proof of the relation of the number three to the mind, I think what has been said enough. Those numbers then of the body which have relation to the old man and the Old Testament, being past and gone, the numbers too of the soul, which have relation to the new man and the New Testament, being past and gone, a septenary so to say being passed; because

every thing is done in time, four having been distributed to the body, three to the mind; the eighth will come, the day of judgment: which assigning to deserts their due, will transfer at once the saint, not to temporal works, but to eternal life; but will condemn the ungodly to eternal punishment.

3. In fear of which condemnation the Church prays in this Psalm, and says, (ver. 1.) Reprove me not, O Lord, in Thine anger. The Apostle too mentions the anger of the judgment; Thou treasurest up unto thyself, he says, anger against the day of the anger of the just judgment of God. In which he would not be reprov'd, whosoever longs to be healed in this life. Nor in Thy rage chasten me. Chasten, seems rather too mild a word; for it availeth toward amendment. For for him who is reprov'd, that is, accused, it is to be feared lest his end be condemnation. But since rage seems to be more than anger, it may be a difficulty, why that which is milder, namely, chastening, is joined to that which is more severe, namely, rage. But I suppose that one and the same thing is signified by the two words. For in the Greek θυμὸς, which is in the first verse, means the same as ὀργή, which is in the second verse. But when the Latins themselves too wished to use two distinct words, they looked out for what was akin to anger, and rage was used. Hence copies vary. For in some anger is found first, and then rage: in others, for rage, indignation or choler is used. But whatever the reading, it is an emotion of the soul urging to the infliction of punishment. Yet this emotion must not be attributed to God, as if to a soul, of Whom it is said, but Thou, O Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity. Now that which is tranquil, is not disturbed. Disturbance then does not attach to God as judge: but what is done by His ministers, in that it is done by His laws, is called His anger. In which anger, the soul, which now prays, would not only not be reprov'd, but not even chastened, that is, amended or instructed. For in the Greek it is, παιδεύσης, that is, instruct. Now in the day of judgment all are reprov'd that hold not the foundation, which is Christ. But they are amended, that is, purged, who upon this foundation build wood, hay, stubble. For they shall suffer loss, but shall be saved, as by fire. What then does he pray, who would not be either reprov'd or amended in the anger of the Lord? what else but that he may be healed? For where sound health is, neither death is to be dreaded, nor the physician's hand with caustics or the knife.

4. He proceeds accordingly to say, (ver. 2.) Pity me, O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled, that is, the support of my soul, or strength: for this is the meaning of bones. The soul therefore says, that her strength is troubled, when she speaks of bones. For it is not to be supposed, that the soul has bones, such as we see in the body. Wherefore, what follows tends to explain it, (ver. 3.) and my soul is troubled exceedingly, lest because he mentioned bones, they should be understood as of the body. And Thou, O Lord, how long? Who does not see represented here a soul struggling with her diseases; but long kept back by the physician, that she may be convinced what evils she has plunged herself into through sin? For what is easily healed, is not much avoided: but from the difficulty of the healing, there will be the more careful keeping of recovered health. God then, to Whom it is said, And Thou, O Lord, how long? must not be deemed as if cruel: but as a kind convincer of the soul, what evil she hath procured for herself. For this soul does not yet pray so perfectly, as that it can be said to her, Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Behold, here I am. That she may at the same time also come to know, if they who do turn meet with so great difficulty, how great punishment is prepared for the ungodly, who will not turn to God: as it is written in another place, If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and ungodly appear?

5. Ver. 4. Turn, O Lord, and deliver my soul. Turning herself she prays that God too would turn to her: as it is said, Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord. Or is it to be understood according to that way of speaking, Turn, O Lord, that is, make me turn, since the soul in this her turning feels difficulty and toil? For our perfected turning findeth God ready, as says the Prophet, We shall find Him ready as the dawn. Since it was not His absence Who is every where present, but our turning away that made us lose Him; He was in this world, it is said, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. If, then, He was in this world, and the world knew Him not, our impurity doth not endure the sight of Him. But whilst we are turning ourselves, that is, by changing our old life are fashioning our spirit; we feel it hard and toilsome to be wrested back from the darkness of earthly lusts, to the serene and quiet and tranquillity of the divine light. And in such difficulty we say, Turn, O Lord, that is, help us,

that that turning may be perfected in us, which findeth Thee ready, and offering Thyself for the fruition of them that love Thee. And hence after he said, Turn, O Lord, he added, and deliver my soul: cleaving as it were to the entanglements of this world, and suffering, in the very act of turning, from the thorns, as it were, of rending and tearing desires. Make me whole, he says, for Thy pity's sake. He knows that it is not of his own merits that he is healed: for to him sinning, and transgressing a given command, was just condemnation due. Heal me therefore, he says, not for my merit's sake, but for Thy pity's sake.

6. Ver. 5. For in death there is no one that is mindful of Thee. He knows too that now is the time for turning unto God: for when this life shall have passed away, there remaineth but a retribution of our deserts. But in hell who shall confess to Thee? That rich man, of whom the Lord speaks, who saw Lazarus in rest, but bewailed himself in torments, confessed in hell, yea so as to wish even to have his brethren warned, that they might keep themselves from sin, because of the punishment which is not believed to be in hell. Although therefore to no purpose, yet he confessed that those torments had deservedly lighted upon him; since he even wished his brethren to be instructed, lest they should fall into the same. What then is, But in hell who will confess to Thee? Is hell to be understood as that place, whither the ungodly will be cast down after the judgment, when by reason of that deeper darkness they will no more see any light of God, to Whom they may confess aught? For as yet that rich man by raising his eyes, although a vast gulf lay between, could still see Lazarus established in rest: by comparing himself with whom, he was driven to a confession of his own deserts. It may be understood also, as if the Psalmist calls sin, that is committed in contempt of God's law, death: so as that we should give the name of death to the sting of death, because it procures death. For the sting of death is sin. In which death this is to be unmindful of God, to despise His law and commandments: so that by hell the Psalmist would mean, that blindness of soul, which overtakes and enwraps the sinner, that is, the dying. As they did not think good, the Apostle says, to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. From this death, and this hell, the soul earnestly prays that she may be kept safe, whilst she strives to turn to God, and feels her difficulties.

7. Wherefore he goes on to say, (ver. 6.) I have laboured in my groaning. And as if this availed but little, he adds, I will wash each night my couch. That is here called a couch, where the sick and weak soul rests, that is, in bodily gratification and in every worldly pleasure. Which pleasure, whoso endeavours to withdraw himself from it, washes with tears. For he sees that he already condemns carnal lusts; and yet his weakness is held by the pleasure, and willingly lies down therein, from whence none but the soul that is made whole can rise. As for what he says, each night, he would perhaps have it taken thus: that he who, ready in spirit, perceives some light of truth, and yet, through weakness of the flesh, rests sometime in the pleasure of this world, is compelled to suffer as it were days and nights in an alternation of feeling: as when he says, With the mind I serve the law of God, he feels as it were day; again when he says, but with the flesh the law of sin, he declines into night: until all night passeth away, and that one day comes, of which it is said, In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see. For then he will stand, but now he lies down, when he is on his couch; which he will wash each night, that with so great abundance of tears he may obtain the most assured remedy from the mercy of God. I will drench my bed with tears. It is a repetition. For when he says, with tears, he shews with what meaning he said above, I will wash. For we take bed here to be the same as couch above. Although, I will drench, is something more than, I will wash: since any thing may be washed superficially, but drenching penetrates to the more inward parts; which here signifies weeping to the very bottom of the heart. Now the variety of tenses which he uses; the past, when he said, I have laboured in my groaning; and the future, when he said, I will wash each night my couch; the future again, I will drench my bed with tears; this shews what every man ought to say to himself, when he labours in groaning to no purpose. As if he should say, It hath not profited when I have done this, therefore I will do the other.

8. Ver. 7. Mine eye is disordered by anger: is it by his own, or God's anger, in which he maketh petition that he might not be reprov'd, or chasten'd? But if anger in that place intimate the day of judgment, how can it be understood now? Is it a beginning of it, that men here suffer pains and torments, and above all the loss of the understanding of the truth; as I have already quoted that which is said, God gave them over to a reprobate mind?

For such is the blindness of the mind. Whosoever is given over thereunto, is shut out from the interior light of God: but not wholly as yet, whilst he is in this life. For there is outer darkness, which is understood to belong rather to the day of judgment; that he should rather be wholly without God, whosoever whilst there is time refuses correction. Now to be wholly without God, what else is it, but to be in extreme blindness? If indeed God dwell in inaccessible light, whereinto they enter, to whom it is said, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. It is then the beginning of this anger, which in this life every sinner suffers. In fear therefore of the day of judgment, he is in trial and grief; lest he be brought to that, the disastrous commencement of which he experiences now. And therefore he did not say, mine eye is extinguished, but, mine eye is disordered by anger. But if he mean that his eye is disordered by his own anger, there is no wonder either in this. For hence perhaps it is said, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; because the mind, which, from her own disorder, is not permitted to see God, supposes that the inner sun, that is, the wisdom of God, suffers as it were a setting in her.

9. I have grown old in all mine enemies. He had only spoken of anger, (if it were yet of his own anger that he spoke:) but thinking on his other vices, he found that he was entrenched by them all. Which vices, as they belong to the old life and the old man, which we must put off, that we may put on the new man, it is well said, I have grown old. But in all mine enemies, he means, either amidst these vices, or amidst men who will not be converted to God. For these, even if they know them not, even if they bear with them, even if they use the same tables and houses and cities, with no strife arising between them, and in frequent converse together with seeming concord: notwithstanding, by the contrariety of their aims, they are enemies to those who turn unto God. For seeing that the one love and desire this world, the others wish to be freed from this world, who sees not that the first are enemies to the last? For if they can, they draw the others into punishment with them. And it is a great grace, to be conversant daily with their words, and not to depart from the way of God's commandments. For often the mind which is striving to go on to God-ward, being rudely handled in the very road, is alarmed; and generally fulfils not its good intent, lest it should offend those with whom it lives, who love and follow after other perishable

and transient goods. From such every one that is whole is separated, not in space, but in soul. For the body is contained in space, but the soul's space is her affection.

10. Wherefore after the labour, and groaning, and very frequent showers of tears, since that cannot be ineffectual, which is asked so earnestly of Him, Who is the Fountain of all mercies, and it is most truly said, the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: after difficulties so great, the pious soul, by which we may also understand the Church, intimating that she has been heard, see what she adds: (ver. 8.) Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping. It is either spoken prophetically, since they will depart, that is, the ungodly will be separated from the righteous, when the day of judgment arrives, or, for this time present. For although both are equally found in the same assemblies, yet on the open floor the wheat is already separated from the chaff, though it be hid among the chaff. They can therefore be associated together, but cannot be carried away by the wind together.

11. For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping; (ver. 9.) The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord hath received my prayer. The frequent repetition of the same sentiments shews not, so to say, the necessities of the narrator, but the warm feeling of his joy. For they that rejoice are wont so to speak, as that it is not enough for them to declare once for all the object of their joy. This is the fruit of that groaning in which there is labour, and those tears with which the couch is washed, and bed drenched: for, he that sows in tears, shall reap in joy: and, blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

12. Ver. 10. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and vexed. He said above, depart from me all ye: which can take place, as it has been explained, even in this life: but as to what he says, let them be ashamed and vexed, I do not see how it can happen, save on that day when the rewards of the righteous and the punishments of the sinners shall be made manifest. For at present so far are the ungodly from being ashamed, that they do not cease to insult us. And for the most part their mockings are of such avail, that they make the weak to be ashamed of the name of Christ. Hence it is said, Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My

Father. But now whosoever would fulfil those sublime commands, to disperse, to give to the poor, that his righteousness may endure for ever; and selling all his earthly goods, and spending them on the needy, would follow Christ, saying, We brought nothing into this world, and truly we can carry nothing out; having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; incurs the profane raillery of those men, and by those who will not be made whole, is called mad; and often to avoid being so called by desperate men, he fears to do, and puts off that, which the most faithful and powerful of all physicians hath ordered. It is not then at present that these can be ashamed, by whom we have to wish that we be not made ashamed, and so be either called back from our proposed journey, or hindered, or delayed. But the time will come, when they shall be ashamed, saying as is written, These are they whom we had sometimes in derision, and a parable of reproach: we fools counted their life madness, and their end to be without honour: how are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints? Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, nor the sun risen upon us: we have been filled with the way of wickedness and destruction, and have walked through rugged deserts, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us, or what hath the vaunting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow.

13. But as to what he says, Let them be turned and confounded. Who would not judge it to be a most righteous punishment, that they should have a turning unto confusion, who would not have one unto salvation? After this he added, exceeding quickly. For when the day of judgment shall have begun to be no longer looked for, when they shall have said, Peace, then shall sudden destruction come upon them. Now whensoever it come, that comes very quickly, of whose coming we give up all expectation; and nothing makes the length of this life be felt but the hope of living. For nothing seems more quick, than all that has already passed in it. When then the day of judgment shall come, then will sinners feel how that all the life which passeth away is not long. Nor will that any way possibly seem to them to have come tardily, which shall have come without their desiring, or rather without their believing. Although it can too be taken in this place thus, that inasmuch as God has heard, so to say, her groans, and her long

and frequent tears, she may be understood to be freed from her sins, and to have tamed every disordered impulse of carnal affection: as she saith, Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: and when she has had this happy issue, it is no marvel if she be already so perfect, as to pray for her enemies. The words then, Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and vexed, may have this meaning; that they should repent of their sins, which cannot be effected without confusion and vexation. There is then nothing to hinder us from taking what follows too in this sense, let them be turned and ashamed, that is, let them be turned to God, and be ashamed that they sometime gloried in the former darkness of their sins; as the Apostle says, For what glory had ye sometime in those things, of which ye are now ashamed? But as to what he added, exceeding quickly, it must be referred either to the warm affection of her wish, or to the power of Christ; Who converteth to the faith of the Gospel in such quick time the nations, which in their idols' cause did persecute the Church.

PSALM 7

Exposition

A Psalm to David himself, which he sung to the Lord, for the words of Chusi, son of Jemini.

1. Now the story, which gave occasion to this prophecy, may be easily recognised in the second book of Kings. For there Chusi, the friend of king David, went over to the side of Abessalon, his son, who was carrying on war against his father, for the purpose of discovering and reporting the designs which he was taking against his father, at the instigation of Achitophel, who had revolted from David's friendship, and was instructing by his counsel, to the best of his power, the son against the father. But since it is not the story itself which is to be the subject of consideration in this Psalm, from which the prophet hath taken a veil of mysteries, if we have passed over to Christ, let the veil be taken away. And first let us inquire into the signification of the very names, what it means. For there have not been wanting interpreters, who investigating these same words, not carually according to the letter, but spiritually, declare to us, that Chusi should be interpreted silence; and Gemini, righthanded; Achitophel, brother's ruin. Among which interpretations, Judas, that traitor, again meets us, that Abessalon should bear his image, according to that interpretation of it as a father's peace; in that his father was full of thoughts of peace toward him: although he in his guile had war in his heart, as was treated of in the third Psalm. Now as we find in the Gospels that the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ are called sons, so in the same Gospels we find they are called brethren also. For the Lord on the resurrection saith, Go and say to My brethren. And the Apostle calls Him, the first begotten among many brethren. The ruin then of that disciple, who betrayed Him, is rightly understood to be a brother's ruin, which we said is the interpretation of Achitophel. Now as to Chusi, from the interpretation of silence, it is rightly

understood that our Lord contended against that guile in silence, that is, in that most deep secret, whereby blindness happened in part to Israel, when they were persecuting the Lord, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so all Israel might be saved. When the Apostle came to this profound secret and deep silence, he exclaimed, as if struck with a kind of awe of its very depth, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Thus that great silence he does not so much discover by explanation, as he sets forth its greatness in admiration. In this silence the Lord hiding the sacrament of His adorable passion, turns the brother's voluntary ruin, that is, His betrayer's impious wickedness, into the order of His mercy and providence: that what he with perverse mind wrought for one Man's destruction, He might by providential overruling dispose for all men's salvation. The perfect soul then, which is already worthy to know the secret of God, sings a Psalm unto the Lord, she sings for the words of Chusi, because she has attained to know the words of that silence: for among unbelievers and persecutors there is that silence and secret. But among His own, to whom it is said, Now I call you no more servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you: among His friends, I say, there is not the silence, but the words of the silence, that is, the meaning of that silence set forth and manifested. Which silence, that is, Chusi, is called the son of Gemini, that is, righthanded. For what was done for the Saints was not to be hidden from them. And yet He saith, Let not the left hand know what the right hand doeth. The perfect soul then, to which that secret has been made known, sings in prophecy for the words of Chusi, that is, for the knowledge of that same secret. Which secret God at her right hand, that is, favourable and propitious unto her, has wrought. Wherefore this silence is called the son of the right hand, which is, Chusi, the son of Gemini.

2. Ver. 1. O Lord my God, in Thee have I hoped: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me. As one to whom, already perfected, all the war and enmity of vice being overcome, there remaineth no enemy but the envious devil, he says, Save me from all them that persecute me, and

deliver me: (ver. 2.) lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion. The Apostle says, Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Therefore when the Psalmist said in the plural number, Save me from all them that persecute me: he afterwards introduced the singular, saying, lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion. For he does not say, lest at any time they tear: he knew what enemy and violent adversary of the perfect soul remained. Whilst there be none to redeem, nor to save: that is, lest he tear me, whilst Thou redeemest not, nor savest. For, if God redeem not, nor save, he tears.

3. And that it might be clear that the already perfect soul, which is to be on her guard against the most insidious snares of the devil only, says this, see what follows, (ver. 3.) O Lord my God, if I have done this. What is it that he calls this? Since he does not mention the sin by name, are we to understand sin generally? If this sense displease us, we may take that to be meant which follows: as if we had asked, what is this that you say, this? He answers, If there be iniquity in my hands. Now then it is clear that it is said of all sin, (ver. 4.) If I have repaid them that recompense me evil. Which none can say with truth, but the perfect. For so the Lord says, Be ye perfect, as your Father Which is in heaven; Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and raineth on the just and the unjust. He then who repayeth not them that recompense evil, is perfect. When therefore the perfect soul prays for the words of Chusi, the son of Jemini, that is, for the knowledge of that secret and silence, which the Lord, favourable to us and merciful, wrought for our salvation, so as to endure, and with all patience bear, the guiles of this betrayer: as if He should say to this perfect soul, explaining the design of this secret, For thee ungodly and a sinner, that thine iniquities might be washed away by My blood-shedding, in great silence and great patience I bore with My betrayer; wilt not thou imitate me, that thou too mayest not repay evil for evil? Considering then, and understanding what the Lord has done for him, and by His example going on to perfection, the Psalmist says, If I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, if I have not done what Thou hast taught me by Thy example: may I therefore fall by mine enemies empty. And he says well, not, If I have repaid them that do me evil; but, who recompense. For whoso recompenseth, had received somewhat already. Now it is an instance of

greater patience, not even to repay him evil, who after receiving benefits returns evil for good, than if without receiving any previous benefit he had had a mind to injure. If therefore he says, I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, If I have not imitated Thee in that silence, that is, in Thy patience, which Thou hast wrought for me, may I fall by mine enemies empty. For he is an empty boaster, who, being himself a man, desires to avenge himself on a man; and whilst he openly seeks to overcome a man, is secretly himself overcome by the devil, rendered empty by vain and proud joy, because he could not, as it were, be conquered. The Psalmist knows then where a greater victory may be obtained, and where the Father which seeth in secret will reward. Lest then he repay them that recompense evil, he overcomes his anger rather than another man, being instructed too by those writings, wherein it is written, better is he that overcometh his anger, than he that taketh a city. If I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. He seems to swear by way of execration, which is the heaviest kind of oath, as when one says, If I have done so and so, may I suffer so and so. But swearing in a swearer's mouth is one thing, in a prophet's meaning another. For here he mentions what will really befall men, who repay them that recompense evil; not what, as by an oath, he would imprecate on himself or any other.

4. Ver. 5. Let the enemy therefore persecute my soul and take it. By again naming the enemy in the singular number, he more and more clearly points out him, whom he spoke of above as a lion. For he persecutes the soul, and if he has deceived it, will take it. For the limit of men's rage is the destruction of the body; but the soul, after this visible death, they cannot keep in their power: whereas whatever souls the devil shall have taken by his persecutions, he will keep. And let him tread my life upon the earth: that is, by treading let him make my life earth, that is to say, his food. For he is not only called a lion, but a serpent too, to whom it was said, Earth shalt thou eat. And to the sinner was it said, Earth thou art, and into earth shalt thou go. And let him bring down my glory to the dust. This is that dust, which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth, to wit, vain and silly boasting of the proud, puffed up, not of solid weight, as a cloud of dust carried away by the wind. Justly then has he here spoken of the glory, which he would not have brought down to dust. For he would have it

solidly established in conscience before God, where there is no boasting. He that glorieth, saith the Apostle, let him glory in the Lord. This solidity is brought down to the dust, if one through pride despising the secrecy of conscience, where God only proves a man, desires to glory before men. Hence comes what the Psalmist elsewhere says, God shall bruise the bones of them that please men. Now he that has well learnt or experienced the steps in overcoming vices, knows that this vice of empty glory is either alone, or more than all, to be shunned by the perfect. For that by which the soul first fell, she overcomes the last. For the beginning of all sin is pride: and again, the beginning of man's pride is to depart from God.

5. Ver. 6. Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger. Why yet does he, who we say is perfect, incite God to anger? Must we not see, whether he rather be not perfect, who, when he was being stoned, said, O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge? Or does the Psalmist pray thus not against men, but against the devil and his angels, whose possession sinners and the ungodly are? He then does not pray against him in wrath, but in mercy, whosoever prays that that possession may be taken from him by that Lord Who justifieth the ungodly. For when the ungodly is justified, from ungodly he is made just, and from being the possession of the devil he passes into the temple of God. And since it is a punishment, that a possession, in which one longs to have rule, should be taken away from him: this punishment, that he should cease to possess those whom he now possesses, the Psalmist calls the anger of God against the devil. Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger. Arise, (he has used it as "appear,") in words, that is, human and obscure; as though God sleeps, when He is unrecognised and hidden in His secret workings. Be exalted in the borders of mine enemies. He means by borders the possession itself, in which he wishes that God should be exalted, that is, be honoured and glorified, rather than the devil, while the ungodly are justified and praise God. And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given: that is, since Thou hast enjoined humility, appear in humility; and first fulfil what Thou hast enjoined; that men by Thy example overcoming pride may not be possessed of the devil, who against Thy commandments advised to pride, saying, Eat, and your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods.

6. And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee. This may be understood two ways. For the congregation of the people can be taken, either of them that believe, or of them that persecute, both of which took place in the same humiliation of our Lord: in contempt of which the multitude of them that persecute surrounded Him; concerning which it is said, Why have the heathen raged, and the people meditated vain things? But of them that believe through His humiliation the multitude so surrounded Him, that it could be said with the greatest truth, blindness in part is happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in: and again, Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the boundaries of the earth for Thy possession. And for their sakes return Thou on high: that is, for the sake of this congregation return Thou on high: which He is understood to have done by His resurrection and ascension into heaven. For being thus glorified He gave the Holy Ghost, Which before His exaltation could not be given, as it is written in the Gospel, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Having then returned on high for the sake of the congregation of the people, He sent the Holy Ghost: by Whom the preachers of the Gospel being filled, filled the whole world with Churches.

7. It can be taken also in this sense: Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger, and be exalted in the borders of mine enemies: that is, arise in Thine anger, and let not mine enemies understand Thee; so that to be exalted, should be this, become high, that Thou mayest not be understood; which has reference to the silence spoken of above. For it is of this exaltation thus said in another Psalm, And He ascended upon Cherubim, and flew: and, He made darkness His secret place. In which exaltation, or concealment, when for their sins' desert they shall not understand Thee, who shall crucify Thee, the congregation of believers shall surround Thee. For in His very humiliation He was exalted, that is, was not understood. So that, And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given: may have reference to this, that is, when Thou shewest Thyself, be high or deep that mine enemies may not understand Thee. Now sinners are the enemies of the just man, and the ungodly of the godly man. And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee: that is, by this very circumstance, that those who crucify Thee understand Thee not, the Gentiles shall believe on Thee, and so shall

the congregation of the people surround Thee. But what follows, if this be the true meaning, has in it more pain, that it begins already to be perceived, than joy that it is understood. For it follows, and for their sakes return Thou on high, that is, and for the sake of this congregation of the human race, wherewith the Churches are crowded, return Thou on high, that is, again cease to be understood. What then is, and for their sakes, but that this congregation too will offend Thee, so that Thou mayest most truly foretell and say, Thinkest Thou when the Son of Man shall come, He will find faith on the earth? Again, of the false prophets, who are understood to be heretics, He says, Because of their iniquity the love of many shall wax cold. Since then even in the Churches, that is, in that congregation of peoples and nations, where the Christian name has most widely spread, there shall be so great abundance of sinners, which is already, in great measure, perceived; is not that famine of the word here predicted, which has been threatened by another prophet also? Is it not too for this congregation's sake, who, by their sins, are estranging from themselves the light of truth, that God returns on high, that is, so that faith, pure and cleansed from the corruption of all perverse opinions, is held and received, either not at all, or by the very few of whom it was said, Blessed is he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved? Not without cause then is it said, and for the sake of this congregation return Thou on high: that is, again withdraw into the depth of Thy secrecy, even for the sake of this congregation of the peoples, that hath Thy name, and doeth not Thy deeds.

8. But whether the former exposition of this place, or this last be the more suitable, without prejudice to any one better, or equal, or as good, it follows very consistently, the Lord judgeth the people. For whether He returned on high, when, after the resurrection, He ascended into heaven, well does it follow, The Lord judgeth the people: for that He will come from thence to judge the quick and the dead. Or whether He return on high, when the understanding of the truth leaves sinful Christians, for that of His coming it has been said, Thinkest thou the Son of Man on His coming will find faith on the earth? The Lord then judgeth the people. What Lord, but Jesus Christ? For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Wherefore this soul which prayeth perfectly, see how she fears not the day of judgment, and with a truly secure longing says in her

prayer, Thy kingdom come: judge me, she says, O Lord, according to my righteousness. In the former Psalm a weak one was entreating, imploring rather the mercy of God, than mentioning any desert of his own: since the Son of God came to call sinners to repentance. Therefore he had there said, Save me, O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; that is, not for my desert's sake. But now, since being called he hath held and kept the commandments which he received, he is bold to say, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me. This is true harmlessness, which harms not even an enemy. Accordingly, well does he require to be judged according to his harmlessness, who could say with truth, If I have repaid them that recompense me evil. As for what he added, that is upon me, it can refer not only to harmlessness, but can be understood also with reference to righteousness; that the sense should be this, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, which righteousness and harmlessness is upon me. By which addition he shews that this very thing, that the soul is righteous and harmless, she has not by herself, but by God Who giveth brightness and light. For of this he says in another Psalm, Thou, O Lord, wilt light my candle. And of John it is said, that he was not the light, but bore witness of the light. He was a burning and shining candle. That light then, whence souls, as candles, are kindled, shines forth not with borrowed, but with original, brightness, which light is truth itself. It is then so said, According to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me, as if a burning and shining candle should say, Judge me according to the flame which is upon me, that is, not that wherewith I am myself, but that whereby I shine enkindled of thee.

9. Ver. 9. But let the wickedness of sinners be consummated. He says, be consummated, be completed, according to that in the Apocalypse, Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy be filthy still. For the wickedness of those men appears consummate, who crucified the Son of God; but greater is theirs who will not live uprightly, and hate the precepts of truth, for whom the Son of God was crucified. Let the wickedness of sinners, then he says, be consummated, that is, arrive at the height of wickedness, that just judgment may be able to come at once. But since it is not only said, Let the filthy be filthy still; but it is said also, Let the

righteous become more righteous; he joins on the words, And Thou shalt direct the righteous, O God, Who searcheth the hearts and reins. How then can the righteous be directed but in secret? when even by means of those things which, in the commencement of the Christian ages, when as yet the saints were oppressed by the persecution of the men of this world, appeared marvellous to men, now that the Christian name has begun to be in such high dignity, hypocrisy, that is pretence, has increased; of those, I mean, who by the Christian profession had rather please men than God. How then is the righteous man directed in so great confusion of pretence, save whilst God searcheth the hearts and reins; seeing all men's thoughts, which are meant by the word heart; and their delights, which are understood by the word reins? For the delight in things temporal and earthly is rightly ascribed to the reins; for that it is both the lower part of man, and that region where the pleasure of carnal generation dwells, through which man's nature is transferred into this life of care, and deceiving joy, by the succession of the race. God then, searching our heart, and perceiving that it is there where our treasure is, that is, in heaven; searching also the reins, and perceiving that we do not assent to flesh and blood, but delight ourselves in the Lord, directs the righteous man in his inward conscience before Him, where no man seeth, but He alone Who perceiveth what each man thinketh, and what delighteth each. For delight is the end of care; because to this end does each man strive by care and thought, that he may attain to his delight. He therefore seeth our cares, Who searcheth the heart. He seeth too the ends of cares, that is delights, Who narrowly searcheth the reins; that when He shall find that our cares incline neither to the lust of the flesh, nor to the lust of the eyes, nor to the pride of life, all which pass away as a shadow, but that they are raised upward to the joys of things eternal, which are spoilt by no change, He may direct the righteous, even He, the God Who searcheth the hearts and reins. For our works, which we do in deeds and words, may be known unto men; but with what mind they are done, and to what end we would attain by means of them, He alone knoweth, the God Who searcheth the hearts and reins.

10. Ver. 10. My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. The offices of medicine are twofold, one the curing infirmity, the other the preserving health. According to the first it was said

in the preceding Psalm, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; according to the second it is said in this Psalm, If there be iniquity in my hands, if I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. For there the weak prays that he may be delivered, here one already whole that he may not change for the worse. According to the one it is there said, Make me whole for Thy mercy's sake; according to this other it is here said, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness. For there he asks for a remedy to escape from disease; but here for protection from falling into disease. According to the former it is said, Make me whole, O Lord, according to Thy mercy: according to the latter it is said, My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. Both the one and the other maketh men whole; but the former removes them from sickness into health, the latter preserves them in this health. Therefore there the help is merciful, because the sinner hath no desert, who as yet longeth to be justified, believing on Him Who justifieth the ungodly; but here the help is righteous, because it is given to one already righteous. Let the sinner then who said, I am weak, say in the first place, Make me whole, O Lord, for thy mercy's sake; and here let the righteous man, who said, If I have repaid them that recompense me evil, say, My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. For if he sets forth the medicine, by which we may be healed when weak, how much more that, by which we may be kept in health. For if while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, how much more being now justified shall we be kept whole from wrath through Him.

11. My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. God, Who searcheth the hearts and reins, directeth the righteous; but with righteous help maketh He whole the upright in heart. He doth not as He searcheth the hearts and reins, so make whole the upright in heart and reins; for the thoughts are both bad in a depraved heart, and good in an upright heart; but delights which are not good belong to the reins, for they are more low and earthly; but those that are good not to the reins, but to the heart itself. Wherefore men cannot be so called upright in reins, as they are called upright in heart, since where the thought is, there at once the delight is too; which cannot be, unless when things divine and eternal are thought of. Thou hast given, he says, joy in my heart, when he had said, The light of

Thy countenance has been stamped on us, O Lord. For although the phantoms of things temporal, which the mind falsely pictures to itself, when tossed by vain and mortal hope, to vain imaginations oftentimes bring a delirious and maddened joy; yet this delight must be attributed not to the heart, but to the reins; for all these imaginations have been drawn from lower, that is, earthly and carnal things. Hence it comes, that God, Who searcheth the hearts and reins, and perceiveth in the heart upright thoughts, in the reins no delights, affordeth righteous help to the upright in heart, where heavenly delights are coupled with clean thoughts. And therefore when in another Psalm he had said, Moreover even to-night my reins have chided me; he went on to say as touching help, I foresaw the Lord alway in my sight, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Where he shews that he suffered suggestions only from the reins, not delights as well; for had he suffered these, then he would of course be moved. But he said, The Lord is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; and then he adds, Wherefore was my heart delighted; that the reins should have been able to chide, not delight him. The delight accordingly was produced not in the reins, but there, where against the chiding of the reins God was foreseen to be on the right hand, that is, in the heart.

12. Ver. 11. God the righteous judge, strong (in endurance) and long-suffering. What God is judge, but the Lord, Who judgeth the people? He is righteous; Who shall render to every man according to his works. He is strong; (in endurance) Who, being most powerful, for our salvation bore even with ungodly persecutors. He is long-suffering; Who did not immediately, after His resurrection, hurry away to punishment, even those that persecuted Him, but bore with them, that they might at length turn from that ungodliness to salvation: and still He beareth with them, reserving the last penalty for the last judgment, and up to this present time inviting sinners to repentance. Not bringing in anger every day. Perhaps bringing in anger is a more significant expression than, being angry; (and so we find it in the Greek copies;) that the anger, whereby He punisheth, should not be in Him but in the minds of those ministers who obey the commandments of truth; through whom orders are given even to the lower ministries, who are called angels of wrath, to punish sin: whom even now the punishment of men delights not for justice sake, in which they have no pleasure, but for

malice sake. God then doth not bring in anger every day, that is, He doth not collect His ministers for vengeance every day. For now the patience of God inviteth to repentance: but in the last time, when men through their hardness and impenitent heart shall have treasured up for themselves anger in the day of anger, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, then He will brandish His sword.

13. Ver. 12. Unless ye be converted, He says, He will brandish His sword. The Lord Man Himself may be taken to be God's double-edged sword, that is, His spear, which at His first coming He will not brandish, but hideth as it were in the sheath of humiliation: but He will brandish it, when at the second coming to judge the quick and dead, in the manifest splendour of His glory, He shall flash light on His righteous ones, and terror on the ungodly. For in other copies, instead of, He shall brandish His sword, it has been written, He shall make bright His spear: by which word I think the last coming of the Lord's glory most appropriately signified: seeing that is understood of His person, which another Psalm has, Deliver, O Lord, my soul from the ungodly, Thy spear from the enemies of Thine hand. He hath bent His bow, and made it ready. The tenses of the words must not be altogether overlooked, how he has spoken of the sword in the future, He will brandish; of the bow in the past, He hath bent: and these words of the past tense follow after.

14. Ver. 13. And in it He hath prepared the instruments of death: He hath wrought His arrows for the burning. That bow then I would readily take to be the Holy Scripture, in which by the strength of the New Testament, as by a sort of string, the hardness of the Old has been bent and subdued. From thence the Apostles are sent forth like arrows, or divine preachings are shot. Which arrows He has wrought for the burning, arrows, that is, whereby being stricken they might be inflamed with heavenly love. For by what other arrows was she stricken, who saith, Bring me into the house of wine, place me among perfumes, crowd me among honey, for I have been wounded with love? By what other arrows is he kindled, who, desirous of returning to God, and coming back from wandering, asketh for help against crafty tongues, and to whom it is said, What shall be given thee, or what added to thee against the crafty tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with

devastating coals: that is, coals, whereby, when thou art stricken and set on fire, thou mayest burn with so great love of the kingdom of heaven, as to despise the tongues of all that resist thee, and would recall thee from thy purpose, and to deride their persecutions, saying, Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, he says, that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor things present, nor things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus for the burning hath He wrought His arrows. For in the Greek copies it is found thus, He hath wrought His arrows for the burning. But most of the Latin copies have burning arrows. But whether the arrows themselves burn, or make others burn, which of course they cannot do unless they burn themselves, the sense is complete.

15. But since he has said that the Lord has prepared not arrows only, but instruments of death too, in the bow, it may be asked, what are “instruments of death?” Are they, peradventure, heretics? For they too, out of the same bow, that is, out of the same Scriptures, light upon souls not to be inflamed with love, but destroyed with poison: which does not happen but after their deserts: wherefore even this dispensation is to be assigned to the Divine Providence, not that it makes men sinners, but that it orders them after they have sinned. For through sin reaching them with an ill purpose, they are forced to understand them ill, that this should be itself the punishment of sin: by whose death, nevertheless, the sons of the Catholic Church are, as it were by certain thorns, so to say, aroused from slumber, and make progress toward the understanding of the holy Scriptures. For there must be also heresies, that they which are approved, he says, may be made manifest among you: that is, among men, seeing they are manifest to God. Or has He haply ordained the same arrows to be at once instruments of death for the destruction of unbelievers, and wrought them burning, or for the burning, for the exercising of the faithful? For that is not false that the Apostle says, To the one we are the savour of life unto life, to the other the savour of death unto death; and who is sufficient for these things? It is no wonder then if the same Apostles be both instruments of death in those, from whom

they suffered persecution, and fiery arrows to inflame the hearts of believers.

16. Now after this dispensation righteous judgment will come: of which the Psalmist so speaks, as that we may understand that each man's punishment is wrought out of his own sin, and his iniquity turned into vengeance: that we may not suppose that that tranquillity and ineffable light of God brings forth from Itself the means of punishing sin; but that it so ordereth sins, that what have been delights to man in sinning, should be instruments to the Lord avenging. Behold, he says, he hath travailed with injustice. Now what had he conceived, that he should travail with injustice? He hath conceived, he says, toil. Hence then comes that, In toil shalt thou eat thy bread. Hence too that, Come unto Me all ye that toil and are heavy laden; for My yoke is easy, and My burden light. For toil will never cease, except one love that which cannot be taken away against his will. For when those things are loved which we can lose against our will, we must needs toil for them most miserably; and to obtain them, amid the straightnesses of earthly cares, whilst each desires to snatch them for himself, and to be beforehand with another, or to wrest it from him, must scheme injustice. Duly then, and quite in order, hath he travailed with injustice, who hath conceived toil. Now he bringeth forth what, save that with which he hath travailed, although he has not travailed with that which he conceived? For that is not born, which is not conceived; but seed is conceived, that which is formed from the seed is born. Toil is then the seed of iniquity, but sin the conception of toil, that is, that first sin, to depart from God. He then hath travailed with injustice, who hath conceived toil. And he hath brought forth iniquity. Iniquity is the same as injustice: he hath brought forth then that, with which he travailed. What follows next?

17. Ver. 15. He hath opened a ditch, and digged it. To open a ditch, is, in earthly matters, that is, as it were in the earth, to prepare deceit, that another fall therein, whom the unrighteous man wishes to deceive. Now this ditch is opened, when consent is given to the evil suggestion of earthly lusts: but it is digged, when after consent we press on to actual work of deceit. But how can it be, that iniquity should rather hurt the righteous man against whom it proceeds, than the unrighteous heart whence it proceeds? Accordingly, the

stealer of money, for instance, while he desires to inflict painful harm upon another, is himself maimed by the wound of avarice. Now who, even out of his right mind, sees not how great is the difference between these men, when one suffers the loss of money, the other of innocence? He will fall then into the pit which he hath made. As it is said in another Psalm, The Lord is known in executing judgments; the sinner is caught in the works of his own hands.

18. Ver. 16. His toil shall be turned on his head, and his iniquity shall descend on his pate. For he had no mind to escape sin: but was brought under sin as a slave, so to say, as the Lord saith, Whosoever sinneth is a slave. His iniquity then will be upon him, when he is subject to his iniquity; for he could not say to the Lord, what the innocent and upright say, My glory, and the lifter up of my head. He then will be in such wise below, as that his iniquity may be above, and descend on him; for that it weigheth him down and burdens him, and suffers him not to fly back to the rest of the saints. This occurs, when in an ill regulated man reason is a slave, and lust hath dominion.

19. Ver. 17. I will confess to the Lord according to His justice. This is not the sinner's confession: for he says this, who said above most truly, If there be iniquity in my hands: but it is a confession of God's justice, in which we speak thus, Verily, O Lord, Thou art just, in that Thou both so protectest the just, that Thou enlightenest them by Thyself; and so orderest sinners, that they be punished not by Thine, but by their own malice. This confession so praises the Lord, that the blasphemies of the ungodly can avail nothing, who, willing to excuse their evil deeds, are unwilling to attribute to their own fault that they sin, that is, are unwilling to attribute their fault to their fault. Accordingly they find either fortune or fate to accuse, or the devil, to whom He Who made us hath willed that it should be in our power to refuse consent: or they bring in another nature, which is not of God: wretched waverers, and erring, rather than confessing to God, that He should pardon them. For it is not fit that any be pardoned, except he say, I have sinned. He, then, that sees the deserts of souls so ordered by God, that while each has his own given him, the fair beauty of the universe is in no part violated, in all things praises God: and this is not the confession of sinners, but of the

righteous. For it is not the sinner's confession when the Lord says, I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them to babes. Likewise in Ecclesiasticus it is said, Confess to the Lord in all His works: and in confession ye shall say this, All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Which can be seen in this Psalm, if any one with a pious mind, by the Lord's help, distinguish between the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the sinners, how that in these two the whole creation, which God made and rules, is adorned with a beauty wondrous and known to few. Thus then he says, I will confess to the Lord according to His justice, as one who saw that darkness was not made by God, but ordered nevertheless. For God said, Let light be made, and light was made. He did not say, Let darkness be made, and darkness was made: and yet He ordered it. And therefore it is said, God divided between the light, and the darkness: and God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. This is the distinction, He made the one and ordered it: but the other He made not, but yet He ordered this too. But now that sins are signified by darkness, so is it seen in the Prophet, who says, And thy darkness shall be as the noon day: and in the Apostle, who says, He that hateth his brother is in darkness: and above all that text, Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Not that there is any nature of darkness. For all nature, in so far as it is nature, is compelled to be. Now being belongs to light: not-being to darkness. He then that leaves Him, by Whom he was made, and inclines to that whence he was made, that is, to nothing, is in this sin endarkened: and yet he does not utterly perish, but he is ordered among the lowest things. Therefore after the Psalmist said, I will confess unto the Lord: that we might not understand it of confession of sins, he adds lastly, And I will sing to the name of the Lord most high. Now singing has relation to joy, but repentance of sins to sadness.

20. This Psalm can also be taken in the person of the Lord Man: if only that which is there spoken in humiliation, be referred to our weakness, which He bore.

PSALM 8

To the end, for the wine-presses, a Psalm of David himself.

1. He seems to say nothing of wine-presses in the text of the Psalm, of which this is the title. By which it appears, that one and the same thing is often signified in Scripture by many and various similitudes. We may then take wine-presses to be Churches, on the same principle by which we understand also by a threshing-floor the Church. For whether in the threshing-floor, or in the wine-press, there is nothing else done, but the clearing the produce of its covering; which is necessary, both for its first growth, and increase, and arrival at the maturity either of the harvest or the vintage. Of these coverings or supporters then; that is, of chaff, on the threshing-floor, the corn; and of husks, in the presses, the wine is stripped: as in the Churches, from the multitude of worldly men, which is collected together with the good, for whose birth and adaptating to the divine word that multitude was necessary, this is effected, that by spiritual love they be separated through the operation of God's ministers. For now so it is that the good are, for a time, separated from the bad, not in space, but in affection: although they have converse together in the Churches, as far as respects bodily presence. But another time will come, the corn will be stored up apart in the granaries, and the wine in the cellars. The wheat, saith he, He will lay up in garners; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable. The same thing may be thus understood in another similitude: the wine He will lay up in cellars, but the husks He will cast forth to cattle: so that by the bellies of the cattle we may be allowed by way of similitude to understand the pains of hell.

2. There is another interpretation concerning the wine-presses, yet still keeping to the meaning of Churches. For even the Divine Word may be understood by the grape: for the Lord even has been called a Cluster of grapes; Which they that were sent before by the people of Israel brought

from the land of promise hanging on a staff, crucified as it were. Accordingly, when the Divine Word maketh use of, by the necessity of declaring Himself, the sound of the voice, whereby to convey Himself to the ears of the hearers; in the same sound of the voice, as it were in husks, knowledge, like the wine, is enclosed: and so this grape comes into the ears, as into the pressing machines of the wine-pressers. For there the separation is made, that the sound may reach as far as the ear; but knowledge be received in the memory of those that hear, as it were in a sort of vat; whence it passes into discipline of the conversation and habit of mind, as from the vat into the cellar: where if it do not through negligence grow sour, it will acquire soundness by age. For it grew sour among the Jews, and this sour vinegar they gave the Lord to drink. For that wine, which from the produce of the vine of the New Testament the Lord is to drink with His saints in the kingdom of His Father, must needs be most sweet and most sound.

3. “Wine-presses” are also usually taken for martyrdoms, as if when they who have confessed the name of Christ have been trodden down by the blows of persecution, their mortal remains as husks remained on earth, but their souls flowed forth into the rest of a heavenly habitation. Nor yet by this interpretation do we depart from the fruitfulness of the Churches. It is sung then, for the wine-presses, for the Church’s establishment; when our Lord after His resurrection ascended into heaven. For then He sent the Holy Ghost: by Whom the disciples being fulfilled preached with confidence the Word of God, that Churches might be collected.

4. Accordingly it is said, (ver. 1.) O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy Name in all the earth! I ask, how is His Name wonderful in all the earth? The answer is, For Thy glory has been raised above the heavens. So that the meaning is this, O Lord, Who art our Lord, how do all that inhabit the earth admire Thee! for Thy glory hath been raised from earthly humiliation above the heavens. For hence it appeared Who Thou wast that descendedst, when it was by some seen, and by the rest believed, whither it was that Thou ascendedst.

5. Ver. 2. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies. I cannot take babes and sucklings to be any other, than those to whom the Apostle says, As unto babes in Christ I

have given you milk to drink, not meat. Who were meant by those who went before the Lord praising Him, of whom the Lord Himself used this testimony, when He answered the Jews who bade Him rebuke them, Have ye not read, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise? Now with good reason He says not, Thou hast made, but, Thou hast made perfect praise. For there are in the Churches also those who now no more drink milk, but eat meat: whom the same Apostle points out, saying, We speak wisdom among them that are perfect: but not by those only are the Churches perfected; for if there were only these, little consideration would be had of the human race. But consideration is had, when they too, who are not as yet capable of the knowledge of things spiritual and eternal, are nourished by the faith of the temporal history, which for our salvation after the Patriarchs and Prophets was administered by the most excellent Power and Wisdom of God, even in the Sacrament of the assumed Manhood, in which there is salvation for every one that believeth: to the end that moved by Its authority each one may obey Its precepts, whereby being purified and rooted and grounded in love, he may be able to run with Saints, no more now a child in milk, but a young man in meat, to comprehend the breadth, the length, the height, and depth, to know also the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ.

6. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies. By enemies to this dispensation, which has been wrought through Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we ought generally to understand all who forbid belief in things unknown, and promise certain knowledge: as all heretics do, and they who in the superstition of the Gentiles are called philosophers. Not that the promise of knowledge is to be blamed; but because they deem the most healthful and necessary step of faith is to be neglected, by which we must needs ascend to something certain, which nothing but that which is eternal can be. Hence it appears that they do not possess even this knowledge, which in contempt of faith they promise; seeing that they know not so useful and necessary a step thereof. Out of the mouth, then, of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, Thou, our Lord, declaring first by the Apostle, Except ye believe, ye shall not understand; and saying by His own mouth, Blessed are they that have not seen, and shall believe. Because of the enemies: against

whom too that is said, I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them unto babes. From the wise, he saith, not the really wise, but those who deem themselves such. That Thou mayest destroy the enemy and the defender. Whom but the heretic? For he is both an enemy and a defender, who when he would assault the Christian faith, seems to defend it. Although the philosophers too of this world may be well taken as the enemies and defenders: forasmuch as the Son of God is the Power and Wisdom of God, by which every one is enlightened who is made wise by the truth: of which they profess themselves to be lovers, whence too their name of philosophers; and therefore they seem to defend it, while they are its enemies, since they cease not to recommend noxious superstitions, that the elements of this world should be worshipped and revered.

7. Ver. 3. For I shall see Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers. We read that the law was written with the finger of God, and given through Moses His holy servant: by which finger of God many understand the Holy Ghost. Wherefore if, by the fingers of God, we are right in understanding these same ministers filled with the Holy Ghost, by reason of this same Spirit Which worketh in them, since by them all holy Scripture has been completed for us; we understand consistently with this, that, in this place, the books of both Testaments are called the heavens. Now it is said too of Moses himself, by the magicians of king Pharaoh, when they were conquered by him, This is the finger of God. And what is written, The heaven shall be rolled up as a book, although it be said of this æthereal heaven, yet naturally, according to the same image, the heavens of books are named by allegory. For I shall see, he says, the heavens, the works of Thy fingers: that is, I shall discern and understand the Scriptures, which Thou, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, hast written by Thy ministers.

8. Accordingly the heavens named above also may be interpreted as the same books, where he says, For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens: so that the complete meaning should be this, For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens; for thy glory hath exceeded the declarations of all the Scriptures: out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, that they should begin by belief in the Scriptures, who

would arrive at the knowledge of Thy glory: which hath been raised above the Scriptures, in that it passeth by and transcends the announcements of all words and languages. Therefore hath God lowered the Scriptures even to the capacity of babes and sucklings, as it is sung in another Psalm, And He lowered the heaven, and came down: and this did He because of the enemies, who through pride of talkativeness, being enemies of the cross of Christ, even when they do speak some truth, still cannot profit babes and sucklings. So is the enemy and defender destroyed, who, whether he seem to defend wisdom, or even the name of Christ, still, from the step of this faith, assaults that truth, which he so readily makes promise of. Whereby too he is convicted of not possessing it; since by assaulting the step thereof, namely faith, he knows not how one should mount up thereto. Hence then is the rash and blind promiser of truth, who is the enemy and defender, destroyed, when the heavens, the works of God's fingers, are seen, that is, when the Scriptures, brought down even to the slowness of babes, are understood; and by means of the lowness of the faith of the history, which was transacted in time, they raise them, well nurtured and strengthened, unto the grand height of the understanding of things eternal, up to those things which they establish. For these heavens, that is, these books, are the works of God's fingers; for by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Saints they were completed. For they that have regarded their own glory rather than man's salvation, have spoken without the Holy Ghost, in Whom are the bowels of the mercy of God.

9. For I shall see the heavens, the works of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained. The moon and stars are ordained in the heavens; since both the Church universal, to signify which the moon is often put, and Churches in the several places particularly, which I imagine to be intimated by the name of stars, are established in the same Scriptures, which we believe to be expressed by the word heavens. But why the moon justly signifies the Church, will be more seasonably considered in another Psalm, where it is said, The sinners have bent their bow, that they may shoot in the obscure moon the upright in heart.

10. Ver. 4. What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? It may be asked, what distinction there is between

man and son of man. For if there were none, it would not be expressed thus, man, or son of man, disjunctively. For if it were written thus, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and son of man, that Thou visitest him? it might appear to be a repetition of the word man. But now when the expression is, man, or son of man, a distinction is more clearly intimated. This is certainly to be remembered, that every son of man is a man; although every man cannot be taken to be a son of man. Adam, for instance, was a man, but not a son of man. Wherefore we may from hence consider and distinguish what is the difference in this place between man and son of man; namely, that they who bear the image of the earthy man, who is not a son of man, should be signified by the name of men; but that they who bear the image of the heavenly Man, should be rather called sons of men; for the former again is called the old man, and the latter the new; but the new is born of the old, since spiritual regeneration is begun by a change of an earthy and worldly life; and therefore the latter is called son of man. Man then in this place is earthy, but son of man heavenly; and the former is far removed from God, but the latter present with God; and therefore is He mindful of the former, as in far distance from Him; but the latter He visiteth, with whom being present He enlighteneth him with His countenance. For salvation is far from sinners; and, The light of Thy countenance hath been stamped upon us, O Lord. So in another Psalm he saith, that men in conjunction with beasts are made whole together with these beasts, not by any present inward illumination, but by the multiplication of the mercy of God, whereby His goodness reacheth even to the lowest things; for the wholeness of carnal men is carnal, as of the beasts; but separating the sons of men from those whom being men he joined with cattle, he proclaims that they are made blessed, after a far more exalted method, by the enlightening of the truth itself, and by a certain inundation of the fountain of life. For he speaketh thus: Men and beasts Thou wilt make whole, O Lord, as Thy mercy hath been multiplied, O God. But the sons of men shall put their trust in the covering of Thy wings. They shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house, and of the torrent of Thy pleasures Thou shalt make them drink. For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light. Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee. Through the multiplication of mercy then He is mindful of man, as of beasts; for that multiplied mercy reacheth even to them that are

afar off; but He visiteth the son of man, over whom, placed under the covering of His wings, He extendeth mercy, and in His light giveth light, and maketh him drink of His pleasures, and inebriateth him with the richness of His house, to forget the sorrows and the wanderings of his former conversation. This son of man, that is, the new man, the repentance of the old man begets with pain and tears. He though new, is nevertheless called yet carnal, whilst he is fed with milk; I would not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, says the Apostle. And to shew that they were already regenerate, he says, As unto babes in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, not meat. And when he relapses, as often happens, to the old life, he hears in reproof that he is a man; Are ye not men, he says, and walk as men?

11. Therefore was the son of man first visited in the person of the very Lord Man, born of the Virgin Mary. Of Whom, by reason of the very weakness of the flesh, which the Wisdom of God vouchsafed to bear, and the humiliation of the Passion, it is justly said, (ver. 5.) Thou hast lowered Him a little lower than the Angels. But that glorifying is added, in which He rose and ascended up into heaven; With glory, he says, and with honour hast Thou crowned Him; (ver. 6.) and hast set Him over the works of Thine hands. Since even Angels are the works of God's hands, even over Angels we understand the Only-begotten Son to have been set; Whom we hear and believe, by the humiliation of the carnal generation and passion, to have been lowered a little lower than the Angels.

12. Thou hast put, he says, all things in subjection under His feet. When he says, all things, he excepts nothing. And that he might not be allowed to understand it otherwise, the Apostle enjoins it to be believed thus, when he says, He being excepted Which put all things under Him. And to the Hebrews he uses this very testimony from this Psalm, when he would have it to be understood that all things are in such sort put under our Lord Jesus Christ, as that nothing should be excepted. And yet he does not seem, as it were, to subjoin any great thing, when he says, (ver. 7.) All sheep and oxen, yea, moreover, the beasts of the field, birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea. For, leaving the heavenly excellencies and powers, and all the hosts of Angels, leaving even man

himself, he seems to have put under Him the beasts merely; unless by sheep and oxen we understand holy souls, either yielding the fruit of innocence, or even working that the earth may bear fruit, that is, that earthly men may be regenerated unto spiritual richness. By these holy souls then we ought to understand not those of men only, but of all Angels too, if we would gather from hence that all things are put under our Lord Jesus Christ. For there will be no creature that will not be put under Him, under Whom the preeminent spirits, that I may so speak, are put. But whence shall we prove that sheep can be interpreted even, not of men, but of the blessed spirits of the angelical creatures on high? May we from the Lord's saying that He had left ninety and nine sheep in the mountains, that is, in the higher regions, and had come down for one? For if we take the one lost sheep to be the human soul in Adam, since Eve even was made out of his side, for the spiritual handling and consideration of all which things this is not the time, it remains that, by the ninety and nine left in the mountains, spirits not human, but angelical, should be meant. For as regards the oxen, this sentence is easily despatched; since men themselves are for no other reason called oxen, but because by preaching the Gospel of the word of God they imitate Angels, as where it is said, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. How much more easily then do we take the Angels themselves, the messengers of truth, to be oxen, when Evangelists by the participation of their title are called oxen? Thou hast put under therefore, he says, all sheep and oxen, that is, all the holy spiritual creation; in which we include that of holy men, who are in the Church, in those wine-presses to wit, which are intimated under the other similitude of the moon and stars.

13. Yea moreover, saith he, the beasts of the field. The addition of moreover is by no means idle. First, because by beasts of the plain, may be understood both sheep and oxen: so that, if goats are the beasts of rocky and mountainous regions, sheep may be well taken to be the beasts of the field. Accordingly had it been written even thus, all sheep and oxen and beasts of the field; it might be reasonably asked what beasts of the plain meant, since even sheep and oxen could be taken as such. But the addition of moreover besides, obliges us, beyond question, to recognise some difference or another. But under this word, moreover, not only beasts of the field, but also (ver. 8.) birds of the air, and fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of

the sea, are to be taken in. What is then this distinction? Call to mind the “wine-presses,” holding husks and wine; and the threshing-floor, containing chaff and corn; and the nets, in which were enclosed good fish and bad; and the ark of Noah, in which were both unclean and clean animals: and you will see that the Churches for a while, now in this time, unto the last time of judgment, contain not only sheep and oxen, that is, holy laymen and holy ministers, but moreover beasts of the field, birds of the air, and birds of the sea, that walk through the paths of the sea. For the beasts of the field were very fitly understood, as men rejoicing in the pleasure of the flesh where they mount up to nothing high, nothing laborious. For the field is also the broad way, that leadeth to destruction: and in a field is Abel slain. Wherefore there is cause to fear, lest one coming down from the mountains of God’s righteousness, (for thy righteousness, he says, is as the mountains of God,) making choice of the broad and easy paths of carnal pleasure, be slain by the devil. See now too “the birds of heaven,” the proud, of whom it is said, They have set their mouth against the heaven. See how they are carried on high by the wind, who say, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is our Lord? Behold too the fish of the sea, that is, the curious; who walk through the paths of the sea, that is, search in the deep after the temporal things of this world: which, like paths in the sea, vanish and perish, as quickly as the water comes together again after it has given room, in their passage, to ships, or to whatsoever walketh or swimmeth. For he said not merely, who walk the paths of the sea; but “walk through,” he said; shewing the very determined earnestness of those who seek after vain and fleeting things. Now these three kinds of vice, namely, the pleasure of the flesh, and pride, and curiosity, include all sins. And they appear to me to be enumerated by the Apostle John, when he says, Love not the world; for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For through the eyes especially prevails curiosity. To what the rest indeed belong is clear. And that temptation of the Lord Man was threefold: by food, that is, by the lust of the flesh, where it is suggested, command these stones that they be made bread: by vain boasting, where, when stationed on a mountain, all the kingdoms of this earth are shewn Him, and promised if He would worship: by curiosity, where, from the pinnacle of the temple, He is advised to cast Himself down, for the sake of trying whether He would be borne up by Angels. And accordingly after that

the enemy could prevail with Him by none of these temptations, this is said of him, When the devil had ended all his temptation. With a reference then to the meaning of the wine-presses, not only the wine, but the husks too are put under His feet; to wit, not only sheep and oxen, that is, the holy souls of believers, either in the laity, or in the ministry; but moreover both beasts of pleasure, and birds of pride, and fish of curiosity. All which classes of sinners we see mingled now in the Churches with the good and holy. May He work then in His Churches, and separate the wine from the husks: let us give heed, that we be wine, and sheep or oxen; not husks, or beasts of the field, or birds of heaven, or fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea. Not that these names can be understood and explained in this way only, but the explanation of them must be according to the place where they are found. For elsewhere they have other meanings. And this rule must be kept to in every allegory, that what is expressed by the similitude should be considered agreeably to the meaning of the particular place: for this is the manner of the Lord's and the Apostles' teaching. Let us repeat then the last verse, which is also put at the beginning of the Psalm, and let us praise God, saying, O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is Thy name in all the earth! For fitly, after the matter of the discourse, is the return made to the heading, whither all that discourse must be referred.

PSALM 9

1. The inscription of this Psalm is, To the end for the hidden things of the Son, a Psalm of David himself. As to the hidden things of the Son there may be a question: but since he has not added whose, the very only-begotten Son of God should be understood. For where a Psalm has been inscribed of the son of David, When, he says, he fled from the face of Absalom his son; although his name even was mentioned, and therefore there could be no obscurity as to whom it was spoken of: yet it is not merely said, from the face of son Absalom; but his is added. But here both because his is not added, and much is said of the Gentiles, it cannot properly be taken of Absalom. For the war which that abandoned one waged with his father, no way relates to the Gentiles, since there the people of Israel only were divided against themselves. This Psalm is then sung for the hidden things of the only-begotten Son of God. For the Lord Himself too, when, without addition, He uses the word Son, would have Himself, the Only-begotten, to be understood; as where He says, If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed. For He said not, the Son of God; but in saying merely, Son, He gives us to understand Whose Son it is. Which form of expression nothing admits of, save His excellency of Whom we so speak, that, though we name Him not, He can be understood. For so we say, it rains, clears up, thunders, and such like expressions; and we do not add who does it all: for that the excellency of the doer spontaneously presents itself to all men's minds, and does not want words. What then are the hidden things of the Son? By which expression we must first understand that there are some things of the Son manifest, from which those are distinguished which are called hidden. Wherefore since we believe two advents of the Lord, one past, which the Jews understood not: the other future, which we both hope for; and since the one which the Jews understood not, profited the Gentiles; For the hidden things of the Son, is not unsuitably understood to be spoken of this advent, in which blindness in

part is happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in. (For notice of two judgments is conveyed to us throughout the Scriptures, if any one will give heed to them, one hidden, the other manifest. The hidden one is passing now, of which the Apostle Peter says, The time is come, that judgment should begin from the house of the Lord. The hidden judgment accordingly is the pain, by which now each man is either exercised to purification, or warned to conversion, or if he despise the calling and discipline of God, is blinded unto damnation. But the manifest judgment is that, in which the Lord, at His coming, will judge the quick and the dead, all men confessing that it is He by Whom both rewards shall be assigned to the good, and punishments to the evil. But then that confession will avail, not to the remedy of evils, but to the accumulation of damnation. Of these two judgments, the one hidden, the other manifest, the Lord seems to me to have spoken, where He says, Whoso believeth on Me hath passed from death unto life, and shall not come into judgment; into the manifest judgment, that is. For that which passes from death unto life by means of some affliction, whereby He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, is the hidden judgment. But whoso believeth not, saith He, hath been judged already: that is, by this hidden judgment hath been already prepared for that manifest one. These two judgments we read of also in Wisdom, whence it is written, Therefore unto them, as to children without the use of reason, Thou didst give a judgment to mock them; But they that have not been corrected by this judgment have felt a judgment worthy of God. Whoso then are not corrected by this hidden judgment of God, shall most worthily be punished by that manifest one.) Wherefore in this Psalm must be observed the hidden things of the Son, that is, both His advent in humility, by which He profited the Gentiles with the Jews' blindness; and the pain which is now dispensed secretly, not as yet in the damnation of sinners, but either in exercising the converted, or in admonition that they be converted, or in blinding, that they who refuse to be converted may be made ready for damnation.

2. I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. He doth not, with a whole heart, confess unto God, who doubteth of His Providence in any particular: but he who sees already the hidden things of the wisdom of God, how great is His invisible reward, who saith, We rejoice in tribulations; and how all torments, which are inflicted on the body, are either for the

exercising of those that are converted to God, or for warning that they be converted, or for just preparation of the obdurate unto their last damnation: and so now all things are referred to the governance of Divine Providence, which fools think done as it were by chance and at random, and without any Divine ordering. I will tell all Thy marvels. He tells all God's marvels, who sees them performed not only openly on the body, but invisibly indeed too in the soul, but far more sublimely and excellently. For men earthly, and led wholly by the eye, marvel more that the dead Lazarus rose again in the body, than that Paul the persecutor rose again in soul. But since the visible miracle calleth the soul to the light, but the invisible enlighteneth the soul that comes when called, he tells all God's marvels, who, by believing the visible, passes on to the understanding of the invisible.

3. I will be glad and exult in Thee. Not any more in this world, not in pleasure of bodily dalliance, not in relish of palate and tongue, not in sweetness of perfumes, not in joyousness of passing sounds, not in the variously coloured forms of figure, not in vanities of men's praise, not in wedlock and perishable offspring, not in superfluity of temporal wealth, not in this world's getting, whether it extend over place and space, or be prolonged in time's succession: but, I will be glad and exult in Thee, namely, in the hidden things of the Son, where the light of Thy countenance hath been stamped on us, O Lord: for, Thou wilt hide them, saith he, in the hiding place of Thy countenance. He then will be glad and exult in Thee, who tells all Thy marvels. And He will tell all Thy marvels, (since it is now spoken of prophetically, Who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who sent Him.

4. For now the Person of the Lord begins to appear speaking in this Psalm. For it follows, I will sing to Thy Name, O Most High, in turning mine enemy behind. His enemy then, where was he turned back? Was it when it was said to him, Get thee behind, Satan? For then he who by tempting desired to put himself before, was turned behind, by failing in deceiving Him Who was tempted, and by availing nothing against Him. For earthly men are behind: but the heavenly man is preferred before, although he came after. For the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is from heaven, heavenly. But from this stock he came by whom it was said, He

Who cometh after me is preferred before me. And the Apostle forgets those things that are behind, and reaches forth unto those things that are before. The enemy, therefore, was turned behind, after that he could not deceive the heavenly Man being tempted; and he turned himself to earthy men, where he can have dominion. Wherefore no man goeth before him, and causeth him to be behind, but he who laying aside the image of the earthy man shall have borne the image of the heavenly. But now, should we prefer understanding the words, mine enemy, generally, either for a sinner, or an heathen, it will not be unreasonable. Nor will the words, In turning mine enemy behind, be a punishment; but a benefit, yea such a benefit, as that nothing can be compared to it. For what more blessed than to lay aside pride, and to have no wish to go before Christ, as if one were whole, and needed not the physician, but to wish rather to go behind after Christ, Who, when calling a disciple to perfection, saith, Follow Me. But still, in turning my enemy behind, is more suitably understood as spoken of the devil. For in truth the devil is turned behind, even in the persecution of the righteous, and he, much more to their advantage, is a persecutor, than if he went before as a leader and a prince. We must sing then to the Name of the Most High in turning the enemy behind: since we ought to choose rather to fly from him as a persecutor, than to follow him as a leader. For we have whither we may fly and hide ourselves in the hidden things of the Son; seeing that the Lord hath been made a refuge for us.

5. They will be weakened, and perish from Thy face. Who will be weakened and perish, but the unrighteous and ungodly? They will be weakened, while they shall avail nothing; and they shall perish, because the ungodly will not be; from the face of God, that is, from the knowledge of God, as he perished who said, But now I live not, but Christ liveth in me. But why will the ungodly be weakened, and perish from Thy face? Because, he saith, Thou hast made my judgment, and my cause: that is, the judgment in which I seemed to be judged, Thou hast made mine; and the cause in which men condemned me just and innocent, Thou hast made mine. For such things served Him for our deliverance: as sailors too call the wind theirs, which they take advantage of for prosperous sailing.

6. Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity. Whether the Son say this to the Father, Who said also, Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above, referring this very thing, that the Judge of men was judged for men's advantage, to the Father's equity and His own hidden things: or whether man say to God, Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity, giving the name of God's throne to his soul, so that his body may peradventure be the earth, which is called God's footstool: for God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself: or whether the soul of the Church, perfect now and without spot and wrinkle, worthy, that is, of the hidden things of the Son, in that The King hath brought her into His chamber, say to her spouse, Thou satest upon the throne Who judgest equity, in that Thou hast risen from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and sittest at the right hand of the Father: whichsoever, I say, of those opinions, whereunto this verse may be referred, is preferred, it transgresses not the rule of faith.

7. Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly hath perished. We take this to be more suitably said to the Lord Jesus Christ, than said by Him. For Who else hath rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly perished, save He, Who after that He ascended up into heaven, sent the Holy Ghost, that, filled by Him, the Apostles should preach the word of God with boldness, and freely reprove men's sins? At which rebuke the ungodly perished; because the ungodly was justified and was made godly. Thou hast effaced their name for the world, and for the world's world. The name of the ungodly hath been effaced. For they are not called ungodly who believe in the true God. Now their name is effaced for the world, that is as long as the course of the temporal world endures. And for the world's world. What is the world's world, but that whose image and shadow, as it were, this world possesses? For the change of seasons succeeding one another, whilst the moon is on the wane, and again on the increase, whilst the sun each year returns to his quarter, whilst spring, or summer, or autumn, or winter passes away only to return, is in some sort an imitation of eternity. But this world's world is that which abides in immutable eternity. As a verse in the mind, and a verse in the voice: the former is understood, the latter heard; and the former fashions the latter: and hence the former works in art and abides, the latter sounds in the air and passes away. So the fashion of this changeable

world is defined by that world unchangeable which is called the world's world. And hence the one abides in the art, that is, in the Wisdom and Power of God: but the other is made to pass in the governance of creation. If after all it be not a repetition, so that after it was said for the world, lest it should be understood of this world that passeth away, it were added for the world's world. For in the Greek copies it is thus, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. Which the Latins have for the most part rendered, not, for the world, and for the world's world; but, for ever, and for the world's world. that in the words for the world's world, the words for ever, should be explained. The name then of the ungodly Thou hast effaced for ever, for from henceforth the ungodly shall never be. And if their name be not prolonged unto this world, much less unto the world's world.

8. The swords of the enemy have failed at the end. Not enemies in the plural, but this enemy in the singular. Now what enemy's swords have failed but the devil's? Now these are understood to be divers erroneous opinions, whereby as with swords he destroys souls. In overcoming these swords, and in bringing them to failure, that sword is employed, of which it is said in the seventh Psalm, If ye be not converted, He will brandish His sword. And peradventure this is the end, against which the swords of the enemy fail; since up to it they are of some avail. Now it worketh secretly, but in the last judgment it will be brandished openly. By it the cities are destroyed. For so it follows, The swords of the enemy have failed at the end: and Thou hast destroyed the cities. Cities indeed wherein the devil rules, where crafty and deceitful counsels hold, as it were, the place of a court, on which supremacy attend as officers and ministers the services of all the members, the eyes for curiosity, the ears for lasciviousness, or for whatsoever else is gladly listened to that bears on evil, the hands for rapine or any other violence or pollution soever, and all the other members after this manner serving the tyrannical supremacy, that is, perverse counsels. Of this city the commonalty, as it were, are all soft affections and disturbing emotions of the mind, stirring up daily seditions in a man. So then where a king, where a court, where ministers, where commonalty are found, there is a city. Nor again would such things be in bad cities, unless they were first in individual men, who are, as it were, the elements and seeds of cities. These cities He destroys, when on the prince being shut out thence, of whom it

was said, The prince of this world has been cast out, these kingdoms are wasted by the word of truth, evil counsels are laid to sleep, vile affections tamed, the ministries of the members and senses taken captive, and transferred to the service of righteousness and good works: that as the Apostle says, sin should no more reign in our mortal body, and so forth. Then is the soul at peace, and the man is disposed to receive rest and blessedness. Their memorial has perished with uproar: with the uproar, that is, of the ungodly. But it is said, with uproar, either because when ungodliness is overturned, there is uproar made: for none passeth to the highest place, where there is the deepest silence, but he who with much uproar shall first have warred with his own vices: or with uproar, is said, that the memory of the ungodly should perish in the perishing even of the very uproar, in which ungodliness riots.

9. And the Lord abideth for ever. Wherefore then have the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things against the Lord, and against His Anointed: for the Lord abideth for ever. He hath prepared His seat in judgment, and He shall judge the world in equity. He prepared His seat, when He was judged. For by that patience Man purchased heaven, and God in Man profited believers. And this is the Son's hidden judgment. But seeing He is also to come openly and in the sight of all to judge the quick and the dead, He hath prepared His seat in the hidden judgment: and He shall also openly judge the world in equity: that is, He shall distribute gifts proportioned to desert, setting the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. He shall judge the people with justice. This is the same as was said above, He shall judge the world in equity. Not as men judge who see not the heart, by whom very often worse men are acquitted than are condemned: but in equity and with justice shall the Lord judge, conscience bearing witness, and thoughts accusing, or else excusing.

10. And the Lord hath become a refuge to the poor. Whatsoever be the persecutions of that enemy, who hath been turned behind, what harm shall he do to them whose refuge the Lord hath become? But this will be, if in this world, in which that one has an office of power, they shall choose to be poor, by loving nothing which either here leaves a man while he lives and loves, or is left by him when he dies. For to such a poor man hath the Lord

become a refuge, an Helper in due season, in tribulation. Lo He maketh poor, for He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. For what an Helper in due season is, he explained by adding in tribulation. For the soul is not turned to God, save when it is turned away from this world: nor is it more seasonably turned away from this world, except toils and pains be mingled with its trifling and hurtful and destructive pleasures.

11. Ver. 10. And let them who know Thy Name, hope in Thee, when they shall have ceased hoping in wealth, and in the other enticements of this world. For the soul indeed that seeketh where to fix her hope, when she is torn away from this world, the knowledge of God's Name seasonably receives. For the mere Name of God hath now been published every where: but the knowledge of the name is, when He is known Whose name it is. For the name is not a name for its own sake, but for that which it signifies. Now it has been said, The Lord is His Name. Wherefore whoso willingly submits himself to God as His servant, hath known this name. And let them who know Thy Name hope in Thee. Again, the Lord saith to Moses, I am That I am; and Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, I AM, hath sent me. Let them then who know Thy Name, hope in Thee; that they may not hope in those things which flow by in time's quick revolution, having nothing but 'will be' and 'has been.' For what in them is future, when it arrives, straightway becomes the past; it is awaited with eagerness, it is lost with pain. But in the nature of God nothing will be, as if it were not yet; or hath been, as if it were no longer: but there is only that which is, and this is eternity. Let them cease then to hope in and love things temporal, and let them apply themselves to hope eternal, who know His name Who said, I am That I am; and of Whom it was said, I AM hath sent me. For Thou hast not forsaken them that seek Thee, O Lord. Whoso seek Him, seek no more things transient and perishable; For no man can serve two masters.

12. Ver. 11. Sing to the Lord, Who dwelleth in Sion, is said to them, whom the Lord forsakes not as they seek Him. He dwelleth in Sion, which is interpreted watching, and which beareth the likeness of the Church that now is; as Jerusalem beareth the likeness of the Church that is to come, that is, the city of Saints already enjoying life angelical; for Jerusalem is by interpretation the vision of peace. Now watching goes before vision, as this

Church goes before that one which is promised, the city immortal and eternal. But in time it goes before, not in dignity: because more honourable is that whither we are striving to arrive, than what we practise, that we may attain to arrive; now we practise watching, that we may arrive at vision. But again this same Church which now is, unless the Lord inhabit her, the most earnest watching might run into any sort of error. And to this Church it was said, For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are: again, That Christ may dwell in the inner man in your hearts by faith. It is enjoined us then, that we sing to the Lord Who dwelleth in Sion, that with one accord we praise the Lord, the Inhabitant of the Church. Shew forth His wonders among the heathen. It has both been done, and will not cease to be done.

13. Ver. 12. For requiring their blood He hath remembered. As if they, who were sent to preach the Gospel, should make answer to that injunction which has been mentioned, Shew forth His wonders among the heathen, and should say, O Lord, who hath believed our report? and again, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; the Psalmist suitably goes on to say, That Christians not without great reward of eternity will die in persecution, for requiring their blood He hath remembered. But why did he choose to say, their blood? Was it, as if one of imperfect knowledge and less faith should ask, How will they shew them forth, seeing that the infidelity of the heathen will rage against them; and he should be answered, For requiring their blood He hath remembered, that is, the last judgment will come, in which both the glory of the slain and the punishment of the slayers shall be made manifest? But let no one suppose He hath remembered to be so used, as though forgetfulness can attach to God; but since the judgment will be after a long interval, it is used in accordance with the feeling of weak men, who think God hath forgotten, because He doth not act so speedily as they wish. To such is said what follows also, He hath not forgotten the cry of the poor: that is, He hath not, as you suppose, forgotten. As if they should on hearing, He hath remembered, say, Then He had forgotten; No, He hath not forgotten, says the Psalmist, the cry of the poor.

14. But I ask, what is that cry of the poor, which God forgetteth not? Is it that cry, the words whereof are these, (ver. 13.) Pity me, O Lord, see my humiliation at the hands of my enemies? Why then did he not say, Pity us,

O Lord, see our humiliation at the hands of our enemies, as if many poor were crying; but as if one, Pity me, O Lord? Is it because One intercedeth for the Saints, Who first for our sakes became poor, though He was rich; and it is He Who saith, Who exaltest me from the gates of death, (ver. 14.) that I may declare all Thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Sion? For man is exalted in Him, not that Man only Which He beareth, Which is the Head of the Church; but whichsoever one of us also is among the other members, and is exalted from all depraved desires; which are the gates of death, for that through them is the road to death. But the joy in the fruition is at once death itself, when one gains what he hath in abandoned wilfulness coveted: for coveting is the root of all evil: and therefore is the gate of death, for the widow that liveth in pleasures is dead. At which pleasures we arrive through desires as it were through the gates of death. But all highest purposes are the gates of the daughter of Sion, through which we come to the vision of peace in the Holy Church. In these gates therefore all the praises of God are well shewn forth, that what is holy may not be given to dogs, nor pearls cast before swine: who would rather frowardly bark, than earnestly inquire; or who would neither bark nor inquire, but wallow in the mire of their own lusts. But when God's praises are shewn forth in good earnestness; to them that seek it is given, and to them that inquire it is made manifest, and to them that knock it is opened. Or haply are the gates of death the bodily senses and eyes, which were opened when the man tasted of the forbidden tree, from which they are exalted, to whom it is said that they should seek not the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal: and are the gates of the daughter of Sion the sacraments and beginnings of faith, which are opened to them that knock, that they may arrive at the hidden things of the Son? For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it ascended in the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him. Thus far is the cry of the poor, which the Lord hath not forgotten.

15. Then follows, I will exult for Thy salvation: that is, with blessedness shall I be holden by Thy salvation, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God. Therefore says the Church, which is here in affliction and is saved by hope, as long as the hidden judgment of the Son

is, in hope she says, I will exult for Thy salvation: for now she is worn down either by the roar of violence around her, or by the errors of the heathen. (Ver. 15.) The heathen are fixed in the corruption, which they made. Consider ye how punishment is reserved for the sinner, out of his own works; and how they that have wished to persecute the Church, have been fixed in that corruption, which they thought to inflict. For they were desiring to kill the body, whilst they themselves were dying in soul. In that snare which they hid, has their foot been taken. The hidden snare is crafty devising. The foot of the soul is well understood to be its love: which, when depraved, is called coveting or lust; but when upright, love or charity. For by love it is moved as it were to the place, whither it tendeth. But the soul's place is not in any space which bodily form occupies: but in the delight, at which she rejoices to have attained through love. But a pernicious delight follows coveting, a profitable one charity. Whence coveting is also called a root. The root moreover is taken for, so to say, the foot of the tree. Charity too is called a root, where the Lord speaks of the seed, which in the stony places withers under the scorching sun, because it had not deep root. Whereby He points out those, that rejoice in receiving the word of truth, but give way in persecution, which can be withstood by love only. And the Apostle says, That being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to take in. The foot then of sinners, that is, their love, is taken in the snare, which they hide: for when delight shall have followed on to deceitful dealing, when God shall have delivered them over to the lust of their heart; that delight at once binds them, that they dare not tear away their love thence and apply it to profitable objects; for when they shall make the attempt, they will be pained in heart, as if desiring to free their foot from a fetter: and giving way under this pain they refuse to withdraw from pernicious delights. In the snare then which they have hid, that is, in deceitful counsel, their foot hath been taken, that is their love, which through deceit attains to that vain joy whereby pain is purchased.

16. Ver. 16. The Lord is known executing judgments. These are God's judgments. Not from that tranquillity of His blessedness, nor from the secret places of wisdom, wherein blessed souls are received, is the sword, or fire, or wild beast, or any such thing brought forth, whereby sinners may be tormented: but how are they tormented, and how does the Lord do

judgment? In the works, he says, of his own hands hath the sinner been caught.

17. Here is interposed, The song of the diapsalma: as it were the hidden joy, as far as we can imagine, of the separation which is now made, not in place, but in the affections of the heart, between sinners and the righteous, as of the corn from the chaff, as yet on the floor. And then follows, (ver. 17.) Let the sinners be turned into hell: that is, let them be given into their own hands, when they are spared, and let them be ensnared in deadly delight. All the nations that forget God. Because when they did not think good to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.

18. Ver. 18. For there shall not be forgetfulness of the poor man to the end: who now seems to be in forgetfulness, when sinners are thought to flourish in this world's happiness, and the righteous to be in travail: but the patience, saith He, of the poor shall not perish for ever. Wherefore there is need of patience now to bear with the evil, who are already separated in will, till they be also separated at the last judgment.

19. Ver. 19. Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail. The future judgment is prayed for: but before it come, Let the heathen, saith he, be judged in Thy sight: that is, in secret; which is called in God's sight, with the knowledge of a few holy and righteous ones. (Ver. 20.) Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord. He seems to me to point out Antichrist: of whom the Apostle says, When the man of sin shall be revealed. Let the heathen know that they are men. That they who will be set free by the Son of God, and belong to the Son of Man, and be sons of men, that is, new men, may serve man, that is, the old man the sinner, for that they are men.

20. And because it is believed that he is to arrive at so great a pitch of empty glory, and he will be permitted to do so great things, both against all men and against the Saints of God, that then some weak ones shall indeed think that God cares not for human affairs, the Psalmist interposing a diapsalma, adds as it were the voice of men groaning and asking why judgment is deferred. (Psalm 10. ver. 1.) Why, O Lord, saith he, hast Thou withdrawn afar off? Then he who thus inquired, as if all on a sudden he understood, or as if he asked, though he knew, that he might teach, adds,

Thou despisest in due seasons, in tribulations: that is, Thou despisest seasonably, and causest tribulations to inflame men's minds with longing for Thy coming. For that fountain of life is sweeter to them, that have much thirst. Therefore he hints the reason of the delay, saying, (ver. 2.) Whilst the ungodly vaunteth himself, the poor man is inflamed. Wondrous it is and true with what earnestness of good hope the little ones are inflamed unto an upright living by comparison with sinners. In which mystery it comes to pass, that even heresies are permitted to exist; not that heretics themselves wish this, but because Divine Providence worketh this result from their sins, Which both maketh and ordaineth the light; but ordereth only the darkness, that by comparison therewith the light may be more pleasant, as by comparison with heretics the discovery of truth is more sweet. For so, by this comparison, the approved, who are known to God, are made manifest among men.

21. They are taken in their thoughts, which they think: that is, their evil thoughts become chains to them. But how become they chains? (ver. 3.) For the sinner is praised, saith he, in the desires of his soul. The tongues of flatterers bind souls in sin. For there is pleasure in doing those things, in which not only is no reprover feared, but even an approver heard. And he that does unrighteous deeds is blessed. Hence are they taken in their thoughts, which they think.

22. Ver. 4. The sinner hath angered the Lord. Let no one congratulate the man, that prospers in his way, to whose sins no avenger is nigh, and an approver is by. This is the greater anger of the Lord. For the sinner hath angered the Lord, that he should suffer these things, that is, should not suffer the scourging of correction. The sinner hath angered the Lord: according to the multitude of His anger He will not search it out. Great is His anger, when He searcheth not out, when He as it were forgetteth and marketh not sin, and by fraud and wickedness man attains to riches and honours: which will especially be the case in that Antichrist, who will seem to men blessed to that degree, that he will even be thought God. But how great this anger of God is, we are taught by what follows.

23. God is not in his sight, (ver. 5.) his ways are polluted in all time. He that knows what in the soul gives joy and gladness, knows how great an ill it is

to be abandoned by the light of truth: since a great ill do men reckon the blindness of their bodily eyes, whereby this light is withdrawn. How great then the punishment he endures, who through the prosperous issue of his sins is brought to that pass, that God is not in his sight, and that his ways are polluted in all time, that is, his thoughts and counsels are unclean? Thy judgments are taken away from his face. For the mind conscious of evil, whilst it seems to itself to suffer no punishment, believes that God doth not judge, and so are God's judgments taken away from its face; while this very thing is great condemnation. And he shall have dominion over all his enemies. For so is it delivered, that he will overcome all kings, and alone obtain the kingdom; since too according to the Apostle, who preaches concerning him, He shall sit in the temple of God, exalting himself above all that is worshipped and that is called God.

24. And seeing that being delivered over to the lust of his own heart, and predestinated to extreme condemnation, he is to come, by wicked arts, to that vain and empty height and rule; therefore it follows, (ver. 6.) For he hath said in his heart, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil: that is, my fame and my name will not pass from this generation to the generation of posterity, unless by evil arts I acquire so lofty a principality, that posterity cannot be silent concerning it. For a mind abandoned and void of good arts, and estranged from the light of righteousness, by bad arts devises a passage for itself to a fame so lasting, as is celebrated even in posterity. And they that cannot be known for good, desire that men should speak of them even for ill, provided that their name spread far and wide. And this I think is here meant, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil. There is too another interpretation, if a mind vain and full of error supposes that it cannot come from the mortal generation to the generation of eternity, but by bad arts: which indeed was also reported of Simon, when he thought that he would gain heaven by wicked arts, and pass from the human generation to the generation divine by magic. Where then is the wonder, if that man of sin too, who is to fill up all the wickedness and ungodliness, which all false prophets have begun, and to do such great signs; that, if it were possible, he should deceive the very elect, shall say in his heart, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil?

Ver. 7. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness and deceit. For it is a great curse, to seek heaven by such abominable arts, and to get together such earnings for acquiring the eternal seat. But of this cursing his mouth is full. For this desire shall not take effect, but within his mouth only will avail to destroy him, who dared promise himself such things with bitterness and deceit, that is, with anger and insidiousness, whereby he is to bring over the multitude to his side. Under his tongue is toil and grief. Nothing is more toilsome than unrighteousness and ungodliness: upon which toil follows grief; for that the toil is not only without fruit, but even unto destruction. Which toil and grief refers to that which he hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved from generation to generation without evil. And therefore, under his tongue, not on his tongue, because he will devise these things in silence, and to men will speak other things, that he may appear good and just, and a son of God.

26. Ver. 8. He lieth in ambush with the rich. What rich, but those whom he will load with this world's gifts? And he is therefore said to lie in ambush with them, because he will display their false happiness to deceive men; who, when with a perverted will they desire to be such as they, and seek not the good things eternal, will fall into his snares. That in the dark he may kill the innocent. In the dark, I suppose, is said, where it is not easily understood what should be sought, or what avoided. Now to kill the innocent, is of an innocent to make one guilty.

27. His eyes look against the poor, for he is chiefly to persecute the righteous, of whom it is said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (ver. 9.) He lieth in wait in a secret place, as a lion in his den. By a lion in a den, he means one, in whom both violence and deceit will work. For the first persecution of the Church was violent, when by proscriptions, by torments, by murders, the Christians were compelled to sacrifice: another persecution is crafty, which is now conducted by heretics of any kind and false brethren: there remains a third, which is to come by Antichrist, than which there is nothing more perilous; for it will be at once violent and crafty. Violence he will exert in empire, craft in miracles. To the violence, the word lion refers; to craft, the words in his den. And these are again repeated with a change of order. He lieth in wait, he says, that he may

catch the poor; this hath reference to craft: but what follows, To catch the poor whilst he draweth him, is put to the score of violence. For draweth means, he bringeth him to himself by violence, by whatever tortures he can.

28. Again, the two which follow are the same. Ver. 10. In his snare he will humble him, is craft. He shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor, is violence. For a snare naturally points to lying in wait: but domination most openly conveys the idea of terror. And well does he say, He will humble him in his snare. For when he shall begin to do those signs, the more wonderful they shall appear to men, the more those Saints that shall be then will be despised, and, as it were, set at nought: he, whom they shall resist by righteousness and innocence, shall seem to overcome by the marvels that he does. But he shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor; that is, whilst he shall inflict whatsoever punishments he will upon the servants of God that resist him.

29. But how shall he decline, and fall? (ver. 11.) For he hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; He turneth away His face, that He see not unto the end. This is declining, and the most wretched fall, while the mind of a man prospers as it were in its iniquities, and thinks that it is spared; when it is being blinded, and kept for an extreme and timely vengeance: of which the Psalmist now speaks: (Ver. 12.) Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted: that is, let Thy power be made manifest. Now he had said above, Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail, let the heathen be judged in Thy sight: that is, in secret, where God alone seeth. This comes to pass, when the ungodly have arrived at what seems great happiness to men: over whom is placed a lawgiver, such as they had deserved to have of whom it is said, Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord, let the heathen know that they are men. But now after that hidden punishment and vengeance it is said, Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted; not of course in secret, but now in glory most manifest. That Thou forget not the poor unto the end; that is, as the ungodly think, who say, God hath forgotten, He turneth away His face, that He should not see unto the end. Now they deny that God seeth unto the end, who say that He careth not for things human and earthly, for the earth is as it were the end of things; in that it is the last element, in which men labour in most orderly sort, but they cannot see the order of their labours,

which specially belongs to the hidden things of the Son. The Church then labouring in such times, like a ship in great waves and tempests, awaketh the Lord as if He were sleeping, that He should command the winds, and calm should be restored. He says therefore, Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted, that Thou forget not the poor unto the end.

30. Accordingly understanding now the manifest judgment, and in exultation at it, they say, (ver. 13.) Wherefore hath the ungodly angered God? that is, what hath it profited him to do so great evil? For he said in his heart, He will not require it. Then follows, (ver. 14.) For Thou seest toil and considerest anger, to deliver them into Thine hands. This sentence looks for distinct explanation, wherein if there shall be error it becomes obscure. For thus has the ungodly said in his heart, God will not require it, as though God regarded toil and anger, to deliver them into His hands; that is, as though He feared toil and anger, and for this reason would spare them, lest their punishment be too burdensome to Him, or lest He should be disturbed by the storm of anger: as men generally act, excusing themselves of vengeance, to avoid toil or anger.

31. The poor hath been left unto Thee. For therefore is he poor, that is, hath despised all the temporal goods of this world, that Thou only mayest be his hope. Thou wilt be a helper to the orphan, that is, to him to whom his father this world, by whom he was born after the flesh, dies, and who can already say, The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For of such orphans God becomes the Father. The Lord teaches us in truth that His disciples do become orphans, to whom He saith, Call no man father on earth. Of which He first Himself gave an example in saying, Who is my mother, and who my brethren? Whence some most mischievous heretics would assert that He had no mother; and they do not see that it follows from this, if they pay attention to these words, that neither had His disciples fathers. For as He said, Who is my mother? so He taught them, when He said, Call no man your father on earth.

32. Ver. 15. Break the arm of the sinner and of the malicious; of him, namely, of whom it was said above, He shall have dominion over all his enemies. He called his power then, his arm; to which Christ's power is opposed, of which it is said, Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted.

His fault shall be required, and he shall not be found because of it; that is, he shall be judged for his sins, and himself shall perish because of his sin. After this, what wonder if there follow, (ver. 16.) The Lord shall reign for ever and world without end; ye heathen shall perish out of His earth? He uses heathen for sinners and ungodly.

33. Ver. 17. The Lord hath heard the longing of the poor: that longing wherewith they were burning, when in the straits and tribulations of this world they desired the day of the Lord. Thine ear hath heard the preparation of their heart. This is the preparation of the heart, of which it is sung in another Psalm, My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared: of which the Apostle says, But if we hope for what we see not, we do with patience wait for it. Now, by the ear of God, we ought, according to a general rule of interpretation, to understand not a bodily member, but the power whereby He heareth; and so, (not to repeat this often,) by whatever members of His are mentioned, which in us are visible and bodily, must be understood powers of operation. For we must not suppose it any thing bodily, in that the Lord God hears not the sound of the voice, but the preparation of the heart.

34. Ver. 18. To judge for the orphan and the humble: that is, not for him who is conformed to this world, nor for the proud. For it is one thing to judge the orphan, another to judge for the orphan. He judges the orphan even, who condemns him; but he judges for the orphan, who delivers sentence for him. That man add not further to magnify himself upon earth. For they are men, of whom it was said, Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord: let the heathen know that they are men. But he too, who in this same passage is understood to be placed over them, will be man, of whom it is now said, That man add not further to magnify himself upon earth: namely, when the Son of Man shall come to judge for the orphan, who hath put off from himself the old man, and thus, as it were, buried his father.

35. After the hidden things then of the Son, of which, in this Psalm, many things have been said, will come the manifest things of the Son, of which a little has been now said at the end of the same Psalm. But the title is given from the former, which here occupy the larger portion. Indeed, the very day of the Lord's advent may be rightly numbered among the hidden things of

the Son, although the very presence of the Lord itself will be manifest. For of that day it is said, that no man knoweth it, neither angels, nor powers, nor the Son of man. What then so hidden, as that which is said to be hidden even to the Judge Himself, not as regards knowledge, but disclosure? But concerning the hidden things of the Son, even if any one would not wish to understand the Son of God, but of David himself, to whose name the whole Psalter is attributed, for the Psalms we know are called the Psalms of David, let him give ear to those words in which it is said to the Lord, Have mercy on us, O Son of David: and so even in this manner let him understand the same Lord Christ, concerning Whose hidden things is the inscription of this Psalm. For so likewise is it said by the Angel: God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. Nor to this understanding of it is the sentence opposed in which the same Lord asks of the Jews, If Christ be the Son of David, how then doth he in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I put Thine enemies under Thy feet. For it was said to the unskilled, who although they looked for Christ's coming, yet expected Him as man, not as the Power and Wisdom of God. He teacheth then, in that place, the most true and pure faith, that He is both the Lord of king David, in that He is the Word in the beginning, God with God, by Which all things were made; and Son, in that He was made to him of the seed of David according to the flesh. For He doth not say, Christ is not David's Son, but if ye already hold that He is his Son, learn how He is his Lord: and do not hold in respect of Christ that He is the Son of Man, for so is He David's Son; and leave out that He is the Son of God, for so is He David's Lord.

PSALM 11

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. This title does not require a fresh consideration: for the meaning of, to the end, has already been sufficiently handled. Let us then look to the text itself of the Psalm, which to me appears to be sung against the heretics, who, by rehearsing and exaggerating the sins of many in the Church, as if either all or the majority among themselves were righteous, strive to turn and snatch us away from the breasts of the one True Mother Church: affirming that Christ is with them, and warning us as if with piety and earnestness, that by passing over to them we may go over to Christ, Whom they falsely declare they have. Now it is known that in prophecy Christ, among the many names in which notice of Him is conveyed in allegory, is also called a mountain. We must accordingly answer these people and say, (ver. 1.) I trust in the Lord: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? I keep to one mountain wherein I trust, how say ye that I should pass over to you, as if there were many Christs? Or if through pride you say that you are mountains, I had indeed need to be a sparrow winged with the powers and commandments of God: but these very things hinder my flying to these mountains, and placing my trust in proud men. I have a house where I may rest, in that I trust in the Lord. For even the sparrow hath found her a house, and, The Lord hath become a refuge to the poor. Let us say then with all confidence, lest while we seek Christ among heretics we lose Him, In the Lord I trust: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?

2. Ver. 2. For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart. These be the terrors of those who threaten us as touching sinners, that we may pass over to them as the righteous. Lo, they say, the sinners have bent the bow: the Scriptures, I suppose, by carnal interpretation of which

they emit envenomed sentences from them. They have prepared their arrows in the quiver: the same words that is, which they will shoot out on the authority of Scripture, they have prepared in the secret place of the heart. That they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart: that when they see, from the Church's light being obscured by the multitude of the unlearned and the carnal, that they cannot be convicted, they may corrupt good manners by evil communications. But against all these terrors we must say, In the Lord I trust.

3. Now I remember that I promised to consider in this Psalm with what suitableness the moon signifies the Church. There are two probable opinions concerning the moon: but of these which is the true, I suppose it either impossible or very difficult for a man to decide. For when we ask whence the moon has her light, some say that it is her own, but that of her globe half is bright, and half dark: and when she revolves in her own orbit, that part wherein she is bright gradually turns towards the earth, so as that it may be seen by us; and that therefore at first her appearance is as if she were horned. For if you make a ball half white and half dark; if you have the dark part before your eyes, you see none of the white: and when you begin turning that white part to your eyes, if you do it gradually, at first you will see horns of whiteness; afterwards it increases gradually, until the whole white part is brought opposite to the eye, and none of the other dark part is visible: but if you continue still gradually turning, the darkness begins to appear and the whiteness to diminish, until it returns again to horns, and is at last wholly removed from the eye, and again that dark part alone can be seen, which they say takes place, when the light of the moon seems to increase up to the fifteenth day, and again diminishes up to the thirtieth, and returns to horns, until no light at all appears in it. According to this opinion the moon in allegory signifies the Church, because in its spiritual part the Church is bright, but in its carnal part is dark: and sometimes the spiritual part is seen by good works, but sometimes it lies hid in the conscience, and is known to God alone, since in the body alone is it seen by men. As happens, when we pray in heart, and as it were seem to be doing nothing, whilst we are enjoined to have our hearts upward, not to the earth, but toward the Lord. But others say that the moon has no light of her own, but is lighted by the sun: but that when she is with it, she keeps that

part in which she is not lighted towards us, and therefore there is no light visible in her: but when she begins to recede from the sun, she is lighted in that part also, which is towards the earth; and that she necessarily begins with horns, until on the fifteenth day she becomes opposite the sun; (for then she rises when the sun sets, so that whosoever shall observe the sun setting, if he turn to the east as he first loses sight of it, may see the moon rising;) and thenceforward when she begins to approach him on the other side, she turns towards us that part, in which she is not lighted, till she returns to horns, and afterwards altogether vanishes: because then the part which is lighted is on high towards the heaven, but towards the earth the part which the sun cannot irradiate. Therefore according to this opinion also the moon is understood to be the Church, because she has no light of her own, but is lighted by the only-begotten Son of God, Who in many places of holy Scripture is allegorically called the Sun. Whom certain heretics being ignorant of, and not able to discern Him, endeavour to turn away the minds of the simple to this corporeal and visible sun, which is the common light of the flesh of men and flies, and some they do pervert, who as long as they cannot behold with the mind the inner light of truth, will not be content with the simple Catholic faith; which is the only safety to babes, and by which milk alone they can arrive in assured strength at the firm support of more solid food. Whichever then of these two opinions be the true, the moon in allegory is fitly understood as the Church. Or if in such difficulties as these, troublesome rather than edifying, there be either no satisfaction or no leisure to exercise the mind, or if the mind itself be not capable of it, it is sufficient to regard the moon with ordinary eyes, and not to seek out obscure causes, but with all men to perceive her increasings and fulnesses and wanings; and if she wanes to the end that she may be renewed, even to this rude multitude she sets forth the image of the Church, in which the resurrection of the dead is believed.

4. Next we must enquire, what in this Psalm is meant by, the obscure moon, in which sinners have prepared to shoot at the upright in heart? For not in one way only may the moon be said to be obscure: for when her monthly course is finished, and when her brightness is interrupted by a cloud, and when she is eclipsed at the full, the moon may be called obscure. It may then be understood first of the persecutors of the Martyrs, for that they

wished in the obscure moon to shoot at the upright in heart; whether it be yet in the time of the Church's youth, because she had not yet shone forth in greatness on the earth, and conquered the darkness of heathen superstitions; or by the tongues of blasphemers and such as defame the Christian name, when the earth was as it were beclouded, the moon, that is, the Church, could not be clearly seen; or when by the slaughter of the Martyrs themselves and so great effusion of blood, as by that eclipse and obscuracion, wherein the moon seems to exhibit a bloody face, the weak were deterred from the Christian name; in which terror sinners shot out words crafty and sacrilegious to pervert even the upright in heart. And secondly, it can be understood of these sinners, whom the Church contains, because at that time, taking the opportunity of this moon's obscurity, they committed many crimes, which are now tauntingly objected to us by the heretics, whereas their founders are said to have been guilty of them. But howsoever that be which was done in the obscure moon, now that the Catholic name is spread and celebrated throughout the whole world, what concern of mine is it to be disturbed by things unknown? For in the Lord I trust; nor do I listen to them that say to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow. For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart. Or if the moon seem even now obscure to them, because they would make it uncertain which is the Catholic Church, and they strive to convict her by the sins of those many carnal men whom she contains; what concern is this to him, who says in truth, In the Lord I trust? By which word every one shews that he is himself wheat, and endures the chaff with patience unto the time of winnowing.

5. In the Lord, therefore, I trust. Let them fear who trust in man, and cannot deny that they are of man's party, by whose grey hairs they swear; and when in conversation it is demanded of them, of what communion they are, unless they say that they are of his party, they cannot be recognised. Tell me, what do they do, when the so numberless and daily sins and crimes of those, of whom that society is full, are recounted to them? Can they say, In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? For they do not trust in the Lord, who say that the Sacraments are then holy, if they be administered by holy men. Accordingly when it is demanded of them, who are holy, they are ashamed to say, We are.

Moreover if they are not ashamed to say so, the hearers are ashamed for them. So then they force those who receive the Sacraments to put their hope in man, whose heart they cannot see. And cursed is every one that putteth his hope in man. For what is it to say, What I give is holy, but, Put your hope in me? What if you are not holy? Or shew your heart. But if you cannot do this, how shall I see that you are holy? Or perhaps you will say that it is written, Ye shall know them by their works? I see indeed marvellous works, the daily violences of the Circumcelliones, with the bishops and presbyters for their leaders, flying about in every direction, and calling their terrible clubs 'Israels;' which men now living daily see and feel. But for the times of Macarius, respecting which they raise an invidious cry, most men have not seen them, and no one sees them now: and any Catholic who saw them could say, if he wished to be a servant of God, In the Lord I trust. Which indeed he says now, when he sees many things in the Church which he would not, who perceives that he as yet swims within those nets full of fish good and bad, until all arrive at the end of the sea, where the bad are separated from the good. But these, what do they answer, if he whom they baptize say to one of them, How would you have me feel confidence? For if it be the desert of both the giver and the receiver, be it of God the giver and of my conscience the receiver: for these two, His goodness and my own faith, are not doubtful to me. Why do you interpose yourself, of whom I can know nothing certain? Allow me to say, In the Lord I trust. For if I trust in you, how can I trust that you have done no evil this night? Lastly, if you would have me believe you, can I do more than believe respecting yourself? How then can I trust in those with whom you communicated yesterday, and communicate to-day, and will communicate to-morrow, as to whether even in these three days they have not committed aught of evil? But if what we do not know defileth neither you or me, what cause is there for rebaptizing those who have known nothing of the times of the surrender of the books and of the Macarian cry? What cause that thou shouldest dare to rebaptize Christians coming from Mesopotamia, who never even heard the name of Cæcilianus and Donatus, and deny that they are Christians? But if other men's sins, which they know not of, defile them, whatever is each day committed, on your side, without your knowledge, makes you guilty, who vainly object the imperial constitutions to Catholics, whilst private clubs and fires rage as they do in your own

camp. See whereunto they have fallen, who when they saw sinners in the Catholic Church could not say, In the Lord I trust; and have placed their hope in man. Which they would most certainly say, if they were not themselves, or even if themselves were such as they supposed them to be, from whom with sacrilegious pride they pretended that they wished to separate themselves.

6. Let the Catholic soul then say, In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? For, lo, the sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart: and from them let her turn her speech to the Lord, and say, (ver. 3.) For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected. And this let her say not against these only, but against all heretics. For they have all, as far as in them lies, destroyed the praise which God hath perfected out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, when they disturb the little ones with vain and scrupulous questions, and suffer them not to be nourished with the milk of faith. As if then it were said to this soul, why do they say to you, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow; why do they frighten you with sinners, who have bent the bow, to shoot in the obscure moon at the upright in heart? She answers, Therefore it is they frighten me, because they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected. Where but in their conventicles, where they nourish not with milk, but kill with poison the babes and ignorant of the interior light. But what hath the Just done? If Macarius, if Cæcilianus, offend you, what hath Christ done to you, Who said, My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you; which ye with your abominable dissensions have violated? What hath Christ done to you? Who with such exceeding patience endured His betrayer, as to give to him, as to the other Apostles, the first Eucharist consecrated with His own hands, and blessed with His own mouth. What hath Christ done to you? Who sent this same betrayer, whom He called a devil, who before betraying the Lord could not shew good faith even to the Lord's purse, with the other disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven; that He might shew that the gifts of God come to those that with faith receive them, though he, through whom they receive them, be such as Judas was.

7. Ver. 4. The Lord is in His holy temple, yea in such wise as the Apostle saith, For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Now if any man shall violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. He violateth the temple of God, who violateth unity: for he holdeth not the head, from which the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the working after the measure of every part maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love. The Lord is in this His holy temple; which consisteth of His many members, fulfilling each his own separate duties, by love built up into one building. Which temple he violateth, who for the sake of his own preeminence separateth himself from the Catholic society. The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is in heaven. If you take heaven to be the just man, as you take the earth to be the sinner, to whom it was said, Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go; the words, The Lord is in His holy temple you will understand to be repeated, whilst it is said, The Lord, His seat is in heaven.

8. His eyes look upon the poor. His to Whom the poor man hath been left, and Who hath been made a refuge to the poor. And therefore all the seditions and tumults within these nets, until they be drawn to shore, concerning which heretics upbraid us to their own ruin and our correction, are caused by those men, who will not be Christ's poor. But do they turn away God's eyes from such as would be so? For His eyes look upon the poor. Is it to be feared lest, in the crowd of the rich, He may not be able to see the few poor, whom He brings up in safe keeping in the bosom of the Catholic Church? His eyelids question the sons of men. Here by that rule I would wish to take the sons of men of those that from old men have been regenerated by faith. For these, by certain obscure passages of Scripture, as it were the closed eyes of God, are exercised that they may seek: and again, by certain clear passages, as it were the open eyes of God, are enlightened that they may rejoice. And this frequent closing and opening in the holy Books are as it were the eyelids of God; which question, that is, which try the 'sons of men;' who are neither wearied with the obscurity of the matter, but exercised; nor puffed up by knowledge, but confirmed.

9. Ver. 5. The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly. Why then do we fear lest the ungodly should be any hurt to us, if so be they do with

insincere heart share the sacraments with us, seeing that He questioneth the righteous and the ungodly. But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul: that is, not him who believeth God, and putteth not his hope in man, but only his own soul doth the lover of iniquity hurt.

10. Ver. 6. He shall rain snares upon the sinners. If by clouds are understood prophets generally, whether good or bad, who are also called false prophets: false prophets are so ordered by the Lord God, that by them He may rain snares upon sinners. For no one, but the sinner, falls into a following of them, whether by way of preparation for the last punishment, if he shall choose to persevere in sin; or to dissuade from pride, if in time he shall come to seek God with a more sincere intent. But if by clouds are understood good and true prophets only; by these too it is clear that God raineth snares upon sinners, although by them He watereth also the godly unto fruitfulness. To some, saith the Apostle, we are the savour of life unto life; to some the savour of death unto death. For not prophets only, but all who with the word of God water souls, may be called clouds. Who when they are understood amiss, God raineth snares upon sinners; but when they are understood aright, He maketh the hearts of the godly and believing fruitful. As, for instance, the passage, and they two shall be in one flesh, if one interpret it with an eye to lust, He raineth a snare upon the sinner. But if you understand it, as he who says, But I speak concerning Christ and the Church, He raineth a shower on the fertile soil. Now both are effected by the same cloud, that is, holy Scripture. Again the Lord says, Not that which goeth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out. The sinner hears this, and makes ready his palate for gluttony: the righteous hears it, and is guarded against the superstitious distinction in meats. Here then also out of the same cloud of Scripture, according to the several desert of each, upon the sinner the rain of snares, upon the righteous the rain of fruitfulness, is poured.

11. Fire and brimstone and the blast of the tempest is the portion of their cup. This is their punishment and end, by whom the name of God is blasphemed; that first they should be wasted by the fire of their own lusts, then by the ill savour of their evil deeds cast off from the company of the blessed, at last carried away and overwhelmed suffer penalties unspeakable.

For this is the portion of their cup: as of the righteous, Thy cup inebriating how excellent is it! for they shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house. Now I suppose a cup is mentioned for this reason, that we should not suppose that any thing is done by God's providence, even in the very punishments of sinners, beyond moderation and measure. And therefore as if he were giving a reason why this should be, he added, (ver. 7.) For the Lord is righteous, and hath loved righteousnesses. The plural not without meaning, but only because he speaks of men, is as that righteousnesses be understood to be used for righteous men. For in many righteous men there seem, so to say, to be righteousnesses, whereas there is one only righteousness of God whereof they all participate. Like as when one face looks upon many mirrors, what in it is one only, is by those many mirrors reflected manifoldly. Wherefore he recurs to the singular, saying, His face hath seen equity. Perhaps, His face hath seen equity, is as if it were said, Equity hath been seen in His face, that is, in knowledge of Him. For God's face is the power by which He is made known to them that are worthy. Or at least, His face hath seen equity, because He doth not allow Himself to be known by the evil, but by the good; and this is equity.

12. But if any one would understand the moon of the synagogue, let him refer the Psalm to the Lord's passion, and of the Jews say, For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected; and of the Lord Himself, But what hath the Just done? Whom they accused as the destroyer of the Law: Whose precepts, by their corrupt living, and by despising them, and by setting up their own, they had destroyed, so that the Lord Himself may speak as Man, as He is wont, saying, In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? by reason, that is, of the fear of those, who desired to apprehend and crucify Him. Since the interpretation is not unreasonable of sinners wishing to shoot at the upright in heart, that is, those who believed in Christ, in the obscure moon, that is, the Synagogue filled with sinners. To this too the words, The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is in heaven, are suitable; that is, the Word in Man, or the very Son of Man Who is in heaven. His eyes look upon the poor; either on Him whom He assumed as God, or for whom He suffered as Man. His eyelids question the sons of men. The closing and opening of the eyes, which is probably meant by the word eyelids, we may take to be His death

and resurrection, whereby He tried the sons of men His disciples, terrified at His passion, and gladdened by the resurrection. The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly, even now from out of Heaven governing the Church. But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. Why it is so, what follows teaches us. For He shall rain snares upon the sinners: which is to be taken according to the exposition above given, and so on with all the rest to the end of the Psalm.

PSALM 12

To the end, for the eighth, a Psalm of David.

1. It has been said on the sixth Psalm, that 'the eighth' may be taken as the day of judgment. For the eighth may also be taken 'for the eternal age;' for that after the time present, which is a cycle of seven days, it shall be given to the Saints.

2. Ver. 1. Save me, O Lord, for the holy hath failed; that is, is not found: as we speak when we say, Corn fails, or, Money fails. For the truths have been minished from among the sons of men. The truth is one, whereby holy souls are enlightened: but forasmuch as there are many souls, there may be said in them to be many truths: as in mirrors there are seen many reflections from one face.

3. Ver. 2. He hath talked vanity each man to his neighbour. By neighbour we must understand every man: for that there is no one with whom we should work evil; and the love of our neighbour worketh no evil. Deceitful lips, with a heart and a heart they have spoken evil things. The repetition, with a heart and a heart, signifies a double heart.

4. Ver. 3. May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips. He says all, that no one may suppose himself excepted: as the Apostle says, Upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and of the Greek. The tongue speaking great things: the proud tongue.

5. Ver. 4. Who have said, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us? Proud hypocrites are meant, putting confidence in their speech to deceive men, and not submitting themselves to God.

6. Ver. 5. Because of the wretchedness of the needy and the sighing of the poor, now I will arise, saith the Lord. For so the Lord Himself in the Gospel pitied His people, because they had no ruler, when they could well obey.

Whence too it is said in the Gospel, The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few. But this must be taken as spoken in the person of God the Father, Who, because of the needy and the poor, that is, who in need and poverty were lacking spiritual good things, vouchsafed to send His own Son. From thence begins His sermon on the mount in Matthew, where He says, Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. I will place in salvation. He does not say what He would place: but, in salvation, must be understood as, in Christ; according to that, For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. And hence He is understood to have placed in Him what appertains to the taking away the wretchedness of the needy, and the comforting the sighing of the poor. I will deal confidently in Him: according to that in the Gospel, For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

7. Ver. 6. The words of the Lord are pure words. This is in the person of the Prophet himself, The words of the Lord are pure words. He says pure, without the alloy of pretence. For many preach the truth impurely; for they sell it for the bribe of the advantages of this life. Of such the Apostle says, that they declared Christ not purely. Silver tried by the fire for the earth. These words of the Lord by means of tribulations approved to sinners. Purified seven times: by the fear of God, by godliness, by knowledge, by might, by counsel, by understanding, by wisdom. For seven steps also of beatitude there are, which the Lord goes over, according to Matthew, in the same sermon which He spake on the Mount, Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed the meek, blessed they that mourn, blessed they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed the merciful, blessed the pure in heart, blessed the peace-makers. Of which seven sentences it may be observed how all that long sermon was spoken. For the eighth where it is said, Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, denotes the fire itself, whereby the silver is proved seven times. And at the termination of this sermon it is said, For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. Which refers to that which is said in this Psalm, I deal confidently in Him.

8. Ver. 7. Thou, O Lord, shalt preserve us, and keep us from this generation to eternity: here as needy and poor, there as wealthy and rich.

9. Ver. 8. The ungodly walk in a circle round about: that is, in the desire of things temporal, which revolves as a wheel in a repeated circle of seven days; and therefore they do not arrive at the eighth, that is, at eternity, for which this Psalm is entitled. So too it is said by Solomon, For the wise king is the winnower of the ungodly, and he bringeth on them the wheel of the wicked.—After Thine height Thou hast multiplied the sons of men. For there is in temporal things too a multiplication, which turns away from the unity of God. Hence the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things. But the righteous are multiplied after the height of God, when they shall go from strength to strength.

PSALM 13

Unto the end, a Psalm of David.

1. For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth. (Ver. 1.) How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me unto the end? that is, put me off as to spiritually understanding Christ, Who is the Wisdom of God, and the true end of all the aim of the soul. How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me? As God doth not forget, so neither doth He turn His face away: but Scripture speaks after our manner. Now God is said to turn away His face, when He doth not give to the soul, which as yet hath not the pure eye of the mind, the knowledge of Himself.

2. Ver. 2. How long shall I place counsel in my soul? There is no need of counsel but in adversity. Therefore, How long shall I place counsel in my soul? is as if it were said, How long shall I be in adversity? Or at least it is an answer, so that the meaning is this, So long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me to the end, and so long turn away Thy face from me, until I shall place counsel in mine own soul: so that except a man place counsel in his own soul to work mercy perfectly, God will not direct him to the end, nor give him that full knowledge of Himself, which is face to face. Sorrow in my heart through the day? How long shall I have, is understood. And through the day signifies continuance, so that day is taken for time: from which as each one longs to be free, he has sorrow in his heart, making entreaty to rise to things eternal, and not endure man's day.

3. How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? either the devil, or carnal habit.

4. Ver. 3. Look on me, and hear me, O Lord my God. Look on me, refers to what was said, How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me. Hear, refers to what was said, How long wilt Thou forget me to the end? Lighten

mine eyes, that I sleep not in death. The eyes of the heart must be understood, that they be not closed by the pleasurable eclipse of sin.

5. Ver. 4. Lest at any time mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him. The devil's mockery is to be feared. They that trouble me will exult, if I be moved; the devil and his angels; who exulted not over that righteous man, Job, when they troubled him; because he was not moved, that is, did not draw back from the steadfastness of his faith.

6. Ver. 5. But I have hoped in Thy mercy. Because this very thing, that a man be not moved, and that he abide fixed in the Lord, he should not attribute to self: lest when he glories that he hath not been moved, he be moved by this very pride. My heart shall exult in Thy salvation; in Christ, in the Wisdom of God. (Ver. 6.) I will sing to the Lord Who hath given me good things; spiritual good things, not belonging to man's day. And I will chant to the name of the Lord most high; that is, I give thanks with joy, and in most due order employ my body, which is the song of the spiritual soul. But if any distinction is to be marked here, I will sing with the heart, I will chant with my works; to the Lord, that which He alone seeth, but to the name of the Lord, that which is known among men, which is serviceable not for Him, but for us.

PSALM 14

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. What to the end means, must not be too often repeated. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; as the Apostle saith. We believe on Him, when we begin to enter on the good road: we shall see Him, when we shall get to the end. And therefore is He the end.

2. Ver. 1. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. For not even have certain sacrilegious and abominable philosophers, who entertain perverse and false notions of God, dared to say, There is no God. Therefore it is, hath said in his heart; for that no one dares to say it, even if he has dared to think it. They are corrupt, and become abominable in their affections: that is, whilst they love this world and love not God; these are the affections which corrupt the soul, and so blind it, that the fool can even say, in his heart, There is no God. For as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. There is none that doeth goodness, no not up to one. Up to one, can be understood either with that one, so that no man be understood: or besides one, that the Lord Christ may be excepted. As we say, This field is up to the sea; we do not of course reckon the sea together with the field. And this is the better interpretation, so that none be understood to have done goodness up to Christ; for that no man can do goodness, except He shall have shewn it. And that is true; for until a man know the one God, he cannot do goodness.

3. Ver. 2. The Lord from heaven looked out upon the sons of men, to see if there be one understanding, or seeking after God. It may be interpreted, upon the Jews; as he may have given them the more honourable name of the sons of men, by reason of their worship of the One God, in comparison with the Gentiles; of whom I suppose it was said above, The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God, &c. Now the Lord looks out, that He may see,

by His holy souls: which is the meaning of, from heaven. For by Himself nothing is hid from Him.

4. Ver. 3. All have gone out of the way, they have together become useless: that is, the Jews have become as the Gentiles, who were spoken of above, There is none that doeth good, no not up to one: must be interpreted as above. Their throat is an open sepulchre. Either the voracity of the ever open palate is signified: or allegorically those who slay, and as it were devour those they have slain, into whom they instil the disorder of their own conversation. Like to which with the contrary meaning is that which was said to Peter, Kill and eat; that he should convert the Gentiles to his own faith and good conversation. With their tongues they have dealt craftily. Flattery is the companion of the greedy and of all bad men. The poison of asps is under their lips. By poison, he means deceit; and of asps, because they will not hear the precepts of the law, as asps will not hear the voice of the charmer; which is said more clearly in another Psalm. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: this is, the poison of asps. Their feet are swift to shed blood. He here shews forth the habit of ill doing. Destruction and unhappiness are in their ways. For all the ways of evil men are full of toil and misery. Hence the Lord cries out, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. For My yoke is easy and My burden light. And the way of peace have they not known: that way, namely, which the Lord, as I said, mentions, in the easy yoke and light burden. There is no fear of God before their eyes. These do not say, There is no God; but yet they do not fear God.

5. Ver. 4. Shall not all, who work iniquity, know? He threatens the judgment. Who devour My people as the food of bread: that is, daily. For the food of bread is daily food. Now they devour the people, who serve their own ends out of them, not referring their ministry to the glory of God, and the salvation of those, over whom they are.

6. They have not called upon the Lord. For he doth not really call upon Him, who longs for such things as are displeasing to Him. (Ver. 5.) There they trembled for fear, where no fear was: that is, for the loss of things temporal. For they said, If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on

Him; and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation. They feared to lose an earthly kingdom, where no fear was; and they lost the kingdom of heaven, which they ought to have feared. And this must be understood of all temporal goods, the loss of which when men fear, they come not to things eternal.

7. For God is in the just generation. [It refers to what went before, so that the sense is, ‘shall not all they that work iniquity know that the Lord is in the just generation;’] that is, He is not in them who love the world. For it is unjust to leave the Maker of the worlds, and serve the creature more than the Creator. (Ver. 6.) Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, for the Lord is his hope: that is, ye have despised the humble coming of the Son of God, because ye saw not in Him the pomp of the world: that they, whom He was calling, should put their hope in God alone, not in the things that pass away.

8. Ver. 7. Who will give salvation to Israel out of Sion? Who but He Whose humiliation ye have despised? is understood. For He will come in glory to the judgment of the quick and the dead, and the kingdom of the just: that, forasmuch as in that humble coming blindness hath happened in part unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, in that other should happen what follows, and so all Israel should be saved. For the Apostle too takes that testimony of Isaiah, where it is said, There shall come out of Sion He Who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for the Jews, as it is here, Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion? When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. It is a repetition, as is usual: for I suppose, Israel shall be glad, is the same as, Jacob shall rejoice.

PSALM 15

A Psalm of David himself.

1. Touching this title there is no question. (Ver. 1.) O Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle? Although tabernacle be sometimes used even for an everlasting habitation: yet when tabernacle is taken in its proper meaning, it is a thing of war. Hence soldiers are called tent-fellows, as having their tents together. This sense is assisted by the words, Who shall sojourn? For we war with the devil for a time, and then we need a tabernacle wherein we may refresh ourselves. Which specially points out the faith of the temporal Dispensation, which was wrought for us in time through the Incarnation of the Lord. And who shall rest in Thy holy mountain? Here perhaps he signifies at once the eternal habitation itself, that we should understand by mountain the supereminence of the love of Christ in life eternal.

2. Ver. 2. He who walketh without stain, and worketh righteousness. Here He has laid down the proposition; in what follows he sets it forth in detail.

3. Who speaketh the truth in his heart. For some have truth on their lips, and not in their heart. As if one should deceitfully point out a road, knowing that there were robbers there, and should say, If you go this way, you will be safe from robbers; and it should turn out that in fact there were no robbers found there: he has spoken the truth, but not in his heart. For he supposed it to be otherwise, and spoke the truth in ignorance. Therefore it is not enough to speak the truth, unless it be so also in heart, (Ver. 3.) Who hath practised no deceit in his tongue. Deceit is practised with the tongue, when one thing is professed with the mouth, another concealed in the breast. Nor done evil to his neighbour. It is well known that by neighbour, every man should be understood. And hath not entertained slander against his neighbour, that is, hath not readily or rashly given credence to an accuser.

4. Ver. 4. The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight. This is perfection, that the malicious one have no force against a man; and that this be in his sight; that is, that he know most surely that the malicious is not, save when the mind turns itself away from the eternal and immutable form of her own Creator to the form of the creature, which was made out of nothing. But those that fear the Lord, He glorifieth: the Lord Himself, that is. Now the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. As then the things above belong to the perfect, so what he is now going to say belongs to beginners.

5. Who sweareth unto his neighbour, and deceiveth him not. (Ver. 5.) Who hath not given his money upon usury, and hath not taken rewards against the innocent. These are no great things: but he who is not able to do even this, much less able is he to speak the truth in his heart, and to practise no deceit in his tongue, but as the truth is in the heart, so to profess and have it in his mouth, yea, yea; nay, nay; and to do no evil to his neighbour, that is, to any man; and to entertain no slander against his neighbour: all which are the virtues of the perfect, in whose sight the malicious one hath been brought to nought. Yet he concludes even these lesser things thus, Whoso doeth these things shall not be moved for ever: that is, he shall attain unto those greater things, wherein is great and unshaken stability. For even the very tenses are, perhaps not without cause, so varied, as that in the conclusion above the past tense should be used, but in this the future. For there it was said, The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight: but here, shall not be moved for ever.

PSALM 16

The inscription of the title, of David himself.

1. Our King in this Psalm speaks in the character of the human nature He assumed, of Whom the royal title at the time of His passion was eminently set forth.

2. Now He saith as follows; (ver. 1.) Preserve me, O Lord, for in Thee have I hoped: (ver. 2.) I have said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou requirest not my goods: for with my goods Thou dost not look to be made blessed.

3. Ver. 3. To the saints who are on His earth: to the saints who have placed their hope in the land of the living, the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, whose spiritual conversation is, by the anchor of hope, fixed in that country, which is rightly called God's earth; although as yet in this earth too they be conversant in the flesh. He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in them. To those saints then He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in their advancement, whereby they have perceived, how both the humanity of My divinity hath profited them that I might die, and the divinity of the humanity that I might rise again.

4. Ver. 4. Their infirmities have been multiplied: their infirmities have been multiplied not for their destruction, but that they might long for the Physician. Afterwards they made haste. Accordingly after infirmities multiplied they made haste, that they might be healed. I will not gather together their assemblies by blood. For their assemblies shall not be carnal, nor will I gather them together as one propitiated by the blood of cattle. Nor will I be mindful of their names within My lips. But by a spiritual change what they have been shall be forgotten; nor by Me shall they be any more called either sinners, or enemies, or men; but righteous, and My brethren, and Sons of God through My peace.

5. Ver. 5. The Lord is the portion of Mine inheritance, and of My cup. For together with Me they shall possess the inheritance, the Lord Himself. Let others choose for themselves portions, earthly and temporal, to enjoy: the portion of the Saints is the Lord eternal. Let others drink of deadly pleasures, the portion of My cup is the Lord. In that I say, Mine, I include the Church: for where the Head is, there is the body also. For into the inheritance will I gather together their assemblies, and by the inebriation of the cup I will forget their old names. Thou art He who will restore to Me My inheritance: that to these too, whom I free, may be known the glory wherein I was with Thee before the world was made. For Thou wilt not restore to Me that which I never lost, but Thou wilt restore to these, who have lost it, the knowledge of that glory: in whom because I am, Thou wilt restore to Me.

6. Ver. 6. The lines have fallen to me in glorious places. The boundaries of my possession have fallen in Thy glory as it were by lot, like as God is the possession of the Priests and Levites. For Mine inheritance is glorious to Me. For Mine inheritance is glorious, not to all, but to them that see; in whom because I am, it is to Me.

7. Ver. 7. I will bless the Lord, Who hath given Me understanding: whereby this inheritance may be seen and possessed. Yea moreover too even unto night my reins have chastened Me. Yea besides understanding, even unto death, My inferior part, the assumption of flesh, hath instructed Me, that I might experience the darkness of mortality, which that understanding hath not.

8. Ver. 8. I foresaw the Lord in My sight always. But coming into things that pass away, I removed not Mine eye from Him Who abideth ever, foreseeing this, that to Him I should return after passing through the things temporal. For He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved. For He favoureth Me, that I should abide fixedly in Him.

9. Ver. 9. Wherefore My heart was glad, and My tongue exulted. Wherefore both in My thoughts is gladness, and in my words exultation. Moreover too My flesh shall rest in hope. Moreover too My flesh shall not fail unto destruction, but shall sleep in hope of the resurrection.

10. Ver. 10. For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell. For Thou wilt neither give My soul for a possession to those parts below. Neither wilt Thou grant Thine Holy One to see corruption. Neither wilt Thou suffer that sanctified body, whereby others are to be also sanctified, to see corruption. (Ver. 11.) Thou hast made known to Me the paths of life. Thou hast made known through Me the paths of humiliation, that men might return to life, from whence they fell through pride; in whom because I am, Thou hast made known to Me. Thou wilt fill Me with joy with Thy countenance. Thou wilt fill them with joy, that they should seek nothing further, when they shall see Thee face to face; in whom because I am, Thou wilt fill Me. Pleasure is at Thy right hand even to the end. Pleasure is in Thy favour and mercy in this life's journey, leading on even to the end of the glory of Thy countenance.

PSALM 17

A prayer of David himself.

1. This prayer must be assigned to the Person of the Lord, with the addition of the Church, which is His body.

2. Ver. 1. Hear My righteousness, O God, consider My supplication. Harken unto My prayer, not in deceitful lips: not going forth to Thee in deceitful lips. (Ver. 2.) Let My judgment from Thy countenance go forth. From the enlightening of the knowledge of Thee, let Me judge truth. Or at least, let My judgment go forth, not in deceitful lips, from Thy countenance, that is, that I may not in judging utter aught else than I understand in Thee. Let Mine eyes see equity: the eyes, of course, of the heart.

3. Ver. 3. Thou hast proved and visited Mine heart in the night-season. For this Mine heart hath been proved by the visitation of tribulation. Thou hast examined Me by fire, and iniquity hath not been found in Me. Now not night only, in that it is wont to disturb, but fire also, in that it burns, is this tribulation to be called; whereby when I was examined I was found righteous.

4. That My mouth may not speak (ver. 4.) the works of men. That nothing may proceed out of My mouth, but what relates to Thy glory and praise; not to the works of men, which they do beside Thy will. Because of the words of Thy lips. Because of the words of Thy peace, or of Thy prophets. I have kept hard ways. I have kept the toilsome ways of human mortality and suffering.

5. Ver. 5. To perfect My steps in Thy paths. That the love of the Church might be perfected in the strait ways, whereby she arrives at Thy rest. That My footsteps be not moved. That the signs of My way, which, like footsteps, have been imprinted on the Sacraments and Apostolical writings,

be not moved, that they may mark them who would follow Me. Or at least, that I may still abide fixedly in eternity, after that I have accomplished the hard ways, and have finished My steps in the straits of Thy paths.

6. Ver 6. I have cried out, for Thou hast heard Me, O God. With a free and strong effort have I directed My prayers unto Thee: for that I might have this power, Thou hast heard Me when praying more weakly. Incline Thine ear to Me, and hear My words. Let not Thy hearing forsake My humiliation.

7. Ver. 7. Make Thy mercies marvellous. Let not Thy mercies be disesteemed, lest they be loved too little.

8. Who savest them that hope in Thee from such as resist Thy right hand: from such as resist the favour, whereby Thou favourest Me. (Ver. 8.) Keep Me, O Lord, as the apple of Thine eye: which seems very little and minute: yet by it is the sight of the eye directed, whereby the light is distinguished from the darkness; as by Christ's humanity, the divinity of the Judgment distinguishing between the righteous and sinners. In the covering of Thy wings protect Me. In the defence of Thy love and mercy protect Me. (Ver. 9.) From the face of the ungodly who have troubled Me.

9. Mine enemies have compassed about My soul; (ver. 10.) they have shut up their own fat. They have been covered with their own gross joy, after that their desire hath been satiated with wickedness. Their mouth hath spoken pride. And therefore their mouth spoke pride, in saying, Hail, King of the Jews, and other like words.

10. Ver. 11. Casting Me forth they have now compassed Me about. Casting Me forth outside the city, they have now compassed Me about on the Cross. Their eyes they have determined to turn down on the earth. The bent of their heart they have determined to turn down on these earthly things: deeming Him, Who was slain, to endure a mighty evil, and themselves, that slew Him, none.

11. Ver. 12. As a lion ready for prey, have they taken Me. They have taken Me, like that adversary who walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. And as a lion's whelp dwelling in secret places. And as his whelp, the

people to whom it was said, Ye are of your father the devil: meditating on the snares, whereby they might circumvent and destroy the just One.

12. Ver. 13. Arise, O Lord, prevent them, and cast them down. Arise, O Lord, Thou Whom they suppose to be asleep, and regardless of men's iniquities; be they blinded before by their own malice, that vengeance may prevent their deed; and so cast them down.

13. Deliver My soul from the ungodly. Deliver My soul, by restoring Me after the death, which the ungodly have inflicted on Me. Thy weapon (ver. 14.) from the enemies of Thine hand. For My soul is Thy weapon, which Thy hand, that is, Thy eternal Power, hath taken to subdue thereby the kingdoms of iniquity, and divide the righteous from the ungodly. This weapon then deliver from the enemies of Thine hand, that is, of Thy Power, that is, from Mine enemies. Destroy them, O Lord, from off the earth, scatter them in their life. O Lord, destroy them from off the earth, which they inhabit, scatter them throughout the world in this life, which only they think their life, who despair of life eternal. And by Thy hidden things their belly hath been filled. Now not only this visible punishment shall overtake them, but also their memory hath been filled with sins, which as darkness are hidden from the light of Thy truth, that they should forget God. They have been filled with swine's flesh. They have been filled with uncleanness, treading under foot the pearls of God's words. And they have left the rest to their babes: crying out, This sin be upon us and upon our children.

14. Ver. 15. But I shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight. But I, Who have not appeared to them that, with their filthy and darkened heart, can not see the light of wisdom, shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight. I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested. And when they have been satiated with their uncleanness, that they could not know Me, I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested, in them that know Me. In that verse indeed where it is said, filled with swine's flesh, some copies have, filled with children: for from the ambiguity of the Greek a double interpretation has resulted. Now by children we understand works; and as by good children, good works, so by, evil evil.

PSALM 18

To the end, for the servant of the Lord, David himself.

That is, for the strong of hand, Christ in His Manhood. The words of this song which he spoke to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, and of the hand of Saul; and he said, On the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies and of the hand of Saul: namely, the king of the Jews, whom they had demanded for themselves. For as David is said to be by interpretation, strong of hand; so Saul, is said to be demanding. Now it is well known, how that People demanded for themselves a king, and received him for their king, not according to the will of God, but according to their own will.

2. Christ, then, and the Church, that is, whole Christ, the Head and the Body, saith here, (ver. 1.) I will love Thee, O Lord, My strength. I will love Thee, O Lord, by Whom I am strong.

3. Ver. 2. O Lord, My stay, and My refuge, and My deliverer. O Lord, Who hast stayed Me, because I sought refuge with Thee: and I sought refuge, because Thou hast delivered Me. My God is My helper; and I will hope in Him. My God, Who hast first afforded me the help of Thy call, that I might be able to hope in Thee. My defender, and the horn of My salvation, and My redeemer. My defender, because I have not leant upon Myself, lifting up as it were the horn of pride against Thee; but have found Thee a horn indeed, that is, the sure height of salvation: and that I might find it, Thou redeemedst Me.

4. Ver. 3. With praise will I call upon the Lord, and I shall be safe from Mine enemies. Seeking not My own but the Lord's glory, I will call upon Him, and there shall be no means whereby the errors of ungodliness can hurt Me.

5. Ver. 4. The pains of death, that is, of the flesh, have compassed Me about. And the overflowings of ungodliness have troubled Me. Ungodly troubles stirred up for a time, like torrents of rain which will soon subside, have come on to trouble Me.

6. Ver. 5. The pains of hell compassed Me about. Among those that compassed Me about to destroy Me, were pains of envy, which work death, and lead on to the hell of sin. The snares of death prevented Me. They prevented Me, so that they wished to hurt Me first, which shall afterwards be recompensed unto them. Now they seize unto destruction such men as they have evilly persuaded by the boast of righteousness: in the name but not in the reality of which they glory against the Gentiles.

7. Ver. 6. And in Mine oppression I called upon the Lord, and cried unto My God. And He heard My voice from His holy temple. He heard from My heart, wherein He dwelleth, My voice. And My cry in His sight entered into His ears; and My cry, which I utter, not in the ears of men but inwardly before Him Himself, entered into His ears.

8. Ver. 7. And the earth was moved and trembled. When the Son of Man was thus glorified, sinners were moved and trembled. And the foundations of the mountains were troubled. And the hopes of the proud, which were in this life, were troubled. And were moved, for God was wroth with them. That is, that the hope of temporal goods might have now no more establishment in the hearts of men.

9. Ver. 8. There went up smoke in His wrath. The tearful supplication of penitents went up, when they came to know God's threatenings against the ungodly. And fire burneth from His face. And the ardour of love after repentance burns by the knowledge of Him. Coals were kindled from Him. They, who were already dead, abandoned by the fire of good desire and the light of righteousness, and who remained in coldness and darkness, re-kindled and enlightened, have come to life again.

10. Ver. 9. And He bowed the heaven, and came down. And He humbled the just One, that He might descend to men's infirmity. And darkness under His feet. And the ungodly, who savour of things earthly, in the darkness of

their own malice, knew not Him: for the earth under His feet is as it were His footstool.

11. Ver. 10. And He mounted above the cherubim, and did fly. And He was exalted above the fulness of knowledge, that no man should come to Him but by love: for love is the fulfilling of the law. And full soon He shewed to His lovers that He is incomprehensible, lest they should suppose that He is comprehended by corporeal imaginations. He flew above the wings of the winds. But that swiftness, whereby He shewed Himself to be incomprehensible, is above the powers of souls, whereon as upon wings they raise themselves from earthly fears into the air of liberty.

12. Ver. 11. And hath made darkness His hiding place. And hath settled the obscurity of the Sacraments, and the hidden hope in the heart of believers, where He may lie hid, and not abandon them. In this darkness too, wherein we yet walk by faith, and not by sight, as long as we hope for what we see not, and with patience wait for it. Round about Him is His tabernacle. Yet they that believe Him turn to Him and encircle Him; for that He is in the midst of them, since He is equally the friend of all, in whom as in a tabernacle He at this time dwells. Dark water in clouds of air. Nor let any one on this account, if he understand the Scripture, imagine that he is already in that light, which will be when we shall have come out of faith into sight: for in the prophets and in all the preachers of the word of God there is obscure teaching.

13. Ver. 12. In respect of the brightness in His sight: in comparison with the brightness, which is in the sight of His manifestation. His clouds have passed over. The preachers of His word are not now bounded by the confines of Judæa, but have passed over to the Gentiles. Hail and coals of fire. Reproofs are figured, whereby, as by hail, the hard hearts are bruised: but if a cultivated and genial soil, that is, a godly mind, receive them, the hail's hardness dissolves into water, that is, the terror of the lightning-charged, and as it were frozen, reproof dissolves into satisfying doctrine; and hearts kindled by the fire of love revive. All these things in His clouds have passed over to the Gentiles.

14. Ver. 13. And the Lord hath thundered from heaven. And in confidence of the Gospel the Lord hath sounded forth from the heart of the just One. And the Highest gave His voice; that we might entertain it, and in the depth of human things, might hear things heavenly.

15. Ver. 14. And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them. And He sent out Evangelists traversing straight paths on the wings of strength, not in their own power, but His by Whom they were sent. And He scattered them, to whom they were sent, that to some of them they should be the savour of life unto life, to others the savour of death unto death. And He multiplied lightnings, and troubled them. And He multiplied miracles, and troubled them.

16. Ver. 15. And the fountains of water were seen. And the fountains of water springing up into everlasting life, which were made in the preachers, were seen. And the foundations of the round world were revealed. And the Prophets, who were not understood, and upon whom was to be built the world of believers in the Lord, were revealed. At Thy chiding, O Lord: crying out, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. At the blasting of the breath of Thy displeasure; saying, Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

17. Ver. 16. He hath sent down from on high, and hath fetched Me: by calling out of the Gentiles for an inheritance a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle. He hath taken Me out of the multitude of waters. He hath taken Me out of the multitude of peoples.

18. Ver. 17. He hath delivered Me from My strongest enemies. He hath delivered Me from Mine enemies, who prevailed to the afflicting and overturning of this temporal life of Mine. And from them which hate Me; for they are too strong for Me: as long as I am under them knowing not God.

19. Ver. 18. They have prevented Me in the day of My affliction. They have first injured Me, in the time when I am bearing a mortal and toilsome body. And the Lord hath become My stay. And since the stay of earthly pleasure was disturbed and torn up by the bitterness of misery, the Lord hath become My stay.

20. Ver. 19. And hath brought Me forth into a broad place. And since I was enduring the straits of the flesh, He brought Me forth into the spiritual breadth of faith. He hath delivered Me, because He desired Me. Before that I desired Him, He delivered Me from My most powerful enemies, (who were envious of Me when I once desired Him,) and from them that hated Me, because I do desire Him.

21. Ver. 20. And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness. And the Lord shall reward Me according to the righteousness of My good will, Who first shewed mercy, before that I had the good will. And according to the cleanness of My hands He will recompense Me. And according to the cleanness of My deeds He will recompense Me, Who hath given Me to do well by bringing Me forth into the broad place of faith.

22. Ver. 21. Because I have kept the ways of the Lord. That the breadth of good works, that are by faith, and the long-suffering of perseverance should follow after.

23. Nor have I walked impiously apart from My God. Ver. 22. For all His judgments are in My sight. For with persevering contemplation I weigh all His judgments, that is, the rewards of the righteous, and the punishments of the ungodly, and the scourges of such as are to be chastened, and the trials of such as are to be proved. And I have not cast out His righteousness from Me: as they do that faint under their burden of them, and return to their own vomit.

24. Ver. 23. And I shall be undefiled with Him, and I shall keep Myself from Mine iniquity.

25. Ver. 24. And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness. Accordingly not only for the breadth of faith, which worketh by love; but also for the length of perseverance, will the Lord reward Me according to My righteousness. And according to the cleanness of My hands in the sight of His eyes. Not as men see, but in the sight of His eyes. For the things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal: whereto the height of hope appertains.

26. Ver. 25. With the holy Thou shalt be holy. There is a hidden depth also, wherein Thou art known to be holy with the holy, for that Thou makest holy. And with the harmless Thou shalt be harmless. For Thou harmest no man, but each one is bound by the bands of his own sins.

27. Ver. 26. And with the chosen Thou shalt be chosen. And by him whom Thou chooseth, Thou art chosen. And with the froward Thou shalt be froward. And with the froward Thou seemest froward: for they say, The way of the Lord is not right: and their way is not right.

28. Ver. 27. For Thou wilt make whole the humble people. Now this seems froward to the froward, that Thou wilt make them whole that confess their sins. And Thou wilt humble the eyes of the proud. But them that are ignorant of God's righteousness, and seek to establish their own, Thou wilt humble.

29. Ver. 28. For thou wilt light My candle, O Lord. For our light is not from ourselves; but Thou wilt light my candle, O Lord. O my God, Thou wilt enlighten my darkness. For we through our sins are darkness; but, Thou, O my God, wilt enlighten my darkness.

30. Ver. 29. For by Thee shall I be delivered from temptation. For not by myself, but by Thee, shall I be delivered from temptation. And in my God shall I leap over the wall. And not in myself, but in my God shall I leap over the wall, which sin has raised between men and the heavenly Jerusalem.

31. Ver. 30. My God, His way is undefiled. My God cometh not unto men, except they shall have purified the way of faith, whereby He may come to them; for that His way is undefiled. The words of the Lord have been proved by fire. The words of the Lord are tried by the fire of tribulation. He is the Protector of them that hope in Him. And all that hope not in themselves, but in Him, are not consumed by that same tribulation. For hope followeth faith.

32. Ver. 31. For Who is God, but the Lord? Whom we serve. And Who God, but our God? And Who is God, but the Lord? Whom after good service we sons shall possess as the hoped for inheritance.

33. Ver. 32. God, Who hath girded me with strength. God, Who hath girded me that I might be strong, lest the loosely flowing folds of desire hinder my deeds and steps. And hath made my way undefiled. And hath made the way of love, whereby I may come to Him, undefiled, as the way of faith is undefiled, whereby He comes to me.

34. Ver. 33. Who hath made my feet perfect like harts' feet. Who hath made my love perfect to surmount the thorny and dark entanglements of this world. And will set me up on high. And will fix my aim on the heavenly habitation, that I may be filled with all the fulness of God.

35. Ver. 34. Who teacheth my hands for battle. Who teacheth me to work for the overthrow of mine enemies, who strive to shut the kingdom of heaven against us. And Thou hast made mine arms as a bow of steel. And Thou hast made my earnest striving after good works unwearied.

36. Ver. 35. And Thou hast given me the defence of my salvation, and Thy right hand hath held me up. And the favour of Thy grace hath held me up. And Thy discipline hath directed me to the end. And Thy correction, not suffering me to wander from the way, hath directed me that whatsoever I do, I refer to that end, whereby I may cleave to Thee. And this Thy discipline, it shall teach me. And that same correction of Thine shall teach me to attain to that, whereunto it hath directed me.

37. Ver. 36. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me. Nor shall the straits of the flesh hinder me; for Thou hast enlarged my love, working in gladness even with these mortal things and members which are under me. And my footsteps have not been weakened. And either my goings, or the marks which I have imprinted for the imitation of those that follow, have not been weakened.

38. Ver. 37. I will follow up mine enemies, and seize them. I will follow up my carnal affections, and will not be seized by them, but will seize them, so that they may be consumed. And I will not turn, till they fail. And from this purpose I will not turn myself to rest, till they fail who make a tumult about me.

39. Ver. 38. I will break them, and they shall not be able to stand: and they shall not hold out against me. They shall fall under my feet. When they are cast down, I will place before me the loves whereby I walk for evermore.

40. Ver. 39. And Thou hast girded me with strength to the war. And the loose desires of my flesh hast Thou bound up with strength, that in such a fight I may not be encumbered. Thou hast supplanted under me them that rose up against me. Thou hast caused them to be deceived, who followed upon me, that they should be brought under me, who desired to be over me.

41. Ver. 40. And Thou hast given mine enemies the back to me. And Thou hast turned mine enemies, and hast made them to be a back to me, that is, to follow me. And Thou hast destroyed them that hate me. But such other of them, as have persisted in hatred, Thou hast destroyed.

42. Ver. 41. They have cried out, and there was none to save them. For who can save them, whom Thou wouldest not save? To the Lord, and He did not hear them. Nor did they cry out to any chance one, but to the Lord: and He did not judge them worthy of being heard, who depart not from their wickedness.

43. Ver. 42. And I will beat them as small as dust before the face of the wind. And I will beat them small; for dry they are, receiving not the shower of God's mercy; that borne aloft and puffed up with pride they may be hurried along from firm and unshaken hope, and as it were from the earth's solidity and stability. As the clay of the streets I will destroy them. In their wanton and loose course along the broad ways of perdition, which many walk, will I destroy them.

44. Ver. 43. Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of the people. Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of them who said, If we send Him away, all the world will go after Him.

45. Thou shalt make Me the head of the Gentiles. A people whom I have not known have served Me. The people of the Gentiles, whom in bodily presence I have not visited, have served Me. (Ver. 44.) At the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me. They have not seen Me with the eye: but, receiving My preachers, at the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me.

46. The strange children have lied unto Me. Children, not to be called Mine, but rather strange children, to whom it is rightly said, Ye are of your father the devil, have lied unto Me. (Ver. 45.) The strange children have waxen old. The strange children, to whom for their renovation I brought the new Testament, have remained in the old man. And they have halted from their own paths. And like those that are weak in one foot, for holding the old they have rejected the new Testament, they have become halt, even in this old Law, rather following their own traditions, than God's. For they brought frivolous charges of unwashen hands, because such were the paths, which themselves had made and worn by long use, in wandering from the ways of God's commands.

47. Ver. 46. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my God. But to be carnally minded is death: for the Lord liveth, and blessed be my God. And let the God of my salvation be exalted. And let me not think after an earthly fashion of the God of my salvation; nor look from Him for this earthly salvation, but that on high.

48. Ver. 47. O God, Who givest Me vengeance, and subduest the people under Me. O God, Who avengest Me by subduing the people under Me. My Deliverer from My angry enemies: the Jews crying out, Crucify Him, Crucify Him.

49. Ver. 48. From them that rise up against Me Thou wilt exalt Me. From the Jews that rise up against Me in My passion, Thou wilt exalt Me in My resurrection. From the unjust man Thou wilt deliver Me. From their unjust rule Thou wilt deliver Me.

50. Ver. 49. For this cause will I confess to Thee among the Gentiles, O Lord. For this cause shall the Gentiles confess to Thee through Me, O Lord. And I will sing unto Thy Name. And Thou shalt be more widely known by My good deeds.

51. Ver. 50. Magnifying the salvation of His King. God, Who magnifieth, so as to make wonderful, the salvation, which His Son giveth to believers. And shewing mercy to His Christ: God, Who sheweth mercy to His Christ: To David and to His seed for evermore: to the Deliverer Himself strong of hand, Who hath overcome this world; and to them whom, as believers in the

Gospel, He hath begotten for evermore. What things soever are spoken in this Psalm which cannot apply to the Lord Himself personally, that is to the Head of the Church, must be referred to the Church. For whole Christ speaks here, in Whom are all His members.

PSALM 19

first exposition

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. It is a well-known title; nor does the Lord Jesus Christ say what follows, but it is said of Him.

2. Ver. 1. The heavens tell out the glory of God. The righteous Evangelists, in whom, as in the heavens, God dwelleth, set forth the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the glory wherewith the Son glorified the Father upon earth. And the firmament sheweth forth the works of His hands. And the firmament sheweth forth the deeds of the Lord's power, that now made heaven by the assurance of the Holy Ghost, which before was earth by fear.

3. Ver. 2. Day unto day uttereth word. To the spiritual the Spirit giveth out the fulness of the unchangeable Wisdom of God, the Word which in the beginning is God with God. And night unto night announceth knowledge. And to the fleshly, as to those afar off, the mortality of the flesh, by conveying faith, announceth future knowledge.

4. Ver. 3. There is no speech nor language, in which their voices are not heard. In which the voices of the Evangelists have not been heard, seeing that the Gospel was preached in every tongue.

5. Ver. 4. Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

6. In the sun hath He set His tabernacle. Now that He might war against the powers of temporal error, the Lord, being about to send not peace but a sword on earth, in time, or in manifestation, set so to say His military dwelling, that is, the dispensation of His incarnation. (Ver. 5.) And He as a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber. And He, coming forth out of

the Virgin's womb, where God was united to man's nature as a bridegroom to a bride. Rejoiced as a giant to run His way. Rejoiced as One exceeding strong, and surpassing all other men in power incomparable, not to inhabit, but to run His way. For, He stood not in the way of sinners.

7. Ver. 6. His going forth is from the highest heaven. From the Father is His going forth, not that in time, but from everlasting, whereby He was born of the Father. And His meeting is even to the height of heaven. And in the fulness of the Godhead He meets even to an equality with the Father. And there is none that may hide himself from His heat. But whereas, the Word was even made flesh, and dwelt in us, assuming our mortality, He permitted no man to excuse himself from the shadow of death; for the heat of the Word penetrated even it.

8. Ver. 7. The law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls. The law of the Lord, therefore, is Himself Who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it; an undefiled law, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, not oppressing souls with the yoke of bondage, but converting them to imitate Him in liberty. The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to babes. The testimony of the Lord is sure; for, no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him, which things have been hidden from the wise and revealed to babes; for, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

9. Ver. 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. All the statutes of the Lord are right in Him Who taught not what He did not; that they who should imitate Him might rejoice in heart, in those things which they should do freely with love, not slavishly with fear. The commandment of the Lord is lucid, enlightening the eyes. The commandment of the Lord is lucid, with no veil of carnal observances, enlightening the sight of the inner man.

10. Ver. 9. The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring for ever. The fear of the Lord; not that distressing fear under the law, dreading exceedingly the withdrawal of temporal goods, by the love of which the soul commits fornication; but that chaste fear wherewith the Church, the more ardently she loves her Spouse, the more carefully does she take heed of offending

Him, and therefore, perfect love casteth not out this fear, but it endureth for ever.

11. The judgments of the Lord are true, justified together. The judgments of Him, Who judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, are justified in truth unchangeably. For neither in His threatenings or His promises doth God deceive any man, nor can any withdraw either from the ungodly His punishment, or from the godly His reward. (Ver. 10.) To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone. Whether it be gold and stone itself much, or much precious, or much to be desired; still, the judgments of God are to be desired more than the pomp of this world; by desire of which it is brought to pass that the judgments of God are not desired, but feared, or despised, or not believed. But if any be himself gold and precious stone, that he may not be consumed by fire, but received into the treasury of God, more than himself does he desire the judgments of God, Whose will he preferreth to his own. And sweeter than honey and the honey comb. And whether one be even now honey, who, disenthralled already from the chains of this life, is awaiting the day, when he may come up to God's feast; or whether he be yet as the honey comb, wrapped about with this life as it were with wax, not mixed and become one with it, but filling it, needing some pressure of God's hand, not oppressing but expressing it, whereby from life temporal it may be strained out into life eternal: to such an one the judgments of God are sweeter, than he himself is to himself, for that they are sweeter than honey and the honey comb.

12. Ver. 11. For Thy servant keepeth them. For to him who keepeth them not the day of the Lord is bitter. In keeping them there is great reward. Not in any external benefit, but in the thing itself, that God's judgments are kept, is there great reward; great because one rejoiceth therein.

13. Ver. 12. Who understandeth sins? But what sort of sweetness can there be in sins, where there is no understanding? For who can understand sins, which close the very eye, to which truth is pleasant, to which the judgments of God are desirable and sweet? yea, as darkness closes the eye, so do sins the mind, and suffer it not to see either the light, or itself.

14. Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret faults. From the lusts which lie hid in me, cleanse me, O Lord. (Ver. 13.) And from the faults of others preserve Thy servant. Let me not be led astray by others. For he is not a prey to the faults of others, who is cleansed from his own. Preserve therefore from the lusts of others, not the proud man, and him who would be his own master, but, Thy servant. If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. If neither my own secret sins, nor those of others, get the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. For there is no third source of sin, but one's own secret sin, by which the devil fell, and another's sin, by which man is seduced, so as by consenting to make it his own. And I shall be cleansed from the great offence. What but pride? for there is none greater than apostacy from God, which is the beginning of the pride of man. And he shall indeed be undefiled, who is free from this offence also; for this is the last to them who are returning to God, which was the first as they departed from Him.

15. Ver. 14. And the words of my mouth shall be pleasing, and the meditation of my heart is always in Thy sight. The meditation of my heart is not after the vain glory of pleasing men, for now there is pride no more, but in Thy sight alway, Who regardest a pure conscience. O Lord, my Helper, and my Redeemer. O Lord, my Helper, in my approach to Thee; for Thou art my Redeemer, that I might set out unto Thee: lest any attributing to his own wisdom his conversion to Thee, or to his own strength his attaining to Thee, should be rather driven back by Thee, who resistest the proud; for he is not cleansed from the great offence, nor pleasing in Thy sight, Who redeemest us that we may be converted, and helpest us that we may attain unto Thee.

second exposition

1. As we have intreated the Lord to cleanse us from our own secret faults, and preserve His servants from those of others, we ought to understand the meaning of this, that we may sing with man's intelligence, and not as it were with the voice of birds. For black-birds, and parrots, and ravens, and magpies, and such like birds, are often taught by men to utter they know not what. But to sing with understanding has been granted by the divine will to human kind. And how many bad and dissipated men thus sing what is

worthy of their ears and hearts, we well know and we deplore. For they are so much the worse, as they cannot be ignorant of what they sing. For they know that their songs are impure, and yet the greater the impurity the greater their readiness to sing, for they think themselves the more joyous in proportion as they are more unclean. But we who, in the Church, have learnt to sing the oracles of God, should at the same time be instant to be that which is written, Blessed is the people that understand the joyful sound. Therefore, dearest brethren, what we have sung with accordant voice, we ought also with an undisturbed heart to know and understand. For each one of us has in this canticle prayed unto the Lord, and said unto God, Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults, and preserve Thy servant from those of others. If they shall not get the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled, and cleansed from the great offence. Now that we may well understand what this is, and the nature of it, let us, as the Lord shall help us, shortly run over the contents of this Psalm.

2. For the canticle is of Christ, as evidently appears from that passage where it is written, He as a Bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber. For who is the Bridegroom, but He to whom has been betrothed by the Apostle that virgin, for whom the chaste friend of the bridegroom chastely fears, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so this virgin's mind, the Bride of Christ, should be corrupted from the chastity that is in Christ? In this our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, therefore, abundant and full grace resides, of which the Apostle John saith, And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Ver. 1. This glory the heavens declare. The heavens are Saints, raised up from the earth, bearing the Lord. Although the visible heaven also, in some sort, hath declared the glory of Christ. When? When, at the same Lord's nativity, a new star, which had never before been seen, appeared. But, nevertheless, these are truer and higher heavens, of which it is said in the following verses of the Psalm, There is no speech, nor language, in which their voices are not heard. Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Whose words but the heavens'? Whose then but the Apostles'? It is they declare unto us the glory of God, residing in Jesus Christ through grace for the remission of sins. For all have

sinned, and want the glory of God, being justified gratuitously by His Blood. Because gratuitously, therefore grace. For grace is no grace if it be not gratuitous. Because we had before done no good thing, whereby we might deserve such gifts, rather in that punishment was, not for nothing, to be inflicted, therefore was the boon for nothing accorded. Nothing had gone before in our deserts but what would entitle us to condemnation. But He, not for our righteousness, but of His own mercy, hath saved us by the laver of regeneration. This, I say, is the glory of God; this have the heavens declared. This, I say, is God's glory, not thine. For no good hast thou done, and yet so great good hast thou received. If, therefore, thou attainest unto the glory which the heavens have declared, say unto the Lord thy God, My God, His mercy shall prevent me. For it hath prevented thee; of course it hath prevented thee, for that it found no good in thee. Thou preventedst His punishment by thy pride; He prevented thy punishment by effacing thy sins. For as of a sinner justified, of ungodly made godly, of one condemned received into the kingdom, say thou unto the Lord thy God, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. Say we not unto us. For unto whom, if as unto us? Say we, I repeat, not unto us; for if He were so to deal with us, He could only inflict punishment upon us. Not unto us, but unto His own Name let Him give the glory, because He hath not dealt with us according to our iniquities. Not therefore unto us, O Lord, not unto us. The repetition is confirmation; Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. This those heavens knew, which declared the glory of God.

3. And the firmament sheweth the works of His hands. What was before said, the glory of God, is here repeated, the works of His hands. What are the works of His hands? It is not, as some think, that God made all things by the Word, and man, as more excellent than all other things, He made by His Own Hands. We must not think this; this is a weak and inexact notion; for He made all things by the Word. For although diverse works of God are mentioned, among which He made man after His own image, yet all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. But as respects the Hands of God, it is said of the heavens too, And the heavens are the works of Thy Hands. And that you might not suppose that saints are in that place called heavens, he added, They shall perish, but Thou abidest.

Therefore not man only, but the heavens also, that shall perish, did God make with His Hands, to Whom it is said, The heavens are the works of Thy Hands. And of the earth is this self-same said, For the sea is His and He made it, and His Hands laid the foundations of the dry land. Therefore, if He made the heavens with His Hands, and the earth with His Hands, He made not man alone with His hands; and if by the Word He made the heavens, and by the Word the earth, therefore by the Word man too. What by the Word that by the hand, what by the hand that by the Word. For the stature of God is not marked out by human members, Who is wholly every where, and is no where contained. What therefore He made by the Word, He made by the Wisdom, and what He made by the Hand he did by the Power; now Christ is the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God, and all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. The heavens have declared, do declare, will declare, the glory of God. The heavens, I say, that is, the Saints will declare the glory of God; raised aloft from earth, bearing God, thundering with precepts, lightening with Wisdom, will declare that glory of God, as I said, whereby we that are saved are unworthy of it. This unworthiness, that is, wherein we were unworthy, the younger son acknowledges when straitened by want; this unworthiness, I say, the younger son acknowledges, far from his father's home, a worshipper of demons, as it were a feeder of swine; he acknowledges the glory of God, but when straitened by want. And since by that glory of God we have been made what we were not worthy of, he says to his father, I am not worthy to be called thy son. Unhappy, he obtains happiness by his lowliness, and shews himself worthy in the confession of his unworthiness. This glory of God the heavens declare, and the firmament sheweth the works of His hands. The heavens, the firmament, are a firm heart, a fearless heart. For these things are shewn among the ungodly, among the enemies of God, among the lovers of the world, and the persecutors of the righteous; in the midst of a violent world are these things shewn. But what could the violence of the world effect, when the firmament shewed these things? The firmament sheweth; what? the works of His hands. What are the works of His hands? That glory of God, whereby we are saved, whereby we are created in good works. For we are His work, created in Christ Jesus in good works. For He not only made us men, but righteous men too, if so we be, and not we ourselves.

4. Ver. 2. Day unto day uttereth a word, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. What is this? Perhaps it is plain and evident what day unto day uttereth a word is, evident and plain as if by day. But what night unto night sheweth knowledge is, is obscure as if by night. Day unto day, saints unto saints, Apostles unto believers, Christ Himself unto Apostles, to whom He said, Ye are the light of the world. This seems plain, and easy of apprehension. But how doth night unto night shew knowledge? Some have understood these words simply, and perhaps it may be so, considering the meaning of this sentence to be, that what the Apostles heard in our Lord Jesus Christ's time, during His converse on earth, this has been passed on to posterity as from time to time; day unto day, night unto night, the former day unto the latter day, the former night unto the latter night, for that this doctrine is preached day and night. Let this simple interpretation suffice him whom it will suffice. But some words in Scripture have from their obscurity this advantage, that they give birth to many interpretations. Accordingly had this been plain, you would have heard some one thing, but as it is obscurely spoken, you will hear many. There is too another interpretation, day unto day, night unto night, that is, spirit unto spirit, flesh unto flesh. There is another, day unto day, spiritual unto spiritual, night unto night, carnal unto carnal. For both hear, though both do not equally understand. For the one hear it as a word uttered, the other as knowledge declared. For what is uttered is uttered to those present, but what is declared is declared to those that are far removed. More senses of the word heavens may be discovered, but because of the stress of the present time, a limit must be imposed. Yet let us mention one more meaning, which certain have, as if by conjecture, opened. When, they say, the Lord Christ talked with the Apostles, day unto day uttered a word; when Judas betrayed the Lord Christ to the Jews, night unto night declared knowledge.

5. Ver. 3. There is no speech nor language in which their voices are not heard. Whose, but of those heavens which declare the glory of God? There is no speech, nor language, in which their voices are not heard. Read the Acts of the Apostles, how, when the Holy Ghost came upon them, they were all filled with Him, and spake in the tongues of all nations, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Lo, there is no speech nor language, in which their voices are not heard. But not there only, where they were filled, was

the sound. (Ver. 4.) Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. And therefore are we even speaking here. For that sound hath come even unto us, the sound which went forth into all the earth, and the heretic cometh not into the Church! For this cause hath the sound gone forth into all the earth, that thou mayest enter into heaven. O man full of mischief and strife, most evil and still liking to err, O haughty son, hear thy Father's will. Lo, what can be more plain, what more evident? Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Needs it any interpreter? Why strivest thou against thyself? Wouldest thou hold a part in dissent, who canst hold the whole in concord?

6. In the sun hath He set His tabernacle. His Church, that is, in open sight, not in secret, not that it should lie hid, not veiled as it were; lest haply as veiled it should light upon the flocks of the heretics. It is said again to one in holy Scripture, For thou didst this secretly, thou shalt suffer in the sun, that is, thou didst the evil in secret, thou shalt suffer the punishment in the open sight of all men. In the sun therefore hath He set His tabernacle. Why, O heretic, fliest into darkness? Art thou a Christian? Hear Christ. Art thou a servant? Hear thy Lord. Art thou a son? Hear thy Father; amend thyself, return to life again. Let us say of thee too, He was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. Say not to me, Why dost thou seek me, if I am lost? For therefore do I seek thee, because thou art lost. Do not seek me, says he. This is indeed the wish of ungodliness, whereby we are divided; but not of charity, whereby we are brethren. I should not be extravagant, if I were to seek my servant; and am I called extravagant, because I seek my brother? Be this his conceit, in whom brotherly love exists not; yet will I seek my brother. Let him be even angry, so he be still sought, who is appeased when he is found. I will seek, I say, my brother, and appeal to my Lord, not against him, but for him. Nor in my appeal will I say, Lord, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me; but, speak to my brother, that he hold the inheritance with me. Why then errest thou, brother? Why fly by the corners? Why try to lie hid? He has set His tabernacle in the sun. (Ver. 5.) And as a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber, I suppose that thou mayest recognise Him. As a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber, He rejoiced as a giant to run His course; He hath set His tabernacle in the sun; that is, as a bridegroom when the Word was made

flesh, He found a bridal chamber in the Virgin's womb; and thence coming out as from a closet of surpassing purity, joined to the nature of man, humble in His mercy below all, strong in His majesty above all. For this is, He rejoiced as a giant to run His course, He was born, grew up, taught, suffered, rose again, ascended; He ran His course, He halted not therein. The self-same bridegroom then Who did all this, He set in the sun, that is, in the open sight of all men, His tabernacle, that is, His holy Church.

7. Now wouldest thou hear what course He swiftly ran? (Ver. 6.) His going forth is from the highest heaven, and His meeting even to the height thereof. But after that He went forth thence, and returned on His backward course, He sent His Spirit. There appeared to them, upon whom He came, cloven tongues as of fire. As fire the Holy Ghost came, to burn the hay of flesh, to smelt and refine the gold; as fire He came, and therefore it follows, and there is none that can hide from the heat thereof.

8. Ver. 7. The law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls. This is the Holy Ghost. The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to babes, not to the proud. This is the Holy Ghost.

9. Ver. 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, not terrifying, but rejoicing the heart. This is the Holy Ghost. The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes; not dulling them, the eyes, not of the flesh, but of the heart, not of the outer, but of the inner man. This is the Holy Ghost.

10. Ver. 9. The fear of the Lord; not a slavish fear, but chaste, loving freely, not fearing to be punished by Him at Whom it is alarmed, but to be separated from Him Whom it loves. This is chaste fear, not which perfect love casteth out, but enduring for ever. This is the Holy Ghost, that is, this fear the Holy Ghost giveth, bringeth, implanteth. The judgments of the Lord are true, justified together, not for the contentions of division, but for the gathering together of unity. For this is, together. This is the Holy Ghost. Therefore He made them, upon whom He first descended, speak in the tongues of all nations, because He announced that He would gather together the tongues of all nations into unity. What one man did then on receiving the Holy Ghost, that one should speak in the tongues of all nations, this unity itself now doth, she speaketh in all tongues. And now One Man

speaketh in all nations in all tongues, One Man the Head and the Body, One Man Christ and the Church, perfect Man together, the bridegroom and the bride. But they two, saith He, shall be one flesh. The judgments of the Lord are true justified together, because of unity.

11. Ver. 10. To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone. Either much gold, or much precious, or much to be desired; much any way, with the heretic little. They do not love together with us, yet with us they confess Christ. This same Christ Whom with me thou dost confess, Him love with me. And he, who willeth not together, refuses, resists, rejects, with him there is not this desirableness more than gold, and much precious stone. Listen again, sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb. But this is all against the wanderer; honey is bitter to one in a fever; but notwithstanding sweet and acceptable to one restored to health, for to sound health it is dear. To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone, sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb.

12. Ver. 11. For Thy servant also keepeth them. How sweet they are Thy servant proves by keeping them, not by talking. Thy servant keepeth them, for that they are both at present sweet, and healthful for time to come; for in keeping them there is great reward. But enamoured of his strife, the heretic neither sees this brilliancy, nor tastes the sweetness.

13. Ver. 12. For, Who understandeth sins? Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Therefore, saith he, he is a servant who keepeth this sweetness, the pleasantness of charity, the love of unity. I, he says, myself who keep it, entreat Thee, (for who understandeth sins?) lest some steal over me, man as I am, and by some, as a man, I be first entangled. Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins. This then we have sung; see, to this I have come in my discourse. Let us say, and sing with understanding, and pray in our song, and by our prayer obtain our petition, let us say, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins. For, Who understandeth sins? If darkness is seen, sins are understood. In fact, when we repent of sin, we are in the light. For whilst one is entangled in his sin, with eyes as it were darkened and closed, he sees not the sin; for so, if the eye of thy body be covered, thou canst neither see aught else, nor that by which it is covered. Therefore say we to God, Who can see what He will purify, who can have an eye on what

He will heal; say we to Him, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins, (ver. 13.) and preserve Thy servant from those of others. My own sins, he says, pollute me, the sins of others afflict me; from the one cleanse me, from the other preserve me. Take away from my heart, I pray, the evil thought, keep back from me the evil counsellor, this is, Cleanse me from my secret sins, and preserve Thy servant from those of others. For these two kinds of faults, both our own and those of others, appeared even from the very first in the beginning. The devil fell by his own sin, he degraded Adam by another's sin. This same servant of God, who keepeth the judgments of God in which there is great reward, in another Psalm too prays thus, Let not the foot of pride come unto me, and let not the hand of the wicked move me. Let not the foot of pride come unto me, that is, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins; and let not the hand of the wicked move me, that is, Preserve Thy servant from the sins of others.

14. If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. If they get not the dominion over me, mine own secret sins and the sins of others, then shall I be undefiled. This is no daring reliance on his own strength, but he entreats the Lord to fulfil it; to Whom it is said in another Psalm, Order my ways according to Thy word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. If thou art a Christian, fear not the dominion of any man without; the Lord thy God fear alway. Fear the evil in thyself, that is, thy lust, not what God made in thee, but what thou hast made for thine own self. The Lord made thee a good servant, thou hast created in thine own heart an evil lord for thine own self. Justly wilt thou be subject to iniquity, justly wilt thou be subject to the lord, whom thou hast made for thine own self; since thou wouldest not be subject to Him Who made thee.

15. But if, he says, they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled, and cleansed from the great offence. What offence, do we suppose? What is that great offence? Perchance it is other than that I am about to mention, yet I will not conceal what I think. I deem the great offence to be pride. This perhaps is in another way intimated in that he saith, And I shall be cleansed from the great offence. Do you enquire how great that offence is, which cast down an Angel, which of an Angel made a Devil, and for ever closed the kingdom of heaven against him? This is the

great offence, and the head and cause of all offences. For it is written, The beginning of all sin is pride. And that thou mightest not disregard it as any light matter, he says, The beginning of pride in man is to depart from God. No light evil, my brethren, is this vice; Christian humility is displeasing to this vice in those persons, which you see to be of high degree. By reason of this vice men disdain to submit their necks to the yoke of Christ, being more straitly fastened to the yoke of sin. For no release from serving will be theirs; for they do not like to serve, but to serve is expedient for them. By misliking to serve they gain nothing, but that they serve not a good Lord, not that they do not serve at all. Since whosoever will not be the servant of love, he must needs be the servant of iniquity. From this vice, which is the head of all vices, for that all other vices spring from thence, is produced a departing from God, whilst the soul goes into darkness, and makes an evil use of its free will, with all other sins too in its train; so that a man squanders all his substance by prodigal living with harlots, and through want becomes a feeder of swine, who was the associate of Angels. On account of this vice, on account of this great sin of pride, God came in humility. This cause, this great sin, this mighty disease of souls, brought down the Almighty Physician from heaven, humbled Him even to the form of a servant, exposed Him to despiteful treatment, hung Him on the tree; that by the saving strength of so great medicine this swelling might be cured. Let man now at length blush to be proud, for whose sake God hath become humble. So, saith he, shall I be cleansed from the great offence, because, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

16. Ver. 14. And hereby shall the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be pleasing in Thy sight alway. For if I be not cleansed from this great offence, my words will be pleasing in the sight of men, not in Thy sight. The proud soul would be pleasing in the sight of men; the humble soul would be pleasing in secret, where God seeth; so that if she shall please men with any good work, she would congratulate them whom the good work pleases, not herself, to whom it ought to be enough that she hath done a good work. Our glory, saith the Apostle, is this, the testimony of our conscience. And therefore let us also say what follows, O Lord, my Helper and my Redeemer. Helper in good, Redeemer from evil. Helper, that I may

dwell in Thy love, Redeemer, that Thou mayest deliver me from mine iniquity.

PSALM 20

To the end, a Psalm of David.

1. This is a well-known title; and it is not Christ Who speaks; but the prophet speaks to Christ, under the form of wishing foretelling things to come.

2. Ver. 1. The Lord hear Thee in the day of trouble. The Lord hear Thee in the day in which Thou saidst, Father glorify Thy Son. The name of the God of Jacob protect Thee. For to Thee belongeth the younger people. Since the elder shall serve the younger.

3. Ver. 2. Send Thee help from the Holy, and from Sion defend Thee. Making for Thee a sanctified Body, the Church, from watching safe, which waiteth when Thou shalt come from the wedding.

4. Ver. 3. Be mindful of all Thy sacrifice. Make us mindful of all Thy injuries and despiteful treatment, which Thou hast borne for us. And be Thy whole burnt offering made fat. And turn the cross, whereon Thou wast wholly offered up to God, into the joy of the resurrection.

5. Diapsalma. (Ver. 4.) The Lord render to Thee according to Thine Heart. The Lord render to Thee, not according to their heart, who thought by persecution they could destroy Thee; but according to Thine Heart, Wherein Thou knewest what profit Thy passion would have. And fulfil all Thy counsel. And fulfil all Thy counsel, not only that whereby Thou didst lay down Thy life for Thy friends, that the corrupted grain might rise again to more abundance; but that also whereby blindness in part hath happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so all Israel might be saved.

6. Ver. 5. We will exult in Thy salvation. We will exult in that death will in no wise hurt Thee; for so Thou wilt also shew that it cannot hurt us either.

And in the name of the Lord our God will we be magnified. And the confession of Thy name shall not only not destroy us, but shall even magnify us.

7. The Lord fulfil all Thy petitions. The Lord fulfil not only the petitions which Thou madest on earth, but those also whereby Thou intercedest for us in heaven. (Ver. 6.) Now have I known that the Lord hath saved His Christ. Now hath it been shewn to me in prophecy, that the Lord will raise up His Christ again. He will hear Him from His holy heaven. He will hear Him not from earth only, where He prayed to be glorified; but from heaven also, where interceding for us at the Right Hand of the Father, He hath from thence shed abroad the Holy Spirit on them that believe on Him. In strength is the safety of His right hand. Our strength is in the safety of His favour, when even out of tribulation He giveth help, that when we are weak, then we may be strong. For vain is that safety of man, which comes not of His right hand but of His left: for thereby are they lifted up to great pride, whosoever in their sins have secured a temporal safety.

8. Ver. 7. Some in chariots, and some in horses. Some are drawn away by the ever moving succession of temporal goods; and some are preferred to proud honours, and in them exult: But we will exult in the name of the Lord our God. But we fixing our hope on things eternal, and not seeking our own glory, will exult in the name of the Lord our God.

9. Ver. 8. They have been bound, and fallen. And therefore were they bound by the lust of temporal things, fearing to spare the Lord, lest they should lose their place by the Romans: and rushing violently on the stone of offence and rock of stumbling, they fell from the heavenly hope: to whom the blindness in part of Israel hath happened, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own. But we are risen, and stand upright. But we, that the Gentile people might enter in, out of the stones raised up as children to Abraham, who followed not after righteousness, have attained to it, and are risen; and not by our own strength, but being justified by faith, we stand upright.

10. Ver. 9. O Lord, save the King: that He, Who in His Passion hath shewn us an example of conflict, should also offer up our sacrifices, the Priest

raised from the dead, and established in heaven. And hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee. And as He now offereth for us, hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee.

PSALM 21

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. The title is a familiar one; the Psalm is of Christ.

2. Ver. 1. O Lord, the King shall rejoice in Thy strength. O Lord, in Thy strength, whereby the Word was made flesh, the Man Christ Jesus shall rejoice: And shall exult exceedingly in Thy salvation. And in that, whereby Thou quickenest all things, shall exult exceedingly.

3. Ver. 2. Thou hast given Him the desire of His soul. He desired to eat the Passover, and to lay down His life when He would, and again when He would to take it; and Thou hast given it to Him. And hast not deprived Him of the good pleasure of His lips. My peace, saith He, I leave with you: and it was done.

4. Ver. 3. For Thou hast presented Him with the blessings of sweetness. Because He had first quaffed the blessing of Thy sweetness, the gall of our sins did not hurt Him. Diapsalma. Thou hast set a crown of precious stone on His Head. At the beginning of His discoursing precious stones were brought, and compassed Him about; His disciples, from whom the commencement of His preaching should be made.

5. Ver. 4. He asked life; and Thou gavest Him: He asked a resurrection, saying, Father, glorify Thy Son; and Thou gavest it Him, Length of days for ever and ever. The prolonged ages of this world which the Church was to have, and after them an eternity, world without end.

6. Ver. 5. His glory is great in Thy salvation. Great indeed is His glory in the salvation, whereby Thou hast raised Him up again. Glory and great honour shalt Thou lay upon Him. But Thou shalt yet add unto Him glory and great honour, when Thou shalt place Him in heaven at Thy right hand.

7. Ver. 6. For Thou shalt give Him blessing for ever and ever. This is the blessing which Thou shalt give Him for ever and ever: Thou shalt make Him glad in joy together with Thy countenance. According to His manhood, Thou shalt make Him glad together with Thy countenance, which He lifted up to Thee.

8. Ver. 7. For the King hopeth in the Lord. For the King is not proud, but humble in heart, he hopeth in the Lord. And in the mercy of the Most Highest He shall not be moved. And in the mercy of the Most Highest His obedience even unto the death of the Cross shall not disturb His humility.

9. Ver. 8. Let Thy hand be found by all Thine enemies. Be Thy power, O King, when Thou comest to judgment, found by all Thine enemies; who in Thy humiliation discerned it not. Let Thy right hand find out all that hate Thee. Let the glory, wherein Thou reignest at the right hand of the Father, find out for punishment in the day of judgment all that hate Thee; for that now they have not found it.

10. Ver. 9. Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven: Thou shalt make them on fire within, by the consciousness of their ungodliness: In the time of Thy countenance: in the time of Thy manifestation. The Lord shall trouble them in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them. And then, being troubled by the vengeance of the Lord, after the accusation of their conscience, they shall be given up to eternal fire, to be devoured.

11. Ver. 10. Their fruit shalt Thou destroy out of the earth. Their fruit, because it is earthly, shalt Thou destroy out of the earth. And their seed from the sons of men. And their works; or, whomsoever they have seduced, Thou shalt not reckon among the sons of men, whom Thou hast called into the everlasting inheritance.

12. Ver. 11. Because they turned evils against Thee. Now this punishment shall be recompensed to them, because the evils which they supposed to hang over them by Thy reign, they turned against Thee to Thy death. They imagined a device, which they were not able to establish. They imagined a device, saying, It is expedient that one die for all: which they were not able to establish, not knowing what they said.

13. Ver. 12. For Thou shalt set them low. For Thou shalt rank them among those from whom in degradation and contempt Thou wilt turn away. In Thy leavings Thou shalt make ready their countenance. And in these things that Thou leavest, that is, in the desires of an earthly kingdom, Thou shalt make ready their shamelessness for Thy passion.

14. Ver. 13. Be Thou exalted, O Lord, in Thy strength. Be Thou, Lord, Whom in humiliation they did not discern, exalted in Thy strength, which they thought weakness. We will sing and praise Thy power. In heart and in deed we will celebrate and make known Thy marvels.

PSALM 22

first exposition

To the end, for the taking up of the morning, a Psalm of David.

1. To the end, for His own resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaketh. For in the morning on the first day of the week was His resurrection, whereby He was taken up, into eternal life, Over whom death shall have no more dominion. Now what follows is spoken in the person of The Crucified. For from the head of this Psalm are the words, which He cried out, whilst hanging on the Cross, sustaining also the person of the old man, whose mortality He bare. For our old man was nailed together with Him to the Cross.

2. Ver. 1. O God, my God, look upon me, why hast Thou forsaken me far from my salvation? Far removed from my salvation: for salvation is far from sinners. The words of my sins. For these are not the words of righteousness, but of my sins. For it is the old man nailed to the Cross that speaks, ignorant even of the reason why God hath forsaken him: or else it may be thus, The words of my sins are far from my salvation.

3. Ver. 2. My God, I will cry unto Thee in the day-time, and Thou wilt not hear. My God, I will cry unto Thee in the prosperous circumstances of this life, that they be not changed; and Thou wilt not hear, because I shall cry unto Thee in the words of my sins. And in the night-season, and not to my folly. And so in the adversities of this life will I cry to Thee for prosperity; and in like manner Thou wilt not hear. And this Thou doest not to my folly, but rather that I may have wisdom to know what Thou wouldest have me cry for, not with the words of sins out of longing for life temporal, but with the words of turning to Thee for life eternal.

4. Ver. 3. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, and therefore wilt not hear the unclean words of sins. The praise of him that seeth Thee; not of him, who hath sought his own praise in tasting of the forbidden fruit, that on the opening of his bodily eyes he should endeavour to hide himself from Thy sight.

5. Ver. 4. Our Fathers hoped in Thee. All the righteous, namely, who sought not their own praise, but Thine. They hoped in Thee, and Thou deliveredst them.

6. Ver. 5. They cried unto Thee, and were saved. They cried unto Thee, not in the words of sins, from which salvation is far; and therefore were they saved. They hoped in Thee, and were not confounded. They hoped in Thee, and their hope did not deceive them. For they placed it not in themselves.

7. Ver. 6. But I am a worm, and no man. But I, speaking now not in the person of Adam, but I in My own person, Jesus Christ, was born without human generation in the flesh, that I might be as man beyond men; that so at least human pride might deign to imitate My humility. The scorn of men, and outcast of the people. In which humility I was made the scorn of men, so as that it should be said, as a reproachful railing, Be thou His disciple: and that the people despise Me.

8. Ver. 7. All that saw Me laughed Me to scorn. All that saw Me derided Me. And spake with the lips, and shook the head. And they spoke, not with the heart, but with the lips.

9. For they shook their head in derision, saying, (ver. 8.) He trusted in the Lord, let Him deliver Him: let Him save Him, since He desireth Him. These were their words; but they were spoken with the lips.

10. Ver. 9. Since Thou art He Who drew Me out of the womb. Since Thou art He Who drew Me, not only out of that Virgin womb, (for this is the law of all men's birth, that they be drawn out of the womb,) but also out of the womb of the Jewish nation; by the darkness whereof he is covered, and not yet born into the light of Christ, whosoever places his salvation in the carnal observance of the Sabbath, and of circumcision, and the like. My hope from My mother's breasts. My hope, O God, not from the time when I began to

be fed by the milk of the Virgin's breasts; for it was even before; but from the breasts of the Synagogue, as I have said, out of the womb, Thou hast drawn Me, that I should not suck in the customs of the flesh.

11. Ver. 10. I have been strengthened in Thee from the womb. It is the womb of the Synagogue, which did not carry Me, but threw Me out: but I fell not, for Thou heldest me. From My mother's womb Thou art My God. From My mother's womb: My mother's womb did not cause that, as a babe, I should be forgetful of Thee.

12. Thou art My God, (ver. 11.) depart not from Me; for trouble is hard at hand. Thou art, therefore, My God, depart not from Me; for trouble is nigh unto Me; for it is in My body. For there is none to help. For who helpeth, if Thou helpest not?

13. Ver. 12. Many calves came about Me. The multitude of the wanton populace came about Me. Fat bulls closed Me in. And their leaders, glad at My oppression, closed Me in.

14. Ver. 13. They opened their mouth upon Me. They opened their mouth upon Me, not out of Thy Scripture, but of their own lusts. As a ravening and roaring lion. As a lion, whose ravening is, that I was taken and led; and whose roaring, Crucify, Crucify.

15. Ver. 14. I was poured out like water, and all My bones were scattered. I was poured out like water, when My persecutors fell: and through fear, the stays of My body, that is, the Church, My disciples were scattered from Me. My heart became as melting wax, in the midst of my belly. My wisdom, which was written of Me in the sacred books, was, as if hard and shut up, not understood: but after that the fire of My Passion was applied, it was, as if melted, manifested, and entertained in the memory of My Church.

16. Ver. 15. My strength dried up as a potsherd. My strength dried up by My Passion; not as hay, but a potsherd, which is made stronger by fire. And My tongue cleaved to My jaws. And they, through whom I was soon to speak, kept My precepts in their hearts. And Thou broughtest Me down to the dust of death. And to the ungodly appointed to death, whom the wind casteth forth as dust from the face of the earth, Thou broughtest Me down.

17. Ver. 16. For many dogs came about Me. For many came about Me barking, not for truth, but for custom. The council of the malignant came about Me. [The council of the malignant besieged Me.] They pierced My hands and feet. They pierced with nails My hands and feet.

18. Ver. 17. They numbered distinctly all My bones. They numbered distinctly all My bones, while extended on the wood of the Cross, Yea, these same regarded, and beheld Me. Yea, these same, that is, unchanged, regarded and beheld Me.

19. Ver. 18. They divided My garments for themselves, and cast the lot upon My vesture.

20. Ver. 19. But Thou, O Lord, withhold not Thy help far from Me. But Thou, O Lord, raise Me up again, not as the rest of men, at the end of the world, but immediately. Look to My defence. Look, that they in no wise hurt Me.

21. Ver. 20. Deliver My soul from the sword. Deliver My soul from the tongue of dissension. And My only One from the hand of the dog. And from the power of the people, barking after their custom, deliver My Church.

22. Ver. 21. Save Me from the lion's mouth: save Me from the mouth of the kingdom of this world: and my humility from the horns of the unicorns. And from the loftiness of the proud, exalting themselves to special preeminence, and enduring no partakers, save My humility.

23. Ver. 22. I will declare Thy name to My brethren. I will declare Thy name to the humble, and to My Brethren that love one another as they have been beloved by Me. In the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. In the midst of the Church will I with rejoicing preach Thee.

24. Ver. 23. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him. Ye that fear the Lord, seek not your own praise, but praise Him. All ye seed of Jacob, magnify Him. All ye seed of him whom the elder shall serve, magnify Him.

25. Let all the seed of Israel fear Him. Let all who have been born to a new life, and restored to the vision of God fear Him. (Ver. 24.) Since He hath not

despised, nor disregarded the prayer of the poor man. Since He hath not despised the prayer, not of him who, crying unto God in the words of sins was loath to overpass a vain life, but the prayer of the poor man, not swollen up with transitory pomps. Nor hath He turned away His face from Me. As from him, who said, I will cry unto Thee, but Thou wilt not hear. And when I cried unto Him He heard Me.

26. Ver. 25. With Thee is My praise. For I seek not Mine own praise, for Thou art My praise, Who dwellest in the holy place; and, praise of Israel, Thou hearest The Holy One now beseeching Thee. In the great Church I will confess Thee. In the Church of the whole world I will confess Thee. I will offer My vows in the sight of them that fear Him. I will offer the sacraments of My Body and Blood in the sight of them that fear Him.

27. Ver. 26. The poor shall eat, and be filled. The humble and the despisers of the world shall eat, and imitate Me. For so they will neither desire this world's abundance, nor fear its want. And they shall praise the Lord, who seek Him. For the praise of the Lord is the pouring out of that fulness. Their hearts shall live for ever and ever. For that food is the food of the heart.

28. Ver. 27. All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. They shall remember themselves: for, by the Gentiles, born in death and bent on outward things, God had been forgotten; and then shall all the borders of the earth be turned to the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in their own consciences.

29. Ver. 28. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations. For the kingdom is the Lord's, not proud men's: and He shall rule over the nations.

30. Ver. 29. All the rich of the earth have eaten, and worshipped. The rich of the earth too have eaten the Body of their Lord's humiliation, and though they have not, as the poor, been filled even to imitation, yet they have worshipped. In His sight shall fall all that descend to earth. For He alone seeth how all they fall, who abandoning a heavenly conversation, make choice, on earth, to appear happy to men, who see not their fall.

31. And My Soul shall live to Him. And My Soul, Which in the contempt of this world seems to men as it were to die, shall live, not to itself, but to Him. And My seed shall serve Him. (Ver. 30.) And My deeds, or they who through Me believe on Him, shall serve Him.

32. Ver. 31. The generation to come shall be declared to the Lord. The generation of the New Testament shall be declared to the honour of the Lord. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness. And the Evangelists shall declare His righteousness. To a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made. To a people that shall be born to the Lord through faith.

second exposition

A Sermon delivered on the Anniversary of the Lord's Passion.

1. What God would not have passed over in silence in His Scripture, must not either by us be passed over in silence, and by you must be heard. The Lord's Passion, as we know, happened once: for once hath Christ died, the Just for the unjust. And we know, and are sure, and hold fast with faith unshaken, that Christ rising from the dead dieth no more, and death shall have no more dominion over Him. These are the Apostle's words: yet that we may not forget what once occurred, it is transacted in our memory every year. Does Christ die as often as the Easter celebration comes round? but yet the yearly memorial does as it were represent what occurred long since, and causes in us such emotions as if we saw the Lord hanging on the Cross, not of course as mocking, but believing in Him. For as He hung on the Cross He was mocked, as He sitteth in heaven He is worshipped. Or haply is He mocked still, and now we must not be angry with the Jews, who mocked Him at all events as He was dying, not as He was reigning? And who is there, who mocks Christ still? Would it were one, would it were two, would that they could be numbered. All the chaff of His threshing-floor mocks Him, and the wheat sighs for the mocking of the Lord. This I would sigh for with you. For it is the season of sorrow. The Lord's Passion is in course of celebration: it is the season of sighing, the season of weeping, the season of confession and supplication. And which of us is sufficient for shedding tears answerable to the just demands of so great sorrow? But what now saith the Prophet? Who will give my head water, and mine eyes a

fountain of tears? If there were really a fountain of tears in our eyes, even this would not suffice Christ mocked in a matter that is clear, in a matter wherein no one can say, "I understood it not." For to Him who possesses the whole world a part is offered; and to Him who sitteth at the right hand of the Father it is said, "See what Thou hast here;" and for the whole earth Africa alone is shewn Him.

2. The words which we have just heard, brethren, where shall we place them? O that they could be written with our tears. Who was the woman who came in with the ointment? Of what was she the type? was she not of the Church? Whereof was that ointment the figure? was it not of that sweet savour, of which the Apostle says, We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place? For the Apostle too was speaking in the person of this same Church. And the words, we are, he said to the faithful. And what said he? We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place. In every place, Paul said that all the faithful are a sweet savour of Christ; and he is contradicted, and it is said, Africa alone has a sweet savour, all the world besides stinketh. Who says, We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place? The Church. This sweet savour that box of ointment figured, with which the Lord was anointed. Let us see if the Lord Himself do not also bear witness to it. When some who sought their own things, covetous, thieves, that is, that Judas, said of the ointment, To what purpose is this loss? the costly thing might be sold, and benefit the poor. For he wished to sell the sweet savour of Christ. What was the Lord's answer? Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work upon Me. And what shall I say more? when He Himself said, And wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told. Is there aught to add to this? Is there aught to take away? Is there any reason why we should lend our ears to revilers? Has the Lord spoken this falsely, or been deceived? Let them make their choice which to say, let them say either that the Truth hath spoken falsely, or let them say that the Truth was deceived. Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached. And as if thou wouldest ask Him; "But where shall it be preached?" He answers, in the whole world. Let us listen to the Psalm; let us see, if it say the same. Let us listen to that which is sung in lamentation, and truly a matter it is worthy of plaint, when it is sung to the deaf. I wonder, brethren, if this psalm is read to-day among the party of

Donatus too. I ask you, my brethren, I confess to you, Christ's mercy knoweth that I wonder thus, as though they were made of stone, and can not hear. What thing more plain can be spoken to the deaf? Christ's Passion is set forth as clearly as the Gospel, and it was written, I know not how many years before the Lord was born of the Virgin Mary: it was a herald announcing the future Judge. Let us peruse it, as far as the stress of time permits, not as the promptings of our sorrow would move us; but, as I said, as far as the stress of time permits.

3. Ver. 1. O God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me? This first verse we heard on the Cross, where the Lord said, Eli, Eli, that is, My God, My God, lama sabachthani? which is, why hast Thou forsaken Me? The Evangelist hath interpreted this, and said that He spoke in the Hebrew tongue, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? What did the Lord intend to say? For God had not forsaken Him, forasmuch as He was Himself God; of course as the Son of God, God; of course as the Word of God, God. Hear, at the very commencement, that Evangelist, who poured forth what he had drunk in from the Lord's Breast: let us see, whether Christ be God: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The very Word then that was God, was made Flesh, and dwelt in us. And when the Word, God, was made Flesh, He was hanging on the Cross, and said, My God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me? why is it said, but because we were there, but because the Church is the Body of Christ? Wherefore said He, My God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me? unless in some sort as rousing our attention, and saying, "Was this Psalm written concerning Me?" Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. What sins in Him, of Whom it is said, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth? How then saith He, My sins; unless that He prayeth for our sins, and made our sins His sins, that He might make His righteousness our righteousness?

4. Ver. 2. My God, I will cry unto Thee in the day-time, and Thou wilt not hear: and in the night-season, and not to my folly. He spake of course of me, of thee, of such an one. For He bare His Body, that is, the Church. Unless haply ye think, brethren, that when the Lord said, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me, He was afraid to die. The soldier is not

braver than the captain; It is enough for the servant, that he be as his lord. Paul, a soldier of Christ the King, says, I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. He wishes for death, that he may be with Christ, and is Christ Himself afraid of death? But what bare He but our weakness, and in behalf of those who, having a place in His body, yet fear death, did He speak thus? Hence came that voice, it was the voice of His members, not of the Head; and so also in these words, I have cried by day, and by night-season, and Thou wilt not hear. For many cry in tribulation, and are not heard: but unto salvation, not to folly. Paul cried that the thorn in the flesh might be taken away from him, and he was not heard for it to be taken away; and it was said to him, My grace is sufficient for thee; for strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore was he not heard; but not to folly, but to wisdom: to the end that man may understand that God is a Physician, and that tribulation is a remedy for salvation, not a punishment for condemnation. While under treatment thou art cauterized, cut, criest out: the physician heeds not for thy wish, but he heeds for thy health.

5. Ver. 3. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel. Thou dwellest in them, whom Thou hast sanctified, and whom Thou makest to understand, that some to their profit Thou hearest not, and some to their condemnation Thou hearest. To his profit, Paul was not heard; to condemnation, the devil was heard. He asked to tempt Job, and it was granted. The devils asked to go into the swine, and they were heard. Devils are heard, an Apostle is not heard: but they are heard unto condemnation, the Apostle is not heard, unto salvation; for not to my folly. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel. Why dost Thou not hear even Thine own? Why say I this? Remember that it is always said, "Thanks be to God;" and there is a great concourse here, and those, who are not in the habit of coming, have come. I say to all, that the Christian when under tribulation is tried, whether he have not forsaken his God. For when it is well with a man, the Christian is left to himself. The fire is brought to the furnace; and the refiner's furnace is a thing of high mysterious meaning. There is gold there, there is chaff, there is fire working in a confined space. This fire is not diverse, yet its effects are diverse: it turns chaff into ashes, from gold it takes away its impurities. Now they in whom God dwelleth, are

assuredly made better in tribulation, proved as gold. And if perchance the adversary, the devil, ask (to prove any), and it be granted him, whether by some bodily pain, or some loss, or bereavement, let him keep his heart fixed on Him, Who withdraweth not Himself, and if He seem to withdraw His ear from his lamentations, yet He sheweth mercy to his supplications. He who made us knoweth what to do, He knoweth how to re-make us. He is a good builder Who built the house; and if any thing therein hath fallen to decay, He knoweth how to repair it.

6. And see what he says: (ver. 4.) Our fathers hoped in Thee, they hoped, and Thou didst deliver them. We know, and read how many of our fathers God hath delivered who hoped in Him. He delivered the whole people of Israel out of the land of Egypt; He delivered the three children out of the fiery furnace; He delivered Daniel out of the den of lions; He delivered Susanna from a false accusation: they all called upon Him, and were delivered. What? was He wanting to His Own Son, that He should not hear Him when hanging on the Cross? But why is He not delivered forthwith, Who said, Our fathers hoped in Thee, and Thou didst deliver them?

7. Ver. 6. But I am a worm, and no man. A worm, and no man; for man is a worm also: but He is a worm and no man. How no man? Because God. Why then did He so abase Himself as to say, a worm? Is it because a worm is born of the flesh without coition, as Christ of the Virgin Mary? Both a worm even, and yet no man. Why a worm? Because mortal, because born of the flesh, because born without coition. Why not a man? Because the Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

8. A scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. Consider how great things He suffered. Now that we may speak of the Passion, and that we may approach it with the greater grief, consider first how great things He suffers, and then consider wherefore. For what was the fruit thereof? Lo, our fathers hoped, and were delivered out of the land of Egypt. And as I said, so many called upon God, and immediately at the time, not in the life to come, but forthwith, were delivered. Job himself was given up to the devil at his request, corrupted with worms: yet he recovered his health in this life, and received twice as much as he had lost. But the Lord was scourged, and there

was none to help; He was defiled with spittle, and there was none to help; He was smitten with buffetings, and there was none to help; He was crowned with thorns, there was none to help; He was raised on the tree, there was none to deliver; He crieth out, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? there is no help. Wherefore, my Brethren? Wherefore? What the recompense of so great sufferings? All these His sufferings are a price. What so great sufferings are the price of, let us repeat, let us see what He says. Let us first inquire what He suffered, after that, wherefore: and let us see how much they are Christ's enemies, who confess that He endured so great sufferings, and take away the wherefore. Hence let us hear the whole in this Psalm, both what He suffered, and wherefore. Keep to these two, the what and the wherefore. At present let me explain the what. Let us not dwell at length on this, so the very words of the Psalm will come to you the better. See what the Lord suffers, take heed ye Christians: The scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

9. Ver. 7. All that saw Me laughed Me to scorn; they spake with the lips, and shook the head. (Ver. 8.) He trusted in the Lord, let Him deliver Him; let Him save Him, since He desireth Him. But why said they this? Because He was made man, they said it as against a man.

10. Ver. 9. Since Thou art He Who drew Me out of the womb. Would they ever say this to That, Which in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God? For that Word, by Which all things were made, was not drawn out of the womb, save that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us. Since Thou hast drawn Me out of the womb: My God from My mother's breasts. For before the worlds, My Father; from My mother's breasts, My God.

11. Ver. 10. I was cast upon Thee from the womb. That is, that Thou only shouldest be My hope, now as man, now as weak, now the Word made Flesh. From My mother's womb Thou art My God. Not from Thyself My God, for from Thyself My Father; but from My mother's womb My God.

12. Ver. 11. Depart not from Me; for trouble is hard at hand, for there is none to help. See Him forsaken; and woe to us, if He forsake us, for there is none to help.

13. Ver. 12. Many calves came about Me; fat bulls closed Me in. The people, and their leaders: the people, many calves; the leaders, fat bulls.

14. Ver. 13. They opened their mouth upon Me, as a ravening and roaring lion. Let us hearken to their roaring in the Gospel, Crucify, Crucify.

15. Ver. 14. I was poured out like water, and all My Bones were scattered. He calleth His strong ones His Bones. For bones are strong in the body. When did He scatter His Bones? When He said to them, Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Then scattered He His strong ones, and He was poured out like water. For when water is poured out, it either cleanses, or waters. Christ was poured out like water, the filthy were cleansed, minds were watered. My heart became as melting wax, in the midst of My Belly. He calls the weak ones in His Church His Belly. How did His Heart become as wax? His Heart is His Scripture, that is, His wisdom which was in the Scriptures. For the Scripture was closed, no one understood it: the Lord was crucified, and the Scripture was melted like wax, that all the weak ones should understand it. For hence too the veil of the temple was rent: because what was veiled hath been unveiled.

16. Ver. 15. My strength dried up as a potsherd. Gloriously expressed; for, My name has been made stronger by tribulation. For as a potsherd is before the fire soft, after the fire hard; so the Lord's name was before the Passion despised, after the Passion it is honoured. And My tongue cleaved to My jaws. As that member in us is of use only for speaking; so He said that His preachers, His tongue, cleaved to His jaws, that from His inward parts they might derive wisdom. And Thou broughtest Me down to the dust of death.

17. For many dogs came about Me: the council of the malignant ones came about Me. See here the very Gospel. They pierced My hands and My feet. Then were the wounds made, the scars whereof the doubting disciple handled, the same who said, Unless I shall put my fingers into the scars of His wounds, I will not believe: whereupon He said to him, Come, thou hard of belief, put thy hand: and he put his hand, and cried out, My Lord, and my God. And He answered, Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that see not, and believe. They pierced My hands and My feet.

18. (Ver. 17.) They numbered distinctly all My Bones. When He was hanging extended on the tree. The extension of His Body on the tree could not be better described than by the words, They numbered distinctly all My Bones.

19. Yea, they regarded, and beheld Me. They regarded, and understood not: they beheld, and saw not. They lifted up their eyes to the flesh, not their heart unto the Word. (Ver. 18.) They divided My garments for themselves. His garments, His Sacraments. Mark, brethren, His garments, His Sacraments, could be divided by heresies: but there was there a garment which no one divided. And cast the lot upon My vesture. There was there, says the Evangelist, a coat woven from above. From heaven therefore, from the Father therefore, from the Holy Ghost therefore. What is this coat, but love, which no man can divide? What is this coat, but unity? Upon it is the lot cast; no man divideth it. The Sacraments heretics have been able to divide for themselves; they have not divided love. And because they could not divide it, they withdrew: but it abideth entire. It falls by lot to some. Whoso hath it, is safe. No one moves him from the Church Catholic: and if being without he begin to have it, he is received within, as the olive branch by the dove.

20. Ver. 19. But Thou, O Lord, withhold not Thy help far from Me. And it was so: after three days He rose again. Look to My defence.

21. Ver. 20. Deliver My soul from the sword (framea): that is, from death. For framea is a sword, and by a sword He would have us understand death. And Thine Only One from the hand of the dog. My soul, Mine Only One, the Head, and the Body. By Only One, He meant, the Church. From the hand, that is, from the power, of the dog. Who are dogs? They that bark like dogs, and understand not against whom. Nothing is done to them, and they bark. What will a man do to a dog, when he is going on his way? Yet he barks. They that bark with blinded eyes, not discerning against whom, or for whom, are dogs.

22. Ver. 21. Save Me from the lion's mouth. You know who is the roaring lion going about, and seeking whom he may devour. And My humility from

the horns of the unicorns. By unicorns, He would mean only the proud; therefore He added, My humility.

23. You have heard what His sufferings were, and what He prayed, that He might be delivered from them: let us now give heed to the wherefore He suffered. Now then, brethren, consider: whoso is not in that lot, for which Christ suffered, wherefore is he a Christian? Lo, we know what He suffered: His bones were numbered distinctly, He was mocked, His garments were divided, moreover the lot was cast upon His vesture, men in furiousness and raging stood around Him, and all His bones were scattered: we hear it here, and we read it in the Gospel. Let us see wherefore. O Christ, Son of God, if Thou hadst not willed Thou couldest not suffer; O shew us the fruit of Thy Passion. "Hear," saith He, "the fruit: I am not silent, but men are deaf. Hear," saith He, "the fruit, wherefore I suffered all these things."

Ver. 22. I will declare Thy Name to My brethren. Let us see whether He declareth God's Name to His brethren in any separate part. I will declare Thy Name to My brethren: in the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. So is it accomplished now. But let us see what the Church is. For He said, In the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. Let us see the Church, for which He suffered.

24. Ver. 23. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him. Wheresoever God is feared and praised, there is the Church of Christ. See, my brethren, whether in these days throughout the whole world it is said without a cause, Amen and Hallelujah. Is not God feared there? Is not God praised there? Donatus has gone out, and says, "He is altogether not feared, the whole world is lost." Without any reason thou sayest, The whole world is lost. Has then a small portion only remained in Africa? Doth Christ then say nothing, whereby to stop these men's mouths? doth He say nothing, whereby to pluck out the tongues of such as speak thus? Let us see, if haply we may find. Still it is said to us, In the midst of the Church: He speaketh of our Church. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him: let us see, whether they praise the Lord; and let us understand, whether He speaketh of them, and whether in the midst of their Church He be praised. How do they praise Christ, who say, "He hath lost the whole world, the devil hath taken all from Him, and He hath

remained in a part only?" But let us look farther; let Him declare Himself more openly, let Him speak more openly: let it not be a matter for interpretation, or conjecture. All ye seed of Jacob, magnify Him. Perhaps they still say, "We are the seed of Jacob." Let us see, whether they be.

25. Let all the seed of Israel fear Him. Let them still say, "We are the seed of Israel:" let us allow them, let them say it. (Ver. 24.) Since He hath not despised nor disregarded the prayer of the poor. What poor? Not they that rely upon themselves. Let us see, whether they be poor, who say, "We are the righteous." Christ crieth out, Far from My salvation are the words of My sins. But let them still say what they will. Nor hath turned away His face from Me; and when I cried unto Him, He heard Me. Wherefore heard He? to what purpose?

26. Ver. 25. With Thee is My praise. With God He hath put His praise: He hath taught us not to rely on man. Let them still say what they will. Already indeed they begin to burn, the fire begins to draw nigh: there is none may hide himself from the heat thereof. But let them still say, "We too have put our praise with Him, we too rely not on ourselves," let them still say so. In the great Church will I confess Thee. Now here I suppose He has begun to touch the quick. The great Church, Brethren, what is it? Is a scanty portion of the earth the great Church? The great Church is the whole world. Now if one would wish to gainsay Christ, "Tell us, Thou hast said, In the great Church I will confess Thee: what great Church? Thou art reduced to a morsel of Africa, the whole world Thou hast lost: Thou hast shed Thy Blood for the whole, but Thou hast suffered from the invader." Thus have we spoken to the Lord as if by way of inquiry; yet knowing what we are about to say. Let us suppose that we do not know what He would say: doth not He answer us? "Peace, I will yet say what no one can raise a doubt about." Let us await then what He is about to say. I would wish at once to pass sentence, and not admit men to give any other explanation, forasmuch as Christ saith, In the great Church. And you say, that He hath continued in an extreme part. And they still dare to say, "And ours is the great Church: what think you of Bagai and Tamugade?" If He say not something to stop their mouths, let them still say, that the great Church is Numidia only.

27. Let us see, let us hear the Lord further: I will offer my vows in the sight of them that fear Him. What are His vows? The sacrifice which He offered to God. Know ye what sacrifice? The faithful know the vows which He offered in the sight of them that fear Him. For there follows, (ver. 26.) The poor shall eat, and be filled. Blessed poor, who eat to the end that they may be filled. For it is the poor that eat. But they that are rich are not filled, because they are not hungry. The poor shall eat. From them came Peter the fisherman, from them came the other fishermen, John and James his brother, from them came too Matthew the publican. These were of the poor, who ate and were filled: having suffered such things as they ate. He gave His Supper, He gave His Passion: he is filled, who imitates it. The poor imitated it: for they so suffered as to follow Christ's footsteps. The poor shall eat. But why poor? And they shall praise the Lord, who seek Him. The rich praise themselves; the poor praise the Lord. Why are they poor? Because they praise the Lord, and seek the Lord. The Lord is the riches of the poor. For therefore is the house empty, that the heart may be full of riches. Let the rich seek wherewith to fill their chest; the poor seek wherewith to fill their heart: and when they have filled it, they praise the Lord, who seek Him. And see, Brethren, wherein they, that are truly poor, are rich: that it is not in the chest, not in the garner, not in the storehouse: Their hearts shall live for ever and ever.

28. Now then give heed. The Lord hath suffered; all that ye have heard hath the Lord suffered. We ask, why He suffered? and He begins to declare it: I will declare Thy name to My brethren; in the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. But they still say, "This is the Church." Let all the seed of Israel fear Him. They say, "We are the seed of Israel." Since He hath not despised, nor disregarded the prayer of the poor. Still they say, "We are they." Nor hath He turned away His face from Me. Christ the Lord Himself hath not turned away His face from Himself, that is, from His Church, which is His Body. With Thee is My praise. Ye would praise yourselves. But they answer, "Nay, without a doubt we too praise Him." I will offer My vows unto the Lord, in the sight of them that fear Him. The sacrifice of peace, the sacrifice of love, the sacrifice of His Body the faithful know: on this I cannot now enlarge. I will offer My vows in the sight of them that fear Him. Let the publicans eat, let the fishermen eat, let them feed, let them imitate

the Lord, let them suffer, let them be filled. The Lord Himself hath died, the poor die also; and the death of the disciples is added to the death of the Master. Wherefore? Give Me the fruit. (Ver. 27.) All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. See here, Brethren! Why ask ye of me, what answer we should give to Donatus' party? Look at the Psalm: both among us it is read to-day, and among them it is read to-day. Let us write it on our foreheads, let us go forth with it, let not our tongue keep silence, let it repeat the words: "See, Christ hath suffered; see, the Merchant displayeth His gains; see, the price which He gave, His Blood was shed. In a scrip He bare our price: He was smitten with a spear, the scrip was rent, and the price of the whole world flowed forth. What answerest thou, O heretic? Is it not the price of the whole world? Hath Africa only been redeemed? Thou darest not say, 'The whole world was redeemed, but is lost.' From what spoiler's hand hath Christ so suffered, as to lose His own possession? Lo, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord." Let this satisfy thee, and let Him speak. Had he said the ends of the earth, and not all the borders of the earth: they had been able to say, "Lo, we have the ends of the earth in Mauritania." He said, All the borders of the earth, O heretic, he said, all. What outlet is there for thee to escape the difficulty? Outlet hast thou none, but thou hast whereby to enter.

29. I appeal to you: I am unwilling to enlarge upon this, lest it should be said, that my words are of any influence: attend to the Psalm, read the Psalm. Lo, Christ hath suffered, His Blood hath been shed: lo, our Redeemer; lo, our Price. Let me be told, what hath He bought? Why do we ask? What if one say to me, "why, O foolish man, dost thou ask? Thou hast the volume in thine hands: thou hast therein wherewith He bought, seek therein what He bought. Lo, there thou hast, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord." For the borders of the earth shall remember themselves. But heretics have forgotten, and therefore do they hear it every year. Do they give ear to this, think ye, when their reader says, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and turn to the Lord? Well, perchance it is but one verse: thy thoughts were elsewhere, thou wast talking idly with thy brother, when he spoke thus: mark, how he repeats it, and knocks at deaf men's ears: And all the kindreds

of the nations shall worship in His sight. He is still deaf, he does not hear: let the knocking be repeated. (Ver. 28.) For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations. Remember these three verses, Brethren. To-day have they been sung even among them; or it may be they have erased them. Believe me, my Brethren, I am so embarrassed, I am so pressed, that I am astonished at this strange deafness and hardness of their hearts, that I sometimes doubt, whether they have it in their copies. All run to-day to the Church, all to-day attentively listen to this Psalm, all listen with uplifted heart. But suppose that they are not attentive: is it one verse only, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord? Thou art awaking, but art still rubbing thine eyes: And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. Shake off sleep, thou art still drowsy; listen: For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations.

30. Whether they have any thing yet to allege, I know not: let them contend with the Scriptures, not with us. See the volume itself, let them contend against it. Where is their saying, "We preserved the Scriptures from being burnt?" They have been preserved, whereby thou mayest be burnt. What did ye preserve? Open, read: thou didst preserve, and thou dost impugn them. Why preservedst thou from the flames, what thou wouldest destroy with the tongue? I do not believe, I do not believe, that thou preservedst them; I do not at all believe it; thou didst not preserve them. Most truly do our party say, that thou didst deliver them up. He is proved to be the deliverer of them up, who when on reading the Testament doth not follow it. See, it is read, and I follow; it is read, and thou refusest to follow. Whose hand hath cast them into the flames? He that believes and follows, or he that grieves that there is aught to be read? I do not wish to know who may have preserved them: in what place soever the volume hath been found, from what cave soever, our Father's testament hath come to light, for some thieves or other wished to take it away, some persecutors or other wished to burn it: from what place soever it hath been brought forth, let it be read. Why dost thou quarrel? We are Brethren, why do we quarrel? The Father hath not died intestate. He hath made a Testament, and so died: He died, and rose again. So long does the dispute touching the inheritance of the dead last, until the Testament is publicly produced; and when the Testament has been publicly produced, all are silent, that the instrument may be opened and read: the

judge listens with attention, the advocates hold their peace, the heralds procure silence, every body is in suspense that the words of the deceased, unconscious in the tomb, may be read. He lies without consciousness in the tomb, and his words have force. Christ sitteth in heaven; and is His Testament gainsaid? Open, let us read. We are Brethren, why do we contend together? Let us calm our temper, the Father hath not left us without a Testament. He Who made the Testament, liveth for ever: He heareth our words, He recogniseth His own. Let us read; why do we quarrel? When the whole inheritance shall have been found, let us hold to it. Open the Testament, read in the very beginning of the Psalter itself, Ask of Me. But who speaketh? Peradventure not Christ. You have there, The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. The Son of God then speaketh, or the Father speaketh to His Son. What then saith He to His Son? Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the bounds of the earth for Thy possession. It is usual, Brethren, when there is a question of possession, for the borderers to be sought. Between this and that borderer, the heir is sought out, either to whom it is given, or who has bought it. Between what borderers is he sought? Between this and that man in possession. He who hath left all borders, hath left no borderers. Wheresoever thou turnest thyself, Christ is. Thou hast the borders of the earth for thine inheritance; come hither, with me possess the whole. Why by quarrelling dost thou call to a part only? Come hither; to thine own good thou shalt be conquered, thou shalt have the whole. Dost thou wrangle still? I have already read the Testament, and thou wranglest. Art thou still wrangling, because He said, the borders of the earth, and not, all the borders of the earth? Let us read on then. How does it stand? All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and turn to the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations. His it is, not yours. Acknowledge ye the Lord: acknowledge the Lord's possession.

31. But ye again because ye would possess your goods privately, and not in common unity, and with Christ, (for ye wish to rule on earth yourselves, not to reign with Him in heaven,) ye have your own houses. And sometimes we come to them, saying, "Let us seek the truth, let us find the truth." They answer, "Keep what you have: thou hast thy sheep, I have mine; forbear to

meddle with my sheep, for I do not meddle with thine.” Thanks be to God; the sheep are mine; the sheep are His! What hath Christ bought? Nay, let them be neither mine, nor thine; but His Who hath bought them, His Who hath marked them. Neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth; but God Who giveth the increase. Why have I mine, and thou thine? If Christ be there, let mine go thither, for they are not mine: if Christ be here, let thine come hither, for they are not thine. Let us kiss head and hands for possessions, and let the strange children perish. “It is not my possession,” he says. What is this? Let us see whether it be not thy possession, let us see whether thou dost not claim it for thyself. I labour for the name of Christ, thou for the name of Donatus. For if thou look to Christ, Christ is every where. Thou sayest, Lo, here is Christ: I say, He is throughout the world. Praise the Lord, ye servants; praise the Name of the Lord. Wherefrom do they praise? Whereunto do they praise? From the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof, praise ye the Name of the Lord. See the Church which I shew to you, see what Christ hath bought, see what He hath redeemed, see for what He hath given His blood. But what sayest thou? “I gather for Him too.” He that gathereth not with Me, Christ saith, scattereth. Thou dividest unity, thou seekest thine own possessions. And why have they Christ’s Name? Because for the defence of thine own possession thou hast affixed Christ’s titles. Do not some do the same with their own houses? Lest some powerful person should attack his house, he affixes thereon the title of some powerful one, a false title. He would be himself the owner, and would have the front of his house protected by another man’s title: that on reading the title one may be scared at the power of the name, and abstain from attacking the house. This they did when they condemned the Maximianists. They pleaded before judges, and adduced their own council; as it were, shewing their titles, that they might appear to be Bishops. Then the judged asked, “Who is the other Bishop here, of the party of Donatus?” The official answered, “We know none but Aurelius the Catholic.” In fear of the laws they made answer of one Bishop only. But they, that they might gain the ear of the judge, affixed Christ’s Name: on their own possession they affixed His title. Gracious is the Lord to spare them, and claim that for His own possession, wheresoever He findeth His title. Powerful is His mercy, Who doeth that for them, Who gathereth together, whomsoever He findeth bearing the name of Christ. And consider,

Brethren, when any powerful one findeth his title, doth he not justly claim it for his own and say, "He would not affix my title, unless it were my property? He hath affixed my title, it is my property: that, whereon I find my name, is mine." Does he change the title? The title is the very same as before: the owner is changed, the title is not changed. So also with those that have the baptism of Christ, if they return to unity, we do not change or destroy their title; but we acknowledge the title of our King, the title of our Captain. But what do we say? O wretched house, may He own thee, Whose title thou bearest: thou bearest Christ's title; be not the possession of Donatus.

32. We have spoken at great length, Brethren; but let not that, which is read to-day, depart from your recollection. Lo, I repeat it, and often must it be repeated: by this very day, that is, by the mysteries of this day, I adjure you that it go not out of your hearts, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations. Against so clear and so manifestly proven a possession of Christ, listen not to the words of the wrangler. Whatever they say to gainsay it, they are men that say it; but this God saith.

PSALM 23

A Psalm of David himself.

1. The Church speaks to Christ: (ver. 1.) The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing. The Lord Jesus Christ is my Shepherd, and I shall lack nothing.

2. Ver. 2. In a place of pasture there hath He placed me. In a place of fresh pasture, leading me to faith, there hath He placed me to be nourished. By the water of refreshing hath He brought me up. By the water of baptism, whereby they are refreshed who have lost health and strength, hath He brought me up.

3. Ver. 3. He hath converted my soul: He hath led me forth in the paths of righteousness, for His Name's sake. He hath brought me forth in the narrow ways, wherein few walk, of His righteousness; not for my merit's sake, but for His Name's sake.

4. Ver. 4. Yea, though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death. Yea, though I walk in the midst of this life, which is the shadow of death. I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. I will fear no evil, for Thou dwellest in my heart by faith: and Thou art now with me, that after the shadow of death I too may be with Thee. Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me. Thy discipline, like a rod for a flock of sheep, and like a staff for children of some size, and growing out of the natural into spiritual life, they have not been grievous to me; rather have they comforted me: because Thou art mindful of me.

5. Ver. 5. Thou hast prepared a table in my sight, against them that trouble me. Now after the rod, whereby, whilst a little one, and living the natural life, I was brought up among the flock in the pastures; after that rod, I say, when I began to be under the staff, Thou hast prepared a table in my sight,

that I should no more be fed as a babe with milk, but being older should take meat, strengthened against them that trouble me. Thou hast fattened my head with oil. Thou hast gladdened my mind with spiritual joy. And Thy inebriating cup, how excellent is it! And Thy cup yielding forgetfulness of former vain delights, how excellent is it!

6. Ver. 6. And Thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: that is, as long as I live in this mortal life, not Thine, but mine. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord for length of days. Now Thy mercy shall follow me not here only, but also that I may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

PSALM 24

A Psalm of David himself, on the first day of the week.

1. A Psalm of David himself, touching the glorifying and resurrection of the Lord, which took place early in the morning on the first day of the week, which is now called the Lord's Day.

2. Ver. 1. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the compass of the world, and all they that dwell therein: when the Lord, being glorified, is announced for the believing of all nations; and the whole compass of the world becomes His Church. (Ver. 2.) He hath founded it above the seas. He hath most firmly established it above all the waves of this world, that they should be subdued by it, and should not hurt it. And hath prepared it above the rivers. The rivers flow into the sea, and men of lust lapse into the world: these also the Church, which, when worldly lusts have been conquered by the grace of God, hath been prepared by love for the reception of immortality, subdues.

3. Ver. 3. Who shall ascend into the mount of the Lord? Who shall ascend to the height of the righteousness of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? Or who shall abide in that place, whither He shall ascend, founded above the seas, and prepared above the rivers?

4. Ver. 4. The innocent of hand, and the pure in heart. Who then shall ascend thither, and abide there, but the guiltless in deed, and pure in thought? Who hath not received his soul in vain. Who hath not reckoned his soul among things that pass away, but feeling it to be immortal, hath longed for an eternity steadfast and unchangeable. And hath not sworn in deceit to his neighbour. And therefore without deceit, as things eternal are simple and undeceiving, hath so behaved himself to his neighbour.

5. Ver. 5. This man shall receive blessing from the Lord, and mercy from the God of his salvation.

6. Ver. 6. This is the generation of them that seek the Lord. For thus are they born that seek Him. Of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. Diapsalma. Now they seek the face of God, Who gave the preeminence to the younger born.

7. Ver. 7. Take away your gates, ye princes. All ye, that seek rule among men, remove, that they hinder not, the entrances which ye have made, of desire and fear. And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates. And be ye lift up, ye entrances of eternal life, of renunciation of the world, and conversion to God. And the King of glory shall come in. And the King, in Whom we may glory without pride, shall come in: Who having overcome the gates of death, and having opened for Himself the heavenly places, fulfilled that which He said, Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.

8. Ver. 8. Who is this King of glory? Mortal nature is awe-struck in wonder, and asks, Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty. He, Whom thou didst deem weak and overwhelmed. The Lord mighty in battle. Handle the scars, and thou wilt find them made whole, and human weakness restored to immortality. The glorifying of the Lord, which was owing to earth, where It warred with death, hath been paid.

9. Ver. 9. Take away your gates, ye princes. Let us go hence straightway into heaven. Again, let the Prophet's trumpet cry aloud, "Take away too, ye princes of the air, the gates, which ye have in the minds of men who worship the host of heaven." And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates. And be ye lift up, ye doors of everlasting righteousness, of love, and chastity, through which the soul loveth the One True God, and goeth not a whoring with the many, that are called gods. And the King of glory shall come in. And the King of glory shall come in, that He may at the right hand of the Father intercede for us.

10. Ver. 10. Who is this King of glory? What! dost thou too, prince of the power of this air, marvel and ask, Who is this King of glory? The Lord of powers, He is the King of glory. Yea, His Body now quickened, He Who was tempted marches above thee; He Who was tempted by the angel, the

deceiver, goes above all angels. Let none of you put himself before us and stop our way, that he may be worshipped as a god by us: neither principality, nor angel, nor power, separateth us from the love of Christ. It is good to trust in the Lord, rather than to trust in a prince; that he who glorieth, should glory in the Lord. These indeed are powers in the administration of this world, but the Lord of powers, He is the King of glory.

PSALM 25

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. Christ speaks, but in the person of the Church: for what is said has reference rather to the Christian People turned unto God.

2. Ver. 1. Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul: with spiritual longing have I lift up the soul, that was trodden down on the earth with carnal longings. (Ver. 2.) O my God, in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed. O my God, from trusting in myself I was brought even to this weakness of the flesh; and I who on abandoning God wished to be as God, fearing death from the smallest insect, was in derision ashamed for my pride; now, therefore, in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed.

3. And let not my enemies mock me. And let them not mock me, who by ensnaring me with serpent-like and secret suggestions, and prompting me with, “Well done, well done,” have brought me down to this. (Ver. 3.) For all that wait upon Thee shall not be confounded.

4. Let them be confounded who do vain things unrighteously. Let them be confounded who act unrighteously for the acquiring things that pass away. (Ver. 4.) Make Thy ways, O Lord, known to me, and teach me Thy paths: not those which are broad, and lead the many to destruction; but Thy paths, narrow, and known to few, teach Thou me.

5. Ver. 5. In Thy truth guide me: avoiding error. And teach me: for by myself I know nothing, but falsehood. For Thou art the God of my salvation; and for Thee have I waited all the day. For dismissed by Thee from Paradise, and having taken my journey into a far country, I cannot by myself return, unless Thou meetest the wanderer: for my return hath throughout the whole tract of this world’s time waited for Thy mercy.

6. Ver. 6. Remember Thy compassions, O Lord. Remember the works of Thy mercy, O Lord; for men deem of Thee as though Thou hadst forgotten. And that Thy mercies are from eternity. And remember this, that Thy mercies are from eternity. For Thou never wast without them, Who hast subjected even sinful man to vanity indeed, but in hope; and hast not deprived him of so many and great consolations of Thy creation.

7. Ver. 7. Remember not the offences of my youth, and of my ignorance. The offences of my presumptuous boldness and of my ignorance reserve not for vengeance, but let them be as if forgotten by Thee. According to Thy mercy, be mindful of me, O God. Be mindful indeed of me, not according to the anger of which I am worthy, but according to Thy mercy which is worthy of Thee. For Thy goodness, O Lord. Not for my deservings, but for Thy goodness, O Lord.

8. Ver. 8. Gracious and upright is the Lord. The Lord is gracious, since even sinners and the ungodly He so pitied, as to forgive all that is past; but the Lord is upright too, Who after the mercy of vocation and pardon, which is of grace without merit, will require merits meet for the last judgment. Wherefore He will establish a law for them that fail in the way. For He hath first bestowed mercy to bring them into the way.

9. Ver. 9. He will guide the meek in judgment. He will guide the meek, and will not confound in the judgment those, that follow His will, and do not, in withstanding It, prefer their own. The gentle He will teach His ways. He will teach His ways, not to those that desire to run before, as if they were better able to rule themselves; but to those who do not exalt the neck, nor lift the heel, when the easy yoke and the light burden is laid upon them.

10. Ver. 10. All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. And what ways will He teach them, but mercy wherein He is placable, and truth wherein He is incorrupt? Whereof He hath exhibited the one in forgiving sins, the other in judging deserts. And therefore 'all the ways of the Lord' are the two advents of the Son of God, the one in mercy, the other in judgment. He then attaineth unto Him holding on His ways, who seeing himself freed by no deserts of his own, lays pride aside, and henceforward bewares of the severity of His trial, having experienced the clemency of His help. To them

that seek His testament and His testimonies. For they understand the Lord as merciful at His first advent, and as the Judge at His second, who in meekness and gentleness seek His testament, when with His Own Blood He redeemed us to a new life; and in the Prophets and Evangelists, His testimonies.

11. Ver. 11. For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou wilt be favourable to my sin; for it is manifold. Thou hast not only forgiven my sins, which I committed before I believed; but also to my sin, which is manifold, since even in the way there is no lack of stumbling, Thou wilt be made favourable by the sacrifice of a troubled spirit.

12. Ver. 12. Who is the man, that feareth the Lord? from which fear he begins to come to wisdom. He shall establish a law for him in the way, which he hath chosen. He shall establish a law for him in the way, which in his freedom he has taken, that he may not sin now with impunity.

13. Ver. 13. His soul shall dwell in good, and his seed shall, by inheritance, possess the earth. And his work shall possess the stable inheritance of a renewed body.

14. Ver. 14. The Lord is the stay of them that fear Him. Fear seems to belong to the weak, but the Lord is the stay of them that fear Him. And the Name of the Lord, which hath been glorified throughout the whole world, is a stay to them that fear Him. And His testament, that it may be manifested unto them. And He maketh His testament to be manifested unto them, for the Gentiles and the bounds of the earth are Christ's inheritance.

15. Ver. 15. Mine eyes are ever unto the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare. Nor would I fear the dangers of earth, while I look not upon the earth: for He, upon Whom I look, will pluck my feet out of the snare.

16. Ver. 16. Look upon me, and have mercy upon me; for I am single and poor. For I am a single people, keeping the lowliness of Thy single Church, which no schisms or heresies possess.

17. Ver. 17. The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied. The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied by the abounding of iniquity

and the waxing cold of love. O bring Thou me out of my necessities. Since I must needs bear this, that by enduring unto the end I may be saved, bring Thou me out of my necessities.

18. Ver. 18. See my humility and my travail. See my humility, whereby I never, in the boast of righteousness, break off from unity; and my travail, wherein I bear with the unruly ones that are mingled with me. And forgive all my sins. And, propitiated by these sacrifices, forgive all my sins, not those only of youth and my ignorance before I believed, but those also which, living now by faith, I commit through infirmity, or the darkness of this life.

19. Ver. 19. Consider mine enemies, how they are multiplied. For not only without, but even within, in the Church's very communion, they are not wanting. And with an unrighteous hate they hate me. And they hate me who love them.

20. Ver. 20. Keep my soul, and deliver me. Keep my soul, that I turn not aside to imitate them; and draw me out from the confusion wherein they are mingled with me. Let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee. Let me not be confounded, if haply they rise up against me: for not in myself, but in Thee have I put my trust.

21. Ver. 21. The innocent and the upright have cleaved to me, for I have waited for Thee, O Lord. The innocent and the upright, not in bodily presence only, as the evil, are mingled with me, but in the agreement of the heart in the same innocence and uprightness cleave to me: for I have not fallen away to imitate the evil; but I have waited for Thee, expecting the winnowing of Thy last harvest.

22. Ver. 22. Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. Redeem Thy people, O God, whom Thou hast prepared to see Thee, out of his troubles, not those only which he bears without, but those also which he bears within.

PSALM 26

first exposition

Of David himself.

1. It may be attributed to David himself, not the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, but the whole Church now perfectly established in Christ.

2. Ver. 1. Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my innocence. Judge me, O Lord, for, after the mercy which Thou first shewedst me, I have some desert of my innocence, the way whereof I have kept. And trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved. And yet not even so trusting in myself, but in the Lord, I shall abide in Him.

3. Ver. 2. Prove me, O Lord, and try me. Lest, however, any of my secret sins should be hid from me, prove me, O Lord, and try me, making me known, not to Thee from Whom nothing is hid, but to myself, and to men. Burn my reins and my heart. Apply a remedial purgation, as it were fire, to my pleasures and thoughts. (Ver. 3.) For Thy mercy is before mine eyes. For, that I be not consumed by that fire, not my merits, but Thy mercy, whereby Thou hast brought me on to such a life, is before my eyes. And I have been pleasing in Thy truth. And since my own falsehood hath been displeasing to me, but Thy truth pleasing, I have myself been pleasing also with it and in it.

4. Ver. 4. I have not sat with the council of vanity. I have not chosen to give my heart to them who endeavour to provide, what is impossible, how they may be blessed in the enjoyment of things transitory. And I will not enter in with them that work wickedly. And since this is the very cause of all wickedness, therefore I will not have my conscience hid, with them that work wickedly.

5. Ver. 5. I have hated the congregation of evil doers. But to arrive at this council of vanity, congregations of evil doers are formed, which I have hated. And I will not sit with the ungodly. And, therefore, with such a council, with the ungodly, I will not sit, that is, I will not place my consent. And I will not sit with the ungodly.

6. Ver. 6. I will wash mine hands amid the innocent. I will make clean my works among the innocent: among the innocent will I wash mine hands, with which I shall embrace Thy glorious gifts. And I will compass Thy altar, O Lord.

7. Ver. 7. That I may hear the voice of Thy praise. That I may learn how to praise Thee. And that I may declare all Thy wondrous works. And after I have learnt, I may set forth all Thy wondrous works.

8. Ver. 8. O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house: of Thy Church. And the place of the habitation of Thy glory: where Thou dwellest, and art glorified.

9. Ver. 9. Destroy not my soul with the ungodly. Destroy not then, together with them that hate Thee, my soul, which hath loved the beauty of Thy house. And my life with the men of blood. And with them that hate their neighbour. For Thy house is beautified with the two commandments.

10. Ver. 10. In whose hands is wickedness. Destroy me not then with the ungodly and the men of blood, whose works are wicked. Their right hand is full of gifts. And that which was given them to obtain eternal salvation, they have converted into the receiving this world's gifts, supposing that godliness is a trade.

11. Ver. 11. But I have walked in mine innocence: deliver me, and have mercy on me. Let so great a price of my Lord's Blood avail for my complete deliverance: and in the dangers of this life let not Thy mercy leave me.

12. Ver. 12. My foot hath stood in uprightness. My love hath not withdrawn from Thy righteousness. In the Churches I will bless Thee, O Lord. I will not hide Thy blessing, O Lord, from those whom Thou hast called; for next to the love of Thee I join the love of my neighbour.

second exposition

1. When the Apostle Paul was being read, ye heard, as we did, holy Brethren: As, saith he, the truth is in Jesus, that ye lay aside after the former conversation the old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; but be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put ye on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth. And lest any one should suppose that any thing material is to be laid aside, as one takes off a coat; or any thing to be taken from without, as one takes up a garment; as if putting aside one coat and assuming another; and this carnal understanding of it should not allow men to carry into action within themselves spiritually what the Apostle enjoined, he went on and explained what it was to put the old man off one, and put on the new. For the rest of this lesson relates to the idea. He speaks as if to one asking, And how am I to put off the old man, or how put on the new? Am I myself a third person to lay aside the old man, which I have had, and to take a new man, which I have not had? so that three men should be conceived, and he that lays aside the old man and takes the new, should be between the other two. Lest any one then, hindered by such a carnal thought, should fail to do what is commanded, and excuse himself for not doing it by the obscurity of the lesson, the Apostle says in the following words: Wherefore laying aside lying, speak ye the truth. And, lo, this is the laying aside the old man, and the putting on the new. Wherefore laying aside lying, speak ye the truth, every one with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

2. But let not any one of you, Brethren, imagine that truth must be spoken with a Christian, and falsehood with a pagan. Speak with thy neighbour. He is thy neighbour, who is with thee a child of Adam and Eve. We are all neighbours by the lot of our earthly birth: but brethren after another manner by the hope of an heavenly inheritance. Thou oughtest to deem every man thy neighbour, even before he be a Christian. For thou knowest not what he is, with God; thou knowest not how God may have foreknown him. Sometimes he, at whom thou scoffest as worshipping stones, is converted, and worshippeth God, perchance more devoutly than thyself, who wast but just now scoffing at him. There are then neighbours of ours lying hid among those, who are not as yet in the Church; and there are those lying hid in the

Church, who are far from us. And therefore let us, who know not things future, regard every one as our neighbour, not only by the lot of human mortality, whereby we came into this world under the same condition; but also by the hope of that inheritance, since we know not what he is to be, who now is nothing.

3. Attend then to what follows in the putting on the new man, and putting off the old man. Laying aside, saith he, lying, speak ye the truth, every one with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not. If thou art angry with thy servant, because he hath sinned; be angry with thyself, lest thou sin also. Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath. It is understood, Brethren, it is true, with reference to time: because although from the very condition of our humanity, and weakness of our mortal nature, which we bear, wrath doth steal upon the Christian, yet it must not be long retained, nor last to the second day. Cast it out of the heart, before this visible light go down, lest that light invisible abandon thee. But, it is also well understood in another sense, for that Christ, the Truth, is our Sun of Righteousness; not this sun, which is worshipped by Pagans and Manichæans, and is seen by sinners even; but that other Sun, by Whose truth human nature is enlightened, at Which the Angels rejoice: but the weakened vision of the heart of man, although it quails beneath His rays, is purified nevertheless to contemplate Him by His commands. When this Sun hath begun to dwell in a man by faith, let not the wrath, which is born within thee, so far prevail against thee, that it should go down upon thy wrath, that is, that Christ should abandon thy soul; for Christ will not dwell with thy wrath. For He seemeth as it were to go down from thee, when thou dost go down from Him: for anger, when it hath become inveterate, becomes hatred; when it hath become hatred, thou art at once a murderer. For as the Apostle John saith, Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. Again he saith, that every one that hateth his brother abideth in darkness. And no wonder if he abide in darkness, from whom the Sun hath gone down.

4. To this too, perhaps, refers what ye have heard in the Gospel. The ship was in jeopardy in the lake, and Jesus was asleep. We too are sailing through a lake, so to say, and there is no want of wind and tempest: our ship

is almost filled through the daily temptations of this life. And whence comes it, but because Jesus is asleep? If Jesus were not asleep within thee, thou wouldest not be exposed to these storms; but wouldest have calm within, through Jesus watching with thee. But what is “Jesus sleepeth?” Thy faith which is of Jesus, hath fallen asleep. The tempests of this lake arise, thou seest evil men flourishing, the good in trouble; it is a temptation, it is a wave. And thy soul saith, O God, is this Thy justice, that the evil should flourish, the good be in trouble? thou sayest to God, “Is this Thy justice?” and God to thee, “Is this thy faith?” For have I promised thee this? wert thou made a Christian for this, that thou shouldest flourish in this life? Art thou tormented, because the evil flourish here, who shall, hereafter, be tormented with the devil? But why speakest thou thus? why art thou disturbed by the waves of the sea, and the storm? Because Jesus is asleep, that is, because thy faith, which is of Jesus, hath been laid asleep in thine heart. What doest thou that thou mayest be delivered? Awake Jesus, and say, Master, we perish. For the doubtful dangers of the deep alarm us, we perish. He will awake, that is, thy faith will return to thee; and with His help, thou wilt consider in thy soul, that what is, for a time, given to the evil, will not abide with them. For either it will leave them, while they live, or is left by them when they die. But what is promised to thee, will abide for ever. What is granted them for a time, is soon taken away. For it hath flourished as the flower of the grass. For all flesh is grass: the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. Turn therefore the back upon that which falleth, and the face to that which abideth. Now that Christ is awake, the storm shall no more shake thy heart, the waves shall not fill thy bark: for thy faith commands the winds and the waves, and the danger shall pass away. For to this, Brethren, all that belongs, which the Apostle saith of putting off the old man. Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath; neither give place to the devil. The old man then did give place, let not the new. He that stole, let him steal no more. The old man then did steal, let not the new. It is the same man, it is one man: it was Adam, let it be Christ: it was the old man, let it be the new; and so on with what follows there.

5. But let us examine the Psalm somewhat more carefully, because when any one hath made progress in the Church, he must needs endure evil men

in the Church. But the man who is such does not recognise them, although many evil men murmur against the evil, just as one man in health bears more easily with two sick men, than two sick men with one another. Therefore, Brethren, we give this charge, The Church of the time present is a threshing-floor: we have often said it, we often repeat it. It contains both chaff and corn. Let no man look for all the chaff to go out thence, save in the time of winnowing. Let no man leave the floor before the time of winnowing, as if in his unwillingness to endure sinners; lest being found without the floor, he be picked up by the birds, before he enter into the barn. Now, Brethren, mark how we would enforce this. When the corn has begun to be threshed, the grains, amidst the chaff, do not touch each other: it is as though they did not know each other, because of the intervention of the chaff. And any one who looks at a floor at some little distance, thinks there is nothing but chaff; except he look more narrowly, except he put forth his hand, except he make a separation by the breath of his mouth, that is, by a purifying wind, he hardly attains to distinguish the grains. Therefore sometimes even the very grains are so separated as it were from each other, and not touching one another, that any one, when he has made progress, may think that he is alone. This thought, Brethren, tempted Elias, so great a man; and he said to God, as the Apostle also records, They have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God to him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal. He said not to him, Thou hast two or three others like thyself. Do not deem thyself alone. There are, saith He, seven thousand others; and dost thou deem thyself alone? Accordingly this briefly we enjoin, as I had begun to say. Do ye, holy Brethren, give heed with me, and may God's mercy be with us in our hearts, that it may be so understood by you, as to bear fruit, and work in you. Hear it briefly: Whosoever is still evil, let him not deem that no one is good: whosoever is good, let him not deem that he only is good. Do ye apprehend this? Lo, I repeat it, mark ye how I say: Whosoever is evil, let him not in questioning his own conscience, and receiving a bad report of himself, imagine that no one is good: whosoever is good, let him not imagine that he only is good; and let not the good man fear in the mixture with the evil, for the time will come that he shall be separated from them. For to this end we have sung to-day, Destroy not my soul with the ungodly,

and my life with the men of blood. For what is, Destroy not with the ungodly? Destroy not together. Why doth he fear, lest God should destroy him together? For I see that it is said to God, Because Thou sufferest us now together, destroy not together those whom Thou sufferest together. And this pervades the whole psalm, which I would briefly consider with you, holy Brethren, for it is brief.

6. Ver. 1. Judge me, O Lord. It is a serious and seemingly perilous wish, which he expresses for himself, that he may be judged. What is to be judged, which he wishes? He wishes to be separated from the evil. In another place he clearly speaks of this judgment of separation: Judge me, O Lord, and separate my cause from the unholy nation. He shews what he meant by, Judge: lest, as if without judgment, both the good and bad (for both good and bad enter at present into the Church) should go into eternal fire. Judge me, O Lord. Why? For I have walked in mine innocence, and trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved. What is, trusting in the Lord? For he stumbles among the evil, who does not trust in the Lord. Hence it has come that schisms arose. They trembled among the evil, when they were worse themselves, and were unwilling, as it were, to be good among the evil. O! if they were corn, they would endure the chaff in the floor till the time of winnowing. But because they are chaff, the wind hath blown before this winnowing, and hath caught up the chaff from the threshing floor, and cast it forth among thorns. And the chaff indeed hath been cast forth thence: but is that which remains corn only? It is only the chaff that flies away before the winnowing; but there remains both corn and chaff: but the chaff will be winnowed, when the time of winnowing shall come. This the Psalmist meant: I have walked in mine innocence, and trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved. For if I shall trust in man, I shall see perhaps this man sometime living ill, and not keeping to those good ways, which he hath either learnt or teaches in the Church, but those which he hath followed under the teaching of the devil; and because my trust shall be in man, when man stumbles my trust stumbles, and when man falls my trust will fall: but, because I trust in the Lord, I shall not be moved.

7. There follows, (ver. 2.) Prove me, O Lord, and try me; burn my reins, and my heart. What is, Burn my reins, and my heart? Burn my delights, burn

my thoughts, (He hath used heart for thoughts, and reins for delights,) lest I should think any evil, lest any evil should delight me. But wherewith wilt Thou burn my reins? With the fire of Thy word. Wherewith wilt Thou burn my heart? With the heat of Thy Spirit. Of which heat it is said elsewhere, And there is none who can hide himself from the heat thereof. And of which fire the Lord saith, I came to send fire on the earth.

8. Therefore there follows, (ver. 3.) For Thy mercy is before mine eyes, and I have been pleasing in Thy truth. That is, I have not been pleasing in man's sight, but I have been pleasing unto Thee within, where Thou seest: and I care not, if I be displeasing where men see, as the Apostle saith, Let every one prove his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself alone, and not in another.

9. Ver. 4. I have not sat, saith he, with the council of vanity. Give heed, holy Brethren, to what this, I have not sat, is. According as God seeth, he saith, I have not sat. Sometimes thou art not in the council, yet thou sittest there. For instance, thou dost not sit in the theatre, but thou thinkest on the shows of the theatre, against which it is said, Burn my reins: thou sittest there in heart, though thou art not there in body. But it may happen, that thou art held there by some one, and fast bound, or some pious duty may make thee sit there. How can this happen? It chances from some duty of piety, that a necessity may lie on a servant of God to be in the amphitheatre; he wished to deliver some gladiator or other, it might happen that he was sitting, and waiting, until he whom he was desirous of delivering came out. See! he hath not sat in the council of vanity, though he was seen sitting there in body. What is it to sit? To consent unto them who sit there: which if thou have not done, though present, thou hast not sat there: if thou have done it, though absent, thou hast sat there. And I will not enter in with them that work wickedness. (Ver. 5.) I have hated the congregation of evil doers. You see that it is within, that, And I will not sit with the ungodly.

10. Ver. 6. I will wash mine hands in innocency; not with this visible water. Thou dost wash the hands, when thou dost think piously of thy works, and innocently in God's sight; for there is an altar too in God's sight, whereunto the Priest hath entered, Who first offered Himself up for us. There is an heavenly altar, and no man embraceth that altar, but he who washeth his

hands in innocency. For many unworthy men touch this altar here, and God endures that his Sacraments should suffer injury for a time. But what! my Brethren, will the heavenly Jerusalem be as these walls? You will not be so received with the evil into Abraham's bosom, as you are now received with the evil within the walls of the Church. Fear not then: wash thine hands. And I will compass the altar of the Lord: where thou offerest vows unto the Lord, where thou pourest forth prayers, where thy conscience is pure, where thou dost tell God what thou art; and if there be haply aught in thee that displeaseth God, He, to Whom thou dost make confession, taketh care for it. Wash then thine hands in innocency, and compass the altar of the Lord, that thou mayest hear the voice of praise.

11. For this follows, (ver. 7.) That I may hear the voice of praise, and declare all Thy wondrous works. What is, That I may hear the voice of praise? He means, That I may understand. For this is to hear before God, not as these sounds, which many hear, and many do not. How many are there hearing now as regards us, who yet are deaf toward God! How many who have ears, and have not those ears of which Jesus saith, Who hath ears to hear, let him hear! What is it then to hear the voice of praise? I will tell you, if I can, with the help of the Lord's mercy, and your prayers. To hear the voice of praise, is to understand, inwardly, that whatever of evil from sin is in thee, is thine own; whatever of good in works of righteousness, is God's. So hear the voice of praise, as not to praise thyself even when thou art good. For in praising thyself as good, thou dost become evil. For humility had made thee good, pride maketh thee evil. Thou wast converted that thou mightest be illuminated, and by Thy conversion thou wert made full of light, having been enlightened by conversion. But whereunto? unto thyself? If thou couldest be illuminated by conversion to thyself, thou couldest never be in darkness, because thou wouldest ever be with thyself. Wherefore wert thou illuminated? Because thou turnedst thyself to something else, which thou wert not. What is the something else which thou wert not? God is light. For thou wast not light, because thou wast a sinner. For the Apostle saith to them, whom he would have hear the voice of praise, For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light. What is, Ye were sometime darkness, but the old man? But now light: not without a cause are ye light, who were sometime darkness, but because ye have been

illuminated. Think not that thou art thyself light: that is the light, which lighteth every man that cometh into this world: but thou by thyself, by evil will, by thy turning away from God, wast in darkness: now thou art in light. But he immediately subjoined, lest they should be proud to whom it was said, But now light, and added, In the Lord. For thus he saith, Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. Therefore if without the Lord, then not light, but if therefore light because in the Lord, what hast thou that thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? For thus the Apostle himself spake in another place to men who bore themselves proudly, and would attribute to themselves what is God's, and glory in good as if it were their own: he saith to them, For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? He Who hath given to the humble, taketh away from the proud, because he who gave can take away. This is the bearing, Brethren, (if so be I have explained it, as I wished: I have indeed explained it as far as I could, although not as far as I would,) this is the bearing of the words, I will wash my hands in innocency, and I will compass Thine altar, O Lord, that I may hear the voice of Thy praise: that is, that I may not for this good thing in me rely on myself, but on Thee Who gavest it me, that I should not wish to be praised for myself in myself, but for Thee in Thee. Therefore there follows, That I may hear the voice of Thy praise, and declare all Thy wondrous works: not mine, but Thine.

12. And now see, Brethren, see that lover of God, who relieth on God, placed among the evil, entreating God that he be not destroyed with the evil, for that God erreth not in judgment. For, when thou seest men have entered into one place, thou thinkest their merits equal: but God is not deceived, fear not. By the judgment of the wind thou dost discriminate between the chaff and the wheat: thou dost wish the wind to blow for thee, and thou art not the wind, but thou dost wish the wind to blow for thee: and, when with the winnowing fan thou hast shaken out both chaff and wheat, the wind takes away the light, the heavy remains. Thou dost look then for the wind to judge the floor. What? doth God look for another to judge with Him, lest He destroy the good with the evil? Fear not then: be thou secure in thy goodness, even in the midst of the evil; and say what thou hearest,

(ver. 8.) O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thine house. God's house is the Church: as yet it contains evil men, but the beauty of God's house is in the good, is in the holy: this beauty of Thine house have I loved. And the place of the habitation of Thy glory. What is this? This too will I explain, it has a somewhat obscure reference to that meaning: may the Lord help me, and your heart's earnest attention inspired by the same Lord. Why doth he say, the place of the habitation of Thy glory? He said before, the beauty of Thine house: and he explains what is the beauty of God's house, The place, saith he, of the habitation of Thy glory. It is not enough to say, the place of God's habitation; but, the place of the habitation of God's glory. What is God's glory? Whereof I spoke a little before, that he even who is made good should not glory in himself, but in the Lord. For all have sinned, and are in need of the glory of God. In whom then the Lord so dwells, that He receiveth glory for His own good things, that they are unwilling to attribute to themselves, and claim as it were for their own, what they have received from Him: these belong to the beauty of God's house. Nor would Scripture have them distinguished, unless there were some, who have indeed the gift of God, and will not glory in God, but in themselves: they have indeed the gift of God, but they do not belong to the beauty of God's house. For they who belong to the beauty of God's house, in whom God's glory dwelleth, are themselves the place of the habitation of God's glory. And in whom doth God's glory dwell, but in such as so glory, that they glory not in themselves, but in the Lord? Since then I have loved the beauty of Thine house, that is, all who are there and seek Thy glory; and, moreover, I have not put my trust in man, and have not consented to the ungodly, and will not enter into nor sit in their assembly; since I have been such in the Church of God, what reward wilt Thou give me? What should be our answer follows, (Ver. 9.) Destroy not my soul with the ungodly, nor my life with the men of blood.

13. Ver. 10. In whose hands are wickednesses, their right hand is full of gifts. Gifts are not only money, not only gold and silver, not only presents; nor do all who receive these, receive gifts. For sometimes they are received by the Church. Yea, moreover, Peter received such; the Lord received such; He had a bag, Judas stole what was put therein. But what is to receive gifts? To praise a man for gifts, to flatter a man, to fawn and wheedle, to judge

contrary to truth for gifts. For what gifts? Not for gold and silver and any thing of this kind only; but he too who judges amiss for praise, receives a gift, and a gift than which nothing is more empty. For his hand was open to receive the judgment of another's tongue, and he hath lost the judgment of his own conscience. Hence in whose hands there are wickednesses, their right hand is full of gifts. You see, brethren, that they are before God also, in whose hands are no wickednesses, neither is their right hand filled with gifts, of course, in God's sight; and they can say to none but God, Thou knowest: to none but Him can they say, Destroy not my soul with the ungodly, and my life with the men of blood; Who Alone can see that they receive no gifts. For instance, it happens that two men have a cause before a servant of God: no one calls any but his own cause just. For if he thought his own cause unjust, he would not seek the judge. This one thinks that he has a just cause, and so does the other. They come before the judge: before sentence is pronounced, they both say, We accept your judgment; whatever you shall judge, far be it from us to reject.—What say you too?—Judge what you will; only judge: if I should resist at all on any point, may I be anathema. Both love the judge, before he passes judgment. But when sentence shall have been pronounced, it will be against one; and neither of them knows against whom it will be. The judge then, if he shall wish to please both parties, receives for a gift the praise of men. But having received that gift, see what gift he loses. He receives what sounds, and passeth away: he loses what is uttered, and never passeth away. The word of God is being ever uttered; It never passeth away: the word of man as soon as it has been uttered presently passeth away. He holds the shadow, he lets go the substance. Now if he have regard to God, he will pronounce sentence against one of the parties, having his thoughts on God, under Whom as Judge he pronounces it. But he, against whom it has been pronounced, and if it cannot now be disannulled, because it is maintained, it may not be by the law of the Church, but of this world's princes, who have granted so much authority to the Church, that whatever has been judged therein cannot be set aside, if, I say, it cannot be disannulled, he has no wish any longer to look into himself, but turns his blinded eyes against the judge, and maligns him as much as he can. He wished, saith he, to please the other party, he favoured the rich man, either he received something from him, or he was afraid to offend him. He makes an accusation, as if gifts had been received.

But if the poor man shall have had a cause against a rich man, and judgment shall have been for the poor man, the rich one again says, He has received gifts. What gifts from a poor man? He saw, saith he, a poor man, and that he might not be blamed as having acted against the poor, he has overborne justice, and pronounced sentence against the truth. Since then it must needs be that this be said, see how it cannot be said by them who do not receive gifts, save in God's sight, Who alone seeth who receiveth and who doth not receive. (Ver. 11.) But I have walked in mine innocence: O deliver me, and be merciful unto me: (Ver. 12.) my foot hath stood in uprightness. I have been shaken indeed on every side by scandals and temptations from those who blame my judgment with the rashness of men; but my foot hath stood in uprightness. But why in uprightness? Because he had said above, And trusting in the Lord, I shall not be moved.

14. How then does he conclude? In the Churches I will bless Thee, O Lord. That is, in the Churches I will not bless myself, as if certain of men, but I will bless Thee in my works. For this it is to bless God in the Churches, Brethren, so to live that God may be blessed by each man's conversation. For he who blesseth the Lord with his tongue, and curseth Him in his deeds, doth not bless God in the Churches. Almost all bless with the tongue, but not all in deed. Some bless with the voice, some with their conversation. Now those in whose conversation there is not found what they say, cause God to be blasphemed, so that they who do not as yet enter the Church, although they love their sins, and therefore are unwilling to be Christians, yet excuse themselves by the evil, so as to flatter themselves, deceiving their own selves, and saying, Why dost thou persuade me to be a Christian? I have suffered fraud at a Christian's hands, and never did any: a Christian has sworn falsely to me, and I have never done so. And when they speak thus, they are kept back from salvation: that it profiteth them nothing, not indeed that they are already good, but that they are but moderately bad. For as it is no profit to open the eyes, if a man be in darkness; so is it no profit to be in the light, if the eyes are closed. And so the pagan indeed, (to speak of them the rather as though their lives were good,) is, with open eyes, in darkness; because he acknowledgeth not the Lord his Light: but the Christian, whose life is evil, is in none other light than God's, but with closed eyes; for, by his evil life, he will not see Him, in Whose Name he is,

as it were, blind, in the midst of light, quickened by no vision of the True Light.

PSALM 27

first exposition

Of David himself, before he was anointed.

1. Christ's young soldier speaketh, on his coming to the faith. (Ver. 1.) The Lord is my light, and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord will give me both knowledge of Himself, and salvation: who shall take me from Him? The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord will repel all the assaults and snares of mine enemy: of no man shall I be afraid.

2. Ver. 2. Whilst the guilty approach unto me to eat up my flesh. Whilst the guilty come near to recognise and insult me, that they may exalt themselves above me in my change for the better; that with their reviling tooth they may consume not me, but rather my fleshly desires. Mine enemies who trouble me. Not they only who trouble me, blaming me with a friendly intent, and wishing to recal me from my purpose, but mine enemies also. They became weak, and fell. Whilst then they do this with the desire of defending their own opinion, they became weak to believe better things, and began to hate the word of salvation, whereby I do what displeases them.

3. Ver. 3. If camps stand together against me, my heart will not fear. But if the multitude of gainsayers conspire to stand together against me, my heart will not fear, so as to go over to their side. If war rise up against me, in this will I trust. If the persecution of this world arise against me, in this petition, which I am pondering, will I place my hope.

4. Ver. 4. One have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. For one petition have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That as long as I am in this life, no adversities may exclude me from the number of them, who hold the unity

and the truth of the Lord's faith throughout the world. That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. With this end, namely, that persevering in the faith, the delightful vision may appear to me, which I may contemplate face to face. And I shall be protected, His temple. And death being swallowed up in victory, I shall be clothed with immortality, being made His temple.

5. Ver. 5. For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. For He hath hidden me in the dispensation of His Incarnate Word in the time of temptations, to which my mortal life is exposed. He hath protected me in the secret place of His tabernacle. He hath protected me, with the heart believing unto righteousness.

6. On a rock hath He exalted me. And that what I believed might be made manifest for salvation, He hath made my confession to be conspicuous in His own strength. (Ver. 6.) And now, lo! He hath exalted mine head above mine enemies. What doth He reserve for me at the last, when even now the body is dead because of sin, lo! I feel that my mind serves the law of God, and is not led captive under the rebellious law of sin? I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the sacrifice of rejoicing. I have considered the circuit of the world, believing on Christ; and in that for us God was humbled in time, I have praised Him with rejoicing: for with such sacrifice He is well pleased. I will sing and give praises to the Lord. In heart and in deed I will be glad in the Lord.

7. Ver. 7. Hear my voice, O Lord, wherewith I have cried unto Thee. Hear, Lord, my interior voice, which with a strong intention I have addressed to Thy ears. Have mercy upon me, and hear me. Have mercy upon me, and hear me therein.

8. Ver. 8. My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance. For I have not exhibited myself to men; but in secret, where Thou alone hearest, my heart hath said to Thee; I have not sought from Thee ought without Thee as a reward, but Thy countenance. Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek. In this search will I perseveringly persist: for not aught that is common, but Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek, that I may love Thee freely, since nothing more precious do I find.

9. Ver. 9. Turn not away Thy face from me: that I may find what I seek. Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant: lest, while seeking Thee, I fall in with somewhat else. For what is more grievous than this punishment to one who loveth and seeketh the truth of Thy countenance? Be Thou my Helper. How shall I find it, if Thou help me not? Leave me not, neither despise me, O God my Saviour. Scorn not that a mortal dares to seek the Eternal; for Thou, God, dost heal the wound of my sin.

10. Ver. 10. For my father and my mother have left me. For the kingdom of this world and the city of this world, of which I was born in time and mortality, have left me seeking Thee, and despising what they promised, since they could not give what I seek. But the Lord took me up. But the Lord, Who can give me Himself, took me up.

11. Ver. 11. Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way. For me then who am setting out toward Thee, and commencing so great a profession, of arriving at wisdom, from fear, appoint, O Lord, a law in Thy way, lest in my wandering Thy rule abandon me. And direct me in the right path because of mine enemies. And direct me in the right way of its straits. For it is not enough to begin, since enemies cease not until the end is attained.

12. Ver. 12. Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me. Suffer not them that trouble me to be satiated with my evils. For unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me. For there have risen up against me they that speak falsely of me, to remove and call me back from Thee, as if I seek glory of men. And iniquity hath lied unto itself. Therefore iniquity hath been pleased with its own lie. For me it hath not moved, to whom because of this there hath been promised a greater reward in heaven.

13. Ver. 13. I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. And since my Lord hath first suffered these things, if I too despise the tongues of the dying, (for the mouth that lieth slayeth the soul,) I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living, where there is no place for falsity.

14. Ver. 14. Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man: and let thy heart be strong, yea wait on the Lord. But when shall this be? It is arduous for a mortal, it is slow to a lover: but listen to the voice, that deceiveth not, of

him that saith, wait on the Lord. Endure the burning of the reins manfully, and the burning of the heart stoutly. Think not that what thou dost not as yet receive is denied thee. That thou faint not in despair, see how it is said, Wait on the Lord.

second exposition

1. The Lord our God in addressing and consoling us, whom sooth He regards as eating our bread by His Own righteous judgment in the sweat of our face, vouchsafes to speak to us out of ourselves, to shew us that He is not only our Creator, but also our Indweller. These words of the Psalm, which we have heard and partly sung, if we say that they are our own, we must be reverently careful how we speak the truth; for they are rather the words of God's Spirit than our own. Again, if we say that they are not ours, we do indeed lie. For groaning belongs not but to those who are in distress; or all that speech, which is uttered here, full of grief and tears, may be His Who never can be miserable. The Lord then is merciful, we are miserable: in His mercy He vouchsafes to speak to the miserable, vouchsafes even in them to use the speech of the miserable. So each is true, both that the speech is ours, and that it is not ours; that it is the speech of God's Spirit, and that it is not His. The speech is that of God's Spirit, in that but for His inspiration we should not speak thus: but it is not His, in that He is neither miserable, nor in distress: but these words are those of the miserable and distressed. Again, they are ours, because they are words indicating our misery: and yet they are not ours, because it is of His gift that we are vouchsafed even to groan.

2. A Psalm of David before he was anointed. Thus runs the title of the Psalm, A Psalm of David before he was anointed, that is, before he received unction. For he was anointed as a king. And the king was then anointed alone, and also the priest: these two persons were anointed at that time. In the two persons was prefigured the One future king and priest, in either office One Christ; and therefore Christ from the chrism. But not only was our Head anointed, but His Body also, we ourselves. Now He is King, in that He ruleth and leadeth us; Priest, in that He intercedeth for us. And verily He alone hath been such a priest, as to be also Himself the sacrifice. He hath offered none other sacrifice to God than Himself. For He could not

find besides Himself a most pure, reasonable victim, as a lamb without spot, redeeming us by the shedding of His own blood, incorporating us with Himself, making us His Own members, that in Him we too should be Christ. Therefore anointing belongs to all Christians: but in the former times of the Old Testament it belonged to two characters only. But it appears from this that we are the Body of Christ, in that we all are anointed: and we all in Him are both Christ's and Christ, because in some sort Whole Christ is the Head and Body. This anointing will perfect us spiritually in that life, which is promised us. But this voice is of one longing for that life; it is the voice as it were of one longing for the grace of God, which shall be perfected in us at the last: therefore it is said, Before he was anointed. For we are anointed now in the sacrament, and, by this sacrament, something is prefigured, which we shall be. And that certain unspeakable future thing we ought to long for, and to groan in the sacrament, that we may rejoice in that thing, which is foreshewn in the sacrament.

3. See what he says: (ver. 1.) The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? He enlightens me, let darkness vanish: He saves me, let weakness vanish: walking in the light with firmness, whom shall I fear? For God giveth not such salvation, as can be wrested by any one; nor is He such a Light, as can be obscured by any one. The Lord enlightening, we enlightened; the Lord saving, we saved: if then He be the enlightener and we the enlightened; and He the Saviour, we the saved, without Him we are darkness and weakness. But having in Him a sure, and established, and true hope, whom shall we fear? The Lord thy light, the Lord thy Saviour. Find one more powerful, and fear. I belong, in such wise, to the most powerful of all, to the all-powerful, that He both enlighteneth me, and saveth me; nor fear I any but Him. The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

4. Ver. 2. Whilst the guilty approach unto me to eat up my flesh: mine enemies who trouble me became weak and fell. I, therefore, what shall I fear, or whom shall I fear? Of whom shall I be afraid, or of what shall I be afraid? They who persecute me, they are weakened, they fall. Now why do they persecute me? To eat up my flesh. What is my flesh? My fleshly affections. Let them rage in their persecutions: nothing dies in me, but what

is mortal. There will be somewhat in me, which the persecutor cannot reach, where my God dwelleth. Let them eat my flesh: when my flesh is gone, I shall be spirit and spiritual. And indeed so great salvation doth my Lord promise me, that even now this mortal flesh, which seems to be given up to the hands of the persecutors, doth not perish for ever; but what hath been exhibited in the resurrection of my Head, may all the members hope for. Whom should my soul fear, which God inhabiteth? Whom should my flesh fear, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption? Would ye know, because they who persecute us eat our flesh, how that we need not fear even for this very flesh of ours? It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body. Now how great confidence should there be in him, who could say, The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? The general is protected by guards, and fears not; a mortal is protected by mortals, and is secure: a mortal is protected by the Immortal, and shall he fear and be afraid?

5. Now how great confidence there should be in him, who speaks thus, do ye hear; (ver. 3.) If camps stand together against me, mine heart shall not fear. Camps are well defended, but what stronger defence than God? If war rise up against me. What can war do to me? Can it take away my hope from me? Can it take away what the Almighty gives? As He who gives is not conquered, so what He giveth is not taken away. If the gift can be taken away, the giver is conquered. Therefore even these things, which we receive in time, no one can take away from us, my Brethren, but He alone Who gave them. The spiritual things which He bestoweth He will not take away, unless thou shalt let them go; but things fleshly and temporal He taketh away; because whoever else taketh them away, taketh them away by His giving him the power. We know this, and read in the book of Job, that not even the devil, who appears, so to say, to have the greatest power for a time, can do any thing without permission. He received power over the lowest things, and lost the greatest and the highest. And this is not the power of one enraged, but the punishment of one damned. Not even he then can have any power without permission. You see this both in the book which I have quoted, and in the Gospel the Lord saith, This night Satan hath desired that he might sift you as wheat; and I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith

fail not. Now it is permitted either for our punishment, or for our trial. Therefore since no one can take away from us what God giveth, let us fear none but God. Whatsoever else threaten, whatsoever else vaunt itself against us, let not our heart fear.

6. If war rise up against me, in this will I trust. In what? (Ver. 4.) One, saith he, have I asked of the Lord. He named some boon in the feminine gender, as if he had said, One petition. And as we are in the habit of saying in conversation for instance, 'Duas habes,' (in the feminine,) and not 'Duo,' (in the neuter:) so Scripture has used this manner of speech: One, saith he, have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. Let us see what he asketh, who feareth nothing. Great security of soul! Would ye fear nothing? Ask this one, which he asketh who feareth nothing, or which he asketh that he may fear nothing. One, saith he, have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. This is practised here by them that walk honestly. What is this? What is this one? That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. This is the one: for that is called a house where we shall abide always. In this state of pilgrimage, the word house is used, but the proper name is, tent. A tent belongs to those who are in pilgrimage, and in a measure warring and fighting against an enemy. Since then there is a tent in this life, it is plain that there is an enemy too. For to have tents in common, this is to be comrades: and you know this is the name for soldiers. Here then is a tent, there a house. But this tent too is sometimes by application of its resemblance called a house, and the house is according to the same method called a tent: yet properly the latter is the house, the former the tent.

7. Now what we shall do in that house, you have clearly expressed in another Psalm: Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house; they will be praising Thee for ever. On fire, if we may so say, with this desire, and boiling with this love, he longs to dwell all the days of his life in the house of the Lord: in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, not as if they were to come to an end, but days eternal. For so is the word, days, used, as years, of which it is said, And Thy years shall not fail. For the day of life eternal is one day without setting. This then he said to the Lord, I have desired this, One have I asked, This will I require. And as if we should say to him, And what wilt thou do there? what will be thy delight there? what

the recreation of thy soul? what the pleasures there whence thy joys will be supplied? For thou wilt not continue there, unless thou shalt be happy. But that happiness whence will it come? For here we have the divers happinesses of the human race; and any one is called miserable, when what he loves is withdrawn. Men then have divers things, and when any man seems to have what he loves, he is called happy. But he is truly happy, not if he have what he loves, but if he love what he ought to love. For many are more miserable in having what they love, than in wanting it. For men miserable by the love of hurtful things, are more miserable by having them. And God in mercy, when we love amiss, denieth what we love: but in anger giveth to him that loveth what he loves amiss. You have the Apostle, saying expressly, God gave them up to the lust of their own hearts. He gave them what they loved, but in condemnation. You have again God denying what was asked: For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, saith he, that He would take it away from me; (namely, the thorn in the flesh;) and He said to me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for strength is made perfect in weakness. See He gave those up to the lust of their hearts: He denied the Apostle Paul what he prayed for; to the former He gave unto condemnation, to the latter He denied unto salvation. But when we love that which God wills us to love, beyond doubt He will give it us. This is that one, which should be loved, that we may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our life.

8. And because, in these earthly habitations, men are charmed with divers delights and pleasures, and every one wishes to dwell in that house, where he will have nothing to offend his mind, and have many things to delight him; but if those things which did delight are withdrawn, the man wishes to remove from what place soever it be: let us then ask him, as it were, more inquisitively, and let him tell us, what we ourselves, what he will do in that house, where he wishes and desires, longs and asks this one thing from the Lord, that he may dwell therein all the days of his life. What wilt thou do there, I ask thee? What is it for which thou longest? Hear what, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. See what I love, see why I wish to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. He has there a grand spectacle, to contemplate the delight of the Lord Himself. He wishes when his own night is over to be fixed in His light. For then will be our morning, when the night is passed: whence he says in another Psalm, In the morning I

will stand before Thee, and will contemplate. Now therefore I do not contemplate, because I have fallen: then I will stand, and will contemplate. This is man's voice. For man has fallen, and one would not be sent to raise us up, if we had not fallen. We have fallen, He hath descended. He hath ascended, we are lifted up; for no man hath ascended, but He Who descended. He who hath fallen is lifted up; He Who descended ascendeth. And let us not therefore despair, that He alone hath ascended. For He lifteth us up, to whom in our fall He descended: and we shall stand, and shall contemplate, and enjoy great delight. Lo! I have said this, and ye have cried out for the longing after some vision not seen as yet. Let your soul go beyond all ordinary things, and let your reach of thought go beyond all your customary imaginations according to the flesh, derived from the senses of the flesh, and figuring out all manner of vain fancies. Cast all away from your mind, reject whatever may have occurred to you: recognise the weakness of your heart, and for the very fact of any thing occurring to you, that you are able to imagine, say, It is not that; for if it had been that, it would not have occurred to me. So will ye long for some certain good. What kind of good? The Good of all good, whence cometh all good, the Good to which cannot be added what Good It is. For we use the expression, a good man, and a good field, and a good house, and a good animal, and a good tree, and a good body, and a good soul: you have added in speaking of all these, "good." There is the Simple Good, the Very Good by Which all things are good, the Very Good of Which all good things are; this is the delight of the Lord, this we shall contemplate. Now, Brethren, mark; if these goods which are called goods delight us, if goods which are not in themselves goods (for all things changeable are not in themselves goods) delight us; what will be our contemplation of the Good Unchangeable, Eternal, Abiding ever in the same fashion? For these things, which are called good, would by no means delight us, except they were good; nor could they be by any other means good, save from Him Who is simply Good.

9. See why I wish to dwell, saith he, in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. I have told you why, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. But, that I may always contemplate, that no annoyance may befall me in my contemplation, no temptation turn me aside, no power of any hurry

me away, that I may not be exposed to the violence of any enemy in my contemplation, but have secure and thorough enjoyment of my delight, the Lord my God Himself; what shall be done for me? He shall protect me. Not only, then, saith he, would I contemplate the delight of the Lord, but also that I, His temple, be protected. That He may protect me, His own temple, I shall be His temple, and be protected by Him. Is the temple of God such as the temples of idols are? The idols of the Gentiles are protected by their temples: the Lord our God will protect His temple, and I shall be secure. I shall contemplate for delight, and be protected for salvation. As that contemplation shall be perfect, so shall this protection be perfect; and as that joy of contemplation shall be perfect, so also shall the incorruption of sound health be perfect. To these two expressions, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord, and be protected, His temple; those two with which the Psalm commences, ‘The Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, whom shall I fear?’ In that I shall contemplate the delight of the Lord, He is my Light: in that He will protect me, His temple, He is my Salvation.

10. But why doth He make this good for us unto the end? (ver. 5.) For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. My dwelling, then, shall be in His house all the days of my life to this end, that I may contemplate the delight of the Lord, and be protected, His temple. But whence my assurance of arriving thither? For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. Then the days of my evils will be no more, but He hath seen me in the days of my evils. He then Who mercifully regarded me when far off, how shall He gladden me when brought near to Him? For which cause therefore I did not make that one petition shamelessly; nor did my heart say to me, What art thou asking, or from Whom art thou asking? For dost thou dare, unrighteous sinner, to ask any thing from God? Darest thou hope, infirm one, of heart impure, that thou shalt have any contemplation of God? I do, he answers, not of myself, but of His delight; not of self-reliance, but of His earnest. He Who hath given such an earnest to the pilgrim, will He desert him on his arrival? For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. Lo! the day of our evils is this life. Days of evil the ungodly have in one way, the faithful in another. For even they that believe, but who as yet are in pilgrimage from the Lord, (For as long as we are in this body, we are in pilgrimage from the

Lord, as the Apostle hath said:) if they spend no days of evil, whence the words in the Lord's prayer, Deliver us from evil, if we are not in days of evil? But far differently do they spend the days of evil, who have not yet believed: yet even these hath He not disregarded. For Christ died for the ungodly. Therefore let the soul of man dare to feel confidence, and make that one petition: it will have it in safety, it will possess it in safety. So greatly hath she been loved in her deformity, how shall she shine in her beauty? For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle, in the days of my evils: He hath protected me in the secret of His tabernacle. What is the secret of His tabernacle? What is this? For there are, so to say, many members of a tabernacle seen from without. There is too, so to say, the shrine which is called the secret sanctuary, the innermost part of the temple. And what is this? that which the priest alone entered. And haply the priest Himself is the secret of God's tabernacle. For He received flesh from this tabernacle, and made for us the secret of the tabernacle: so that His other members, believers on Him, should be His tabernacle, but Himself the secret of the tabernacle. For ye are dead, saith the Apostle, and your life hath been hid with Christ in God.

11. Would ye know that he is speaking of this? The Rock assuredly is Christ. Hear what follows, For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the days of my evils: He hath protected me in the secret of His tabernacle. You were asking what is the secret of the tabernacle: hear what follows: On the Rock hath He exalted me. Therefore in Christ hath He exalted me. Because thou hast humbled thyself in the dust, He hath exalted thee on the Rock. But Christ is above, and thou art yet below. Hear the words following, (ver. 6.) Even now hath He exalted mine head above mine enemies. Even now, before I come to that house, where I wish to dwell all the days of my life, before I come to that contemplation of the Lord, Even now hath He exalted mine head above mine enemies. As yet I suffer from the enemies of the Body of Christ, as yet I have not been exalted above mine enemies; but, mine head hath He exalted above mine enemies. Christ our Head is already in heaven, our enemies can as yet rage against us; we are not yet exalted above them; but our Head is already there, whence He spake the words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? He hath said that He is in us here below: therefore we too are in Him there above; for that, Even now He hath

exalted mine head above mine enemies. See what an earnest we have, whereby we too are by faith, and hope, and charity, with our Head in heaven for ever; because the Head Himself, by divinity, goodness, unity, is with us on earth even unto the consummation of the world.

12. I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing. We sacrifice the victim of rejoicing, we sacrifice the victim of gladness, the victim of thankfulness, the victim of thanksgiving, which cannot be explained in words. But we sacrifice, where? In His very tabernacle, in the holy Church. What then do we sacrifice? Most abundant and inexpressible joy, with no words, with speech ineffable. This is the victim of rejoicing. Whence hath it been sought, where found? By going about. I have gone about, saith he, and sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing. Let thy mind go about through all creation: every where will creation cry out to thee, God made me. Whatever in art delighteth thee, sets forth the artificer: and much more if thou go about the universe, doth consideration conceive the great Workman's praise. Thou seest the heavens: they are God's great work. Thou seest the earth: God made the numerous seeds, the varieties of herbs, the multitude of animals. Go yet about the heavens even unto the earth, leave nothing: on all sides all things proclaim to thee the Framers, and the very species of creatures are so to say the voices of the Creator's praisers. But who can set forth the whole creation? who set it forth in praises? who worthily praise the heaven and the earth, the sea and all things that are therein? And these indeed are things visible. Who can worthily praise Angels, Thrones, Sovereignities, Principalities, and Powers? Who can worthily praise that very power that works actively within us, quickening the body, moving the limbs, bringing the senses into action, embracing so many things by the memory, discriminating so many things by the intellect; who can worthily praise it? But if in these creatures of God human language is so embarrassed, how fares it in the case of the Creator, except in default of language there remain rejoicing alone? I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing.

13. There is another interpretation also, which seems to me to have a closer reference to the context of the Psalm. For since he had said that he was exalted on the Rock, which is Christ; and that his Head, which is Christ,

was exalted above his enemies; he would have it understood that he himself, who was exalted on the Rock, was exalted in the same, his Head, above his enemies: referring this to the Church's honour, to which the persecution of the enemies gave way: and since this was effected through the faith of the whole world, he saith, I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing: that is, I have considered the faith of the whole world, in which faith my Head hath been exalted above them that persecuted me; and in His very tabernacle, that is, in the Church spread abroad throughout the whole world, have I in manner unspeakable praised the Lord.

14. I will sing and give praises to the Lord. We shall be in safety, and sing in safety, and give praise in safety, when we shall contemplate the delight of the Lord, and shall be protected as His temple in that incorruption, when death shall be swallowed up in victory. But what now? For those joys, which we shall have, when we shall have gained that one petition, have been already spoken of. But what now? Hear my voice, O Lord. Let us groan now, let us pray now. Groaning belongs not but to the miserable, prayer belongs not but to the necessitous. Prayer shall pass away, praise shall take its place; tears shall pass away, joy shall take their place. Now in the meanwhile, whilst we are in the days of our evils, let not our prayer to God cease, from Whom we ask that one petition; and from this petition let us not desist, until by His gift and guidance we attain unto it. (Ver. 7.) Hear my voice, O Lord, wherewith I have cried unto Thee: have mercy upon me, and hear me. He makes that one petition; entreating, weeping, groaning so long, he makes but that one. He has put an end to all His desires; there hath remained that one petition, which he asks.

15. Hear why he makes this petition: (ver. 8.) My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance. This then is what he said a little before, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance. If our joy were in this visible sun, our heart would not say, I have sought Thy countenance; but, the eyes of our body. To whom saith our heart, I have sought Thy countenance, but to Him Who appertaineth to the eye of the heart? The eyes of the flesh seek this visible light, the eyes of the heart seek that other light. But thou wouldest see that

light, which is seen by the eyes of the heart; because this Light is God. For God is Light, saith John, and in Him is no darkness at all. Wouldest thou then see that light? Purify the eye, whereby Christ is seen, for, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

16. My heart hath said unto Thee, I have sought Thy countenance; Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek. I have made one petition of the Lord, this will I seek, Thy countenance. Turn not away Thy face from me. How he hath planted himself in that one petition! Wouldest thou obtain thy request? Seek nothing else. Be thou sufficient but for one petition, for one will suffice thee. My heart hath said unto Thee, I have sought Thy countenance; Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek. Turn not away Thy face from me: turn not aside in anger from Thy servant. Magnificent! nothing can be more divinely spoken! This is the feeling of those that truly love. Another man would be blessed and immortal in these pleasures of earthly lusts which he loves: and peradventure for this reason would worship God, and pray, that he may long live here in his delights, and that nothing should fail him, which earthly desire has in possession, neither gold, nor silver, nor any estate that charms his eyes, that his friends, his children, his wife, his dependents, should not die; in these delights would he live for ever. But since he cannot for ever, for he knows that he is mortal; for this haply does he worship God, and for this pray to God, and for this sigh to God, that all these things may last even to old age. And if God should say to him, Lo! I make thee immortal in these things, he would accept it as a great boon, and in the exultation of his joy and self-congratulation would be unable to contain himself. Not so doth this man wish, who hath made one petition of the Lord. But what doth he wish? To contemplate the delight of the Lord all the days of his life. And on the contrary the other, who in this way and for this reason would worship the Lord, if those temporal advantages were at his hand, would not fear the anger of his Lord, unless lest He should take them away. This man feareth not His anger on this account; since he hath said of his enemies, That they may eat my flesh. For what doth he fear His anger? Lest He take away that which he hath loved. What hath he loved? Thy countenance. Therefore he deems this to be the anger of the Lord, if He turn away His countenance from him. (Ver. 9.) Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant. He might by chance be answered thus; “Why fearest thou lest

He should turn aside from thee in anger? Rather if He should turn aside from thee in anger, He will not avenge Himself on thee: if thou meet Him in His anger, He will be avenged on thee. Rather then desire that He may turn aside from thee when in anger.” “No,” says he; for he knows what he longs for; “His anger is nothing else than the turning away of His countenance.” “What if He will make thee immortal in these delights, and in the enjoyment of earthly gratifications?” Such a lover answers, “I would not have it; whatever I have beside Him has no charms for me: whatever my Lord would give me, let Him take away all, give me Himself.” Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant. From some peradventure He doth turn aside, not in anger; as from certain who say to Him, Turn away Thy face from my sins. When He turneth away His face from thy sins, He doth not turn aside from thee in anger. Let Him then turn away His face from thy sins: but let Him not turn away His face from thee.

17. Be Thou my helper: leave me not. For, lo, I am in the way, I have made the one petition of Thee, to dwell in Thy house all the days of my life, to contemplate Thy delight, and be protected as Thy temple: this is my one petition: but that I may attain unto it, I am in the way. Peradventure Thou wilt say unto me, “Strive, walk, I have given thee freewill; thou art master of thine own will, follow on the way, seek peace, and ensue it; turn not aside from the way, abide not therein, look not back; persevere in walking, for he that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Now that thou hast received freewill, thou dost rely as it were on the power of walking: rely not on thyself; if He should leave thee, thou wilt faint in the very way, thou wilt fall, wilt go astray, wilt come to a stand: say then to Him, Thou hast given me indeed a free will, but without Thee my efforts are nothing: Be Thou my helper: leave me not; neither despise me, O God of my salvation. For Thou dost help, Who formedst; Thou dost not desert, Who createdst.

18. Ver. 10. For my father and my mother have left me. He hath made himself a babe unto God: he hath made Him Father, he hath made Him Mother. He is Father, in that He made, in that He calleth, in that He ordereth, in that He ruleth him: Mother, in that He cherisheth, in that He nourisheth him, in that He suckleth, in that He beareth him. My father and

my mother have left me: but the Lord hath taken me up: both to rule me, and to nourish me. Mortal parents beget, children succeed, mortals to other mortals; and for this were they born who might succeed, that those who begot them might depart: He will not depart Who created me, I will not withdraw from Him. My father and my mother have left me: but the Lord hath taken me up. Beside those two parents also, of whose flesh we were born, the man the father, the woman the mother, as Adam and Eve; besides those two parents, we have here another father and another mother, or rather we had. The father according to the world is the devil, and he was our father when we were unbelievers. For to unbelievers the Lord saith, Ye are of your father the devil. If he be the father of all the ungodly, who worketh in the children of disobedience, who is the mother? There is a certain city, that is called Babylon; this city is the company of all the lost from the East even unto the West; she hath a kingdom on earth: after this city a certain state is named, which ye now see growing old and waning. This was our first mother, in this were we born. We have known another father, God; we have left the devil. For how dare he approach those, whom He, Who overcometh all things, hath taken up? We have known another mother, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the holy Church, a portion whereof is a pilgrim on earth: we have left Babylon. My father and my mother have left me: they have nothing now to give me; since even when they seemed to give to me, it was Thou Who gavest, and I set it down to them.

19. For by whom, even with respect to this world, is aught given to man, but by God? Or what is taken away from man, except He order, or permit, Who gave it? But vain men imagine, that those spirits, whom they adore, give it: and sometimes they say to themselves, God is necessary for life eternal, for that spiritual life; but these powers ought to be worshipped by us for these temporal things. O the folly of mankind! thou hast more love for those things for which thou wouldest worship them: in good truth, thou hast more mind to worship them, or, not to say more, at least as much. But God will not be worshipped together with them, not even though He be worshipped much more, and they much less. What then, thou wilt say, are they not necessary too for these things? No. But we have reason to fear, lest they do one harm in their anger. No harm will they do, unless He permit. They have always the wish to do harm, nor, if they be appeased, or if they

be entreated, do they cease to wish to do harm. For this is a property of their malevolence. Therefore what wilt thou gain by worshipping them, save that thou wilt offend Him, by offending Whom thou wilt be given over into their power, that they who could do nothing to thee when He is favourable, may do what they will when He is angry? And that thou mayest know, whosoever thou art who thinkest so, how vainly thou dost worship them, as if for temporal benefits: of all that worship Neptune have none suffered shipwreck? or of all who blaspheme Neptune have none arrived in port? Have all the women who worship Juno had a good delivery? or all who blaspheme Juno a bad delivery? From this, beloved brethren, ye may understand the folly of those men who will worship them even for these temporal things. For if for these temporal things they ought to be worshipped, their worshippers alone would abound in all temporal blessings. And indeed if this were the case, we ought to avoid such gifts, and make one petition of the Lord. To this must be added, that it is He Who giveth even these things, Who is offended when these spirits are worshipped. Therefore let our father and our mother leave us; let the devil leave us, the city Babylon leave us: let the Lord take us up to console us with things temporal, and to bless us with things eternal. For my father and my mother have left me: but the Lord hath taken me up.

20. Now then he hath been taken up by the Lord, having abandoned that city, and its ruler the devil, for the devil is the ruler of the ungodly, the ruler of the world, of this darkness. What darkness? Sinners, unbelievers. Whence the Apostle saith to them that now believe, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord. Being then now taken up by Him, what say we? (Ver. 11.) Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way. Hast thou dared to ask for a law? What if He should say to thee, "Thou shalt fulfil the law? if I give a law, thou shalt fulfil it?" He would not dare ask it, unless he said first, But the Lord hath taken me up. He would not dare ask it, unless he said first, Be Thou my helper. Therefore if Thou helpest, if Thou takest me up, give me a law. Appoint me, O Lord, a law in Thy way. Therefore, appoint me a law in Thy Christ. For the Way Himself hath spoken unto us, and said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. A law in Christ, is a law with mercy. This is the Wisdom, of Which it is written, She carrieth law and mercy in her tongue. And if thou shalt commit any offence in the law, He

Who shed His Blood for thee, pardons thee on confession: only forsake not thou the way, say unto Him, Be Thou my upholder, and direct me in the right path, because of mine enemies. Give me a law, but take not mercy away: as he said in another Psalm, For He will give mercy, Who hath given a law. Therefore, Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way: this refers to the precept: what refers to mercy? And direct me, saith he, in the right path, because of mine enemies.

21. Ver. 12. Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me: that is, let me not consent to them that trouble me. For if thou shalt consent to him that troubleth thee, unto his soul, he will not, so to say, devour thy flesh, but by a perverted will he will eat up thy soul. Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me. Deliver me, if it please Thee, into the hands of them that trouble me. For this Martyrs have said to Him, and He hath delivered His own into the hands of them that trouble them. But what hath He delivered? The flesh. Which is meant in the book of Job, The earth hath been delivered into the hands of the wicked; the flesh hath been delivered into the hands of the persecutor. Deliver me not up, not my flesh, but me. I speak unto Thee as a soul, as mind I speak unto Thee: I do not say, Deliver not up my flesh into the hands of them that trouble me; but, Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me. And how are men delivered up unto the souls of them that trouble them? For unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me. Now, for that there are unrighteous witnesses, and they speak much evil against me, and in many things defame me, if I shall have been delivered up unto their souls, I also shall lie, and shall be their companion, not a partaker of Thy truth, but a partaker with them in a lie against Thee: Unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me; and iniquity hath lied unto itself: unto itself, and not unto me: unto itself let it ever lie, but let it not lie unto me. If Thou shalt have delivered me up unto the souls of them that trouble me, that is, if I shall have consented to their wishes; now will not iniquity already have lied unto itself, but unto me also: whereas if they exercise against me all the violence they wish, and endeavour to hinder my free course, and notwithstanding Thou give me not over unto their souls: by not consenting to their wishes, I shall abide and continue in Thy truth, and iniquity will lie not unto me, but unto itself.

22. He returns to that one petition after these dangers, after toils, after difficulties, amid the hands of them that persecute and trouble him, gasping, panting, travailing, yet stedfast, and assured while He upholdeth, helpeth, guideth, ruleth; yet, after that going about and rejoicing, in joy exulting, in travails groaning, he sighed at last, and said, (ver. 13.) I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. O the good things of the Lord, sweet, immortal, incomparable, eternal, unchangeable! And when shall I see you, ye good things of the Lord? I believe to see you, but not in the earth of the dying. I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the earth of the living. The Lord shall deliver me from the earth of the dying, Who for my sake vouchsafed to take upon Himself the earth of the dying, and to die amid the hands of the dying: the Lord shall deliver me from the earth of the dying: I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the earth of the living. Panting he spoke, travailing he spoke, he spoke in peril amid a mighty crowd of temptations: but yet wholly depending on His mercy, to Whom he said, Appoint me a law, O Lord.

23. And what doth He say, Who hath appointed him a law? Let us hear the Voice of the Lord too exhorting us from on high, consoling us; His Voice Whom we have for father and mother, who have left us: let us hear His Voice. For He hath heard our groans, He hath seen our deep sighs, He hath beheld our longing; and our one petition, the one request through Christ our Advocate hath He gladly received; and until we accomplish this pilgrimage, during which He will defer, not take away, what He hath promised, He hath said unto us, Wait on the Lord. Thou wilt not wait on a false one, not on one that can be deceived, not on one that will not find what to give. The Almighty hath promised, the Sure One hath promised, the True hath promised. Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man. Faint not: be not of them to whom it is said, Woe unto them that have lost endurance. Wait on the Lord, is said to us all, and to one Man is it said. We are one Man in Christ, we are the Body of Christ, who have that one longing, who make that one petition, who in those days of our evils groan, who believe to see the good things of the Lord in the earth of the living; to us all who are one in One it is said, (ver. 14.) Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man; and let thy heart be strong, yea, wait on the Lord. What else saith He to thee, than repeat what thou hast heard? Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man.

Therefore he who hath lost endurance, hath become effeminate, hath lost vigour. Let men, let women, listen to this; for in the one man is man and woman. Such an one in Christ is neither male, nor female. Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man; let thy heart be strong, yea, wait on the Lord. By waiting on the Lord thou shalt possess Him, thou shalt possess Him on Whom thou shalt wait. Long for somewhat else, if thou canst find aught greater, better, sweeter.

PSALM 28

Of David himself.

1. It is the Voice of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand in the conflict of the Passion. Now what He seems to wish for against His enemies, is not the wish of malevolence, but the declaration of their punishment; as in the Gospel, with the cities, in which though He had performed miracles, yet they had not believed on Him, He doth not wish in any evil will what He saith, but predicteth what is impending over them.

2. Ver. 1. Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, be not silent from me. Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, separate not the unity of Thy Word from that which as Man I am. Lest at any time Thou be silent from me: and I shall be like them that go down into the pit. For from this, that the Eternity of Thy Word ceaseth not to unite Itself to Me, it comes that I am not such a man as the rest of men, who are born into the deep misery of this world: where, as if Thou art silent, Thy Word is not recognised. (Ver. 2.) Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication, whilst I pray unto Thee, whilst I hold up my hands to Thy holy temple. Whilst I am crucified for their salvation, who on believing become Thy holy temple.

3. Ver. 3. Draw not My Soul away with sinners, and destroy me not with them that work iniquity, with them that speak peace with their neighbours. With them that say unto Me, We know that Thou art a Master come from God. But evil in their hearts. But they speak evil in their hearts.

4. Ver. 4. Give unto them according to their works. Give unto them according to their works, for this is just. And according to the malice of their affections. For aiming at evil, they cannot discover good. According to the works of their hands give Thou unto them. Although what they have done may avail for salvation to others, yet give Thou unto them according to the works of their wills. Pay them their recompense. Because, for the

truth which they heard, they wished to recompense deceit; let their own deceit deceive them.

5. Ver. 5. For they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord. And whence is it clear that this hath befallen them? From this forsooth, for they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord. This very thing, in truth, hath been, even now, their recompense, that in Him Whom they tempted with malicious intent as a Man, they should not recognise God, with what design the Father sent Him in the Flesh. And the works of His hands. Nor be moved by those visible works, which are laid out before their very eyes. Thou shalt destroy them, and not build them up. Let them do Me no hurt, nay, nor again in their endeavour to raise engines against My Church, let them aught avail.

6. Ver. 6. Blessed be the Lord, for He hath heard the voice of My prayer.

7. Ver. 7. The Lord My Helper and My Protector. The Lord helping Me in so great sufferings, and protecting Me with immortality in My resurrection. In Him hath My Heart trusted, and I have been helped. And My Flesh hath flourished again: that is, and My Flesh hath risen again. And of my will I will confess unto Him. Wherefore, the fear of death being now destroyed, not by the necessity of fear under the Law, but with a free will with the Law, shall they who believe on Me, confess unto Him; and because I am in them, I will confess.

8. Ver. 8. The Lord is the strength of His people. Not that people ignorant of the righteousness of God, and willing to establish their own. For they thought not themselves strong in themselves: for the Lord is the strength of His people, struggling in this life's difficulties with the devil. And the protector of the salvation of His Christ. That, having saved them by His Christ, after the strength of war, He may protect them at the last with the immortality of peace.

9. Ver. 9. Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. I intercede therefore, after My Flesh hath flourished again, because Thou hast said, Desire of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance: for all Mine are Thine. And rule

them, and set them up even for ever. And rule them in this temporal life, and raise them from hence into life eternal.

PSALM 29

A Psalm of David himself, of the consummation of the tabernacle.

1. A Psalm of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand, of the perfection of the Church in this world, where she wars in time against the devil.

2. The Prophet speaks, (ver. 1.) Bring unto the Lord, O ye Sons of God, bring unto the Lord the young of rams. Bring unto the Lord yourselves, whom the Apostles, the leaders of the flocks, have begotten by the Gospel. (Ver. 2.) Bring unto the Lord glory and honour. By your works let the Lord be glorified and honoured. Bring unto the Lord glory to His name. Let Him be made known gloriously throughout the world. Worship the Lord in His holy court. Worship the Lord in your heart enlarged and sanctified. For ye are His regal holy habitation.

3. Ver. 3. The Voice of the Lord is upon the waters. The Voice of Christ is upon the peoples. The God of majesty hath thundered. The God of majesty, from the cloud of the flesh, hath awfully preached repentance. The Lord is upon many waters. The Lord Jesus Himself, after that He sent forth His Voice upon the peoples, and struck them with awe, converted them to Himself, and dwelt in them.

4. Ver. 4. The Voice of the Lord is in power. The Voice of the Lord now in them themselves, making them powerful. The Voice of the Lord is in great might. The Voice of the Lord working great things in them.

5. Ver. 5. The Voice of the Lord breaking the cedars. The Voice of the Lord humbling the proud in brokenness of heart. The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus. The Lord by repentance shall break them that are lifted on high by the splendour of earthly nobility, when to confound them He shall have chosen the base things of this world, in the which to display His Divinity.

6. Ver. 6. And shall bruise them as the calf of Libanus. And when their proud exaltation hath been cut off, He will lay them low after the imitation of His Own humility, Who like a calf was led to slaughter by the nobility of this world. For the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers agreed together against the Lord, and against His Christ. And the Beloved is as the young of the unicorns. For even He the Beloved, and the Only One of the Father, emptied Himself of His glory; and was made man, like a child of the Jews, that were ignorant of God's righteousness, and proudly boasting of their own righteousness as peculiarly theirs.

7. Ver. 7. The Voice of the Lord cutting short the flame of fire. The Voice of the Lord, without any harm to Himself, passing through all the excited ardour of them that persecute Him, or dividing the furious rage of His persecutors, so that some should say, Is not this haply the very Christ; others, Nay; but He deceiveth the people: and so cutting short their mad tumult, as to pass some over into His love, and leave others in their malice.

8. Ver. 8. The Voice of the Lord moving the wilderness. The Voice of the Lord moving to the faith the Gentiles once without hope, and without God in the world; where no prophet, no preacher of God's word, as it were, no man had dwelt. And the Lord will move the desert of Cades. And then the Lord will cause the holy word of His Scriptures to be fully known, which was abandoned by the Jews who understood it not.

9. Ver. 9. The Voice of the Lord perfecting the stags. For the Voice of the Lord hath first perfected them that overcame and repelled the envenomed tongues. And will reveal the woods. And then will He reveal to them the darkneses of the Divine books, and the shadowy depths of the mysteries, where they may feed with freedom. And in His temple doth every man speak of His glory. And in His Church all born again to an eternal hope praise God, each for His own gift, which He hath received from the Holy Spirit.

10. Ver. 10. The Lord inhabiteth the deluge. The Lord therefore first inhabiteth the deluge of this world in His Saints, kept safely in the Church, as in the ark. And the Lord shall sit a King for ever. And afterward He will sit reigning in them for ever.

11. Ver. 11. The Lord will give strength to His people. For the Lord will give strength to His people fighting against the storms and whirlwinds of this world, for peace in this world He hath not promised them. The Lord will bless His people in peace. And the same Lord will bless His people, affording them peace in Himself; for, saith He, My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you.

PSALM 30

first exposition

To the end, the Psalm of the Canticle of the Dedication of the House, of David himself.

1. To the end, a Psalm of the joy of the Resurrection, and the change, the renewing of the body to an immortal state, and not only of the Lord, but also of the whole Church. For in the former Psalm the tabernacle was finished, wherein we dwell in the time of war: but now the house is dedicated, which will abide in peace everlasting.

2. It is then whole Christ Who speaketh. (Ver. 1.) I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up. I will praise Thy high Majesty, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up. Thou hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me. And those, who have so often endeavoured to oppress Me with various persecutions throughout the world, Thou hast not made to rejoice over Me.

3. Ver. 2. O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed Me. O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and I no longer bear about a body enfeebled and sick by mortality.

4. Ver. 3. O Lord, Thou hast brought back My Soul from hell, and Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit. Thou hast saved Me from the condition of profound darkness, and the lowest slough of corruptible flesh.

5. Ver. 4. Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. The prophet seeing these future things, rejoiceth, and saith, Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. And make confession of the remembrance of His holiness. And make confession to Him, that He hath not forgotten the sanctification, wherewith He hath sanctified you, although all this intermediate period belong to your desires.

6. Ver. 5. For in His indignation is wrath. For He hath avenged against you the first sin, for which you have paid by death. And life in His will And life eternal, whereunto you could not return by any strength of your own, hath He given, because He so would. In the evening weeping will tarry. Evening began, when the light of wisdom withdrew from sinful man, when he was condemned to death: from this evening weeping will tarry, as long as God's people are, amid labours and temptations, awaiting the day of the Lord. And exultation in the morning. Even to the morning, when there will be the exultation of the resurrection, which hath shone forth by anticipation in the morning resurrection of the Lord.

7. Ver. 6. But I said in my abundance, I shall not be moved for ever. But I, that people which was speaking from the first, said in mine abundance, suffering now no more any want, I shall not be moved for ever.

8. Ver. 7. O Lord, in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty. But that this my abundance, O Lord, is not of myself, but that in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty, I have learnt from this, Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I became troubled; for Thou hast sometimes turned away Thy Face from the sinner, and I became troubled, when the illumination of Thy knowledge withdrew from me.

9. Ver. 8. Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto my God will I pray. And bringing to mind that time of my trouble and misery, and as it were established therein, I hear the voice of Thy First-Begotten, my Head, about to die for me, and saying, Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto My God will I pray.

10. Ver. 9. What profit is there in My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? What profit is there in the shedding of My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? Shall dust confess unto Thee? For if I shall not rise immediately, and My body shall become corrupt, shall dust confess unto Thee? that is, the crowd of the ungodly, whom I shall justify by My resurrection? Or declare Thy truth? Or for the salvation of the rest declare Thy truth?

11. Ver. 10. The Lord hath heard, and had mercy on Me, the Lord hath become My helper. Nor did He suffer His holy One to see corruption.

12. Ver. 11. Thou hast turned My mourning into joy to Me. Whom I, the Church, having received, the First-Begotten from the dead, now in the dedication of Thine house, say, Thou hast turned my mourning into joy to me. Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. Thou hast torn off the veil of my sins, the sadness of my mortality; and hast girded me with the first robe, with immortal gladness.

13. Ver. 12. That my glory should sing unto Thee, and I should not be pricked. That now, not my humiliation, but my glory should not lament, but should sing unto Thee, for that now out of humiliation Thou hast exalted me; and that I should not be pricked with the consciousness of sin, with the fear of death, with the fear of judgment. O Lord, my God, I will confess unto Thee for ever. And this is my glory, O Lord, my God, that I should confess unto Thee for ever, that I have nothing of myself, but that all my good is of Thee, Who art God, All in all.

second exposition

1. This truly have we sung: (ver. 1.) I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me. If we shall know from the holy Scriptures who our enemies are, we recognise the truth of this Canticle: but if the wisdom of the flesh deceive us, so that we recognise not against whom our wrestling is, in the very commencement of this Psalm we find a difficulty, which we cannot solve. For whose voice do we suppose his to be, who praiseth God, and giveth thanks, and rejoiceth, and saith, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me? First let us consider the Lord Himself, Who in that He vouchsafed to be Man, could by a prophecy going before apply these words not unsuitably to Himself. For wherein He was Man, therein also was He weak: wherein weak, therein also praying. For as we have just now heard, when the Gospel was being read, how He even retired into the desert from His disciples, whither they followed and found Him: but He retiring thither prayed, and it was said by His disciples who found Him, Men seek Thee. But He answered, Let us go to other places and villages also to preach; for therefore have I come. If thou dost consider the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is it that prays? to Whom doth He pray? why doth He pray? doth God pray? doth He pray to One Equal to

Him? But what occasion for prayer hath the ever Blessed, the ever Almighty, the ever Unchangeable, the Eternal and Coeternal with the Father? Regarding then what Himself hath thundered forth by John, as (so to say) by a cloud of His, saying, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the Same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made: what was made in Him is Life, and the Life was the Light of men, and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. Reading thus far we find no prayer, nor cause for praying, no occasion for praying, no disposition for praying. But since he saith a little afterwards, And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us, thou hast the Majesty to which to pray, thou hast the Humanity to pray for thee. For it was said by the Apostle, even after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; Who sitteth, saith he, at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. Why doth He make intercession for us? Because He vouchsafed to be a Mediator. What is it to be a Mediator between God and men? Not between the Father and men, but between God and men. What is God? Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. What are men? Sinners, ungodly, mortals. Between that Trinity, and the weakness and wickedness of men, Man was made Mediator, not wicked but yet weak; that inasmuch as He was not wicked He might join thee to God, inasmuch as He was weak He might draw near unto thee: and so, that there might be a Mediator between man and God, the Word was made Flesh, that is, the Word was made Man. For men are called by the name of flesh. Hence, And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. By all flesh is meant all men. And the Apostle, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, (that is, against men,) but against princes and powers, and the rulers of the world, of this darkness: of which we will speak, if God help us, in what follows. For this distinction bears upon the exposition of the Psalm, which we have undertaken in the Name of the Lord to unfold to you, holy Brethren. Yet I have mentioned these examples for this reason, that ye may know that men are called flesh, and understand that by the saying, And the Word was made Flesh, is meant, And the Word was made Man.

2. Nor have I said this without reason. Ye should know, holy Brethren, that there existed a certain heresy, or haply that the remains are still found of certain men, who were called Apollinarians. For some of them said that the

Man, which the Wisdom of God assumed, (and in which He manifested forth His Person, not as in other men, but as it is said in the Psalm, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows, that is, more than Thy fellows: that it should not be supposed that Christ was anointed as other men, as other righteous men, as the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, and whatsoever there is great among mankind. Since among mankind there hath not appeared aught greater than John the Baptist, neither hath risen among them that are born of women. If thou lookest for excellency in man, John the Baptist is it. But He, of Whom John saith that he is not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoes, what was He but greater than other men? Even in His very Manhood greater than other men. For as to His being God, and as to His Divinity, and as to His being in the beginning the Word, and the Word being with the Father, and the Word being God, He is above every creature, equal to the Father: but we speak of His Manhood. Perhaps some one of you, Brethren, may imagine, that the Man assumed by the Wisdom of God, was equal to other men. If in the members there be great distinction between the head and the rest of the members, undoubtedly all the members make one body, yet there is great difference between the head, and the rest of the members. For in the other members thou hast only perception by touch; by touching thou hast perception in the other members; but in the head thou both seest, and hearest, and smellst, and tastest, and touchest: if the excellence of the head as compared with the rest of the members be so great, how great is the excellence of the Head of the Church universal, that is, of that Man, Whom God hath willed to be the Mediator between God and men?) Those heretics then said, that That Man, Which the Word assumed when the Word was made Flesh, had no human mind, but was only life without human intelligence. For you know, of what man consists; of a principle of life and a body. But this same principle of life of man has somewhat, which the living principle in beasts has not. For even beasts have animal life, and are called animals; for they would not be called animals, but from animal life; and we see that they too live. But what has man more, wherein he was made after the image of God? In that he has intelligence and wisdom, in that he distinguishes good from evil: herein was he made after the image and likeness of God. He has then somewhat which beasts have not. And in that he despises, in himself, that wherein he is superior to the beasts, he destroys

in himself or defaces, and in a manner effaces the image of God, so that to such it is said, Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding. These heretics then said that our Lord Jesus Christ had no human mind, nor that which the Greeks call λογικὸν, and we rationale, that wherewith man reasons, which the other animals have not. But what say they? That the Very Word of God was in That Man in the place of mind. These have been shut out, the Catholic faith hath rejected them, and they have made a heresy. It hath been established in the Catholic faith, that That Man, which the Wisdom of God assumed, had nothing less than other men, as far as relates to entireness of nature; but as far as relates to excellency of Person, something else than other men. For other men may be called partakers of the Word of God, as having the Word of God: but no one of them can be called the Word of God, Which He was called, forasmuch as it is said, The Word was made Flesh.

3. There have not been wanting some others too, proceeding from this same error, to say not only that That Man, Christ the Mediator between God and men, had no mind, but no principle of life either: but they have said merely, He was the Word and Flesh, and no human animal life was in Him, neither was human mind in Him. This have they said. But what was He? The Word and Flesh. The Catholic Church rejecteth these too, and driveth them out from among the sheep, and from the simple and true faith: and it hath been established, as I said, that That Man, the Mediator, had all that is man's, except sin. For if He did many things after the body, whereby we may understand that He had a Body, not in falsehood, but in truth; as, for instance, how do we understand that He had a Body? He walked, sat, slept, was seized, was scourged, was buffeted, was crucified, died. Take away the body, none of these things could have been done. As then from these signs we recognise in the Gospel that He had a true Body, as Himself also said even after the resurrection, Handle, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have: as from these circumstances, from these actions, we believe, and understand, and know, that the Lord Jesus had a Body, so also from certain other natural functions that He had animal life. To be hungry, to be thirsty, these are functions of animal life: take away animal life, a lifeless body will not be able to be so. But if they say these were unreal, those things too will be unreal which are believed of the Body: but if

the Body be therefore real, because the functions of the body are real; the animal life is therefore real, because its functions are real.

4. What then? Because the Lord was made weak for thee, O man, who hearest me, compare not thyself with God. For thou art a creature, He thy Creator. And compare not thyself with That Man, because thy God, and the Word the Son of God, was Man for thee: but prefer That Man to thyself, as the Mediator, yet God above every creature: and so understand, that He Who was made Man for thee, not unsuitably prayeth for thee. If therefore He doth not unsuitably pray for thee, He could also not unsuitably say those words for thy sake, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over Me. But these words, if we do not understand enemies, will be false, when we think of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For how is it true, if the Lord Christ speak, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up? In His character as man, in His character of weakness, in His character of flesh, how is it true? Since His enemies did rejoice over Him, when they crucified Him, held, scourged, and buffeted Him, saying, Prophecy unto us, O Christ. This rejoicing of theirs as it were compels us to think what is said, Thou hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over Me, to be false. And afterwards, when He was hanging on the Cross, and they were passing by, or standing, and looking, and wagging their heads, and saying, See the Son of God; He saved others, Himself He cannot save: let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe on Him: were they not in speaking thus rejoicing over Him? Where then is that saying, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over Me?

5. Perhaps this is not the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of man as such, of the universal Church of the Christian People: for that all men are in Christ one Man, and the unity of Christians is one Man. Perhaps Man as such, that is, the very unity of Christians saith, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to triumph over me. And how is this true of them? Were not the Apostles seized, were they not beaten, were they not scourged, were they not slain, were they not crucified, were they not burnt alive, fought not they with wild beasts, whose memories we solemnize? And since men thus treated them, did they not

rejoice over them? How then can either the Christian People say, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me?

6. We shall understand this, if we look first to the title of the Psalm. This is, To the end, a Psalm of the canticle of the dedication of the house, of David himself. In this title lies all the expectation, and the whole mystery of the solution of this difficulty. The house will sometime be dedicated, which is now in building. For now the house, that is, the Church, is in building: hereafter it will be dedicated. In the dedication will appear the glory of the Christian People, which is now hidden. Now let our enemies rage, let them humble us, let them do, not whatever they wish, but whatever they are permitted to do from above. For we must not set down whatever we have suffered from our enemies to our enemies, and not to the Lord our God. Seeing that by His Own example the Mediator hath shewn, when from above He permitteth men to injure, that not the will to injure is given from above, but the power. For every evil man hath in himself the will to injure; but the ability to injure is not in his power. That he hath the will, he is at once guilty: that he hath the power, by the hidden dispensation of God's providence it is permitted him against one for punishment, against another it is permitted for his trial, against another it is permitted for his crown. For punishment: as the ἀλλόφυλοι, that is, foreigners were permitted to take captive the people of Israel, because they sinned against God. But for trial permission was given to the devil against Job: Job was tried, the devil was put to confusion. But for a crown has permission been given to persecutors against Martyrs: the Martyrs have been slain, their persecutors fancied they had conquered: they triumphed in the open sight of men unreally, the others were in secret truly crowned. Therefore against whom permission is given, is a matter of the hidden dispensation of God's providence: but the will to injure is man's own, for he does not forthwith slay whom he would.

7. Accordingly the Lord Himself, the Judge of quick and dead, standing before a human judge, affording us a pattern of humility and patience, not conquered, but exhibiting to the soldier an example for fighting, when the judge was threatening, and swelling with pride, and saying, Knowest Thou not that I have power to release, and to slay Thee? took away the pride of

the boaster, and giving back as it were the breathing by which his swelling might go down, answered, Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above. Job too, (now the devil has slain his children, the devil has taken away all his substance,) what did he say too? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath it been done; blessed be the name of the Lord. Let not the enemy triumph, because he hath done it: I know, saith he, by Whom permission hath been given him: to the devil let there be assigned the will to injure, to my Lord the power of proving. Even under his bodily sores, his wife, who was left, comes up to him, like Eve, the devil's helper, not her husband's comforter, tempts him, and among many reproaches says, Speak some word against God, and die. And that Adam on the dunghill was more guarded than Adam in Paradise. For Adam in Paradise consented to the woman, that he should be sent out of Paradise: Adam on the dunghill rejected the woman, that he should be admitted into Paradise. What then does that Adam on the dunghill, travailing with immortality within, without overspread with worms, what says he to the woman? Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women. What? If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not bear with evil? Here again too he acknowledged in himself the hand of the Lord, because the devil had smitten him: for he did not attend to who smote, but Who permitted. For even the devil himself called the same power, which he wished to be given him, the hand of the Lord. For accusing that just man, to whom the Lord bare testimony, he says to God, Doth Job fear the Lord for nought? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. So great goods hast Thou given him, and therefore doth he honour Thee. But put forth Thine hand, and touch all that he hath, and verily he will bless Thee to Thy face! What is, Put forth Thine hand, when he wished himself to put it forth? But because he could not put forth his own hand, he called this very power, which he received of God, the hand of God.

8. What follows then, Brethren, because the enemies have done so great things against Christians, and have exulted, and rejoiced over them? But when will it appear, that they have not really rejoiced over them? When they shall be confounded, and these shall rejoice at the coming of the Lord

our God, when He shall come bearing retribution in His hand, damnation to the ungodly, a kingdom to the righteous, fellowship with the devil to the unrighteous, fellowship with Christ to the faithful. When, I say, He shall shew this, when the righteous shall stand in great boldness, (I speak from the Scriptures: you remember the lesson from the book of Wisdom: Then shall the righteous stand in great boldness against them that have afflicted them: but they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit shall say among themselves, What hath pride profited us? or what good hath the vaunting of riches done us? For all those things are passed away like a shadow. And what will they say of the righteous? How are they reckoned among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints!) then will the dedication of the house be, which is now being built in tribulation; then will that People rightly say, I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me. These words then will be verified in the People of God, the People that now is in straitness, now in tribulation with so great temptations, so great offences, so great persecution, so great pressure. These torments of soul he doth not feel in the Church, who maketh no progress, for he thinks all is peace: but let him begin to make progress, and then he will see in what pressure he is; for when the blade had increased, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. And he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Let him make progress, and he will see where he is: let there be fruit, and tares will appear. It is a true saying of the Apostle, and cannot be destroyed from the beginning unto the end: Yea, and all, saith he, that will live godly in Christ suffer persecution. But malignant men and seducers wax worse and worse, themselves deceived, and deceiving others. And whence are those words of the Psalm, Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man, and let thine heart be strengthened, yea, wait on the Lord? It were not enough once, Wait on the Lord, if it were not repeated: unless haply he might wait two days, three days, four days, and the pressure and tribulation still remain, and therefore he added, Quit thyself like a man: and again, let thine heart be strengthened. And because it will be so from the beginning even to the end, what the sentence has in the beginning, the same it has at the end, Yea, wait on the Lord. These things which press upon thee will pass away, and He will come, on Whom thou waitest, and wipe away thy sweat: He will dry the

tear, thou shalt weep no more. But now we must groan in tribulations, as Job saith, Is not man's life upon earth a trial?

9. Nevertheless, Brethren, before the day of the dedication of the house come, let us consider that our Head hath already been dedicated: already hath the dedication of the house taken place in the Head, as the dedication of the foundation. The Head is above, the foundation below: may we not perhaps have spoken amiss in saying that Christ is the foundation; He is rather the top. He hath ascended into heaven, He sitteth at the right Hand of the "Father." But I think we have made no mistake. For the Apostle hath said, For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones. They who live godly, who honour and praise God, who are patient in tribulations, who long for their country, these build gold, silver, precious stones: but they who still love the things of this world, and are involved in earthly business, and are given up to certain bonds and affections of the flesh, to their homes, wives, possessions; and yet are Christians, so that their heart doth not withdraw from Christ, and that they place nothing before Christ, as in building nothing is placed before the foundation; these indeed build wood, hay, stubble: but what hath he gone on to say? The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. The fire of tribulation and of trial. This fire has tried many martyrs here, but in the end it trieth all the human race. Martyrs have been found, who possessed these worldly goods. How many rich men and senators have suffered? Yet some of them did build wood, hay, stubble, in their affection for carnal and worldly cares: but still, because they had Christ for a foundation upon which they built, the hay was burnt, and they were left on the foundation. So saith the Apostle, If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward, and shall lose nothing; because what he loved, this shall he find. What then hath the fire of tribulation done for them? It hath tried them. If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward: if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. But it is one thing not to be injured by the fire, another thing to be saved through the fire. And whence? Because of the foundation. Let not then the foundation withdraw from thine heart. Lay not the foundation upon hay, that is, lay not hay before the foundation, that the hay should have the first place in thine heart

and Christ the second: but if now it must needs be that there be hay there, at least let Christ have the first place there, and the hay the second.

10. Christ then is the Foundation. As I said, our Head hath been dedicated, the Head is Itself the Foundation. But a foundation is usually below, and a head above. May you, holy brethren, understand my words: peradventure I shall explain this in the Name of Christ. Weights are of two kinds. For a weight is a certain force in any substance, struggling as it were to gain its proper place: this is a weight. You carry a stone in your hand, you bear the pressure of its weight, it presses down your hand, because it seeks its proper place. And would you know what it seeks? Withdraw your hand, it comes to the ground, it rests on the earth, it has arrived where it tended, it has found its proper place. That weight, therefore, was, as it were, spontaneous motion, without life, without sensation. There are other things, which seek their place upwards. For if you pour water upon oil, by its own weight it goes to the bottom. For it seeks its proper place, it seeks to be duly ordered; for water above oil is out of its order. Until it arrives then at its proper order, there is a restless motion, till it occupies its proper place. On the other hand, let out oil under water; as, for instance, if a vessel of oil fall into water, into the deep, into the sea, and be broken, the oil does not rest below. As the water poured upon oil, by its weight towards the bottom seeks its proper place; so oil poured out under water by its weight seeks its proper place towards the top. If then this be so, brethren, whither does fire and water tend? Fire is borne upwards, it seeks its proper place; and water seeks its proper place by its own weight. Stone seeks the bottom, and the wood, and the pillars, and the earth, wherewith these houses are built: they are then of that kind of substances, which, by their own weight, are borne downwards. It is clear then, that they receive their foundation down below, because they are by their own weight borne downwards; and except there is something to sustain it, the whole falls, because the whole tends towards the earth. With things then that have a downward tendency, the foundation is laid below: but the Church of God which is laid below tendeth towards heaven. Our foundation therefore hath been laid there, even our Lord Jesus Christ sitting at the right Hand of the Father. If then ye have understood, holy brethren, how that our Foundation hath been already dedicated, let us shortly listen to, and run through, the Psalm.

11. I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up, and hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me. What enemies? The Jews? In the dedication of the foundation let us understand the very dedication of the future house: for what is now said in the person of the Foundation, will then be said in the person of the whole house. What enemies then? The Jews, or the devil and his angels rather, who retired in confusion after the Lord's resurrection? The prince of death grieved at the victory over death; And Thou hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me: because I could not be kept in hell.

12. Ver. 2. O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed Me. The Lord prayed in the mount before His Passion, He healed Him. Healed Whom? Him, Who was never sick, the Word God, the Word the Divinity? No, but He bore the death of flesh, He bore thy wound, being about to heal thee of thy wound. And the flesh was healed. When? When He rose again. Listen to the Apostle, see the true healing: Death, saith he, hath been swallowed up in Victory. O death, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy struggle? Therefore that exaltation will then be ours to declare, the exaltation now is Christ's.

13. Ver. 3. O Lord, Thou hast brought back My Soul from hell. This needs no explanation. Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit. Who are they that go down into the pit? All sinners who sink into the deep. For the pit is the depth of this world. What is this depth of the world? The abounding of wantonness, and wickedness. They then who immerse themselves in lusts, and earthly desires, go down into the pit. Such persecuted Christ. But what doth He say? Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit.

14. Ver. 4. Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. Since your Head hath risen, all ye other members hope for that, which ye see in the Head: all ye other members hope for that, which ye have believed in the Head. It is a true and ancient proverb, Where the head is, there are the other members. Christ hath ascended into heaven, whither we are about to follow. He hath not remained in hell, He hath risen again, He dieth no more: when we too shall have risen again, we shall die no more. Having then these promises, Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His; and make confession of the remembrance of His

holiness. What is, Make confession of the remembrance? For ye had forgotten Him, but He hath not forgotten you.

15. Ver. 5. For in His indignation is wrath, and life in His will. Wrath in indignation against the sinner: In the day that ye shall eat, ye shall surely die. They touched, they died, having been dismissed from Paradise, for in His indignation is wrath: but not without hope, for there is life in His will. What is in His will? Not in our strength, not in our merits: but because He willed it, He hath saved us; not because we were worthy. For of what is the sinner worthy, but of punishment? He hath given life. And if He hath given life to the ungodly, what doth He reserve for the faithful?

16. In the evening weeping will tarry. Fear not, for that he had said to us, Sing; and here is groaning: in singing exultation, in prayer groaning. Groan for things present, sing for things to come; pray for what is here, sing for what is hoped. In the evening weeping will tarry. What is, In the evening weeping will tarry? It is evening, when the sun sets. The sun hath set on man, that is, That Light of Righteousness, the presence of God. Hence when Adam was expelled, what is said in the book of Genesis? When God walked in Paradise, He walked in the evening. The sinner had now hid himself in the wood, he was unwilling to see the Face of God, at Which he had been wont to rejoice. The Sun of Righteousness had set on him, he did not rejoice at the presence of God. Thence began all this mortal life. In the evening weeping will tarry. Ye will long be in weeping, race of man; for ye will be born of Adam: and so it has come to pass: we too are of Adam, and as many as have begotten children, and shall beget them, are of Adam, of whom they too themselves were born. In the evening weeping will tarry; and exultation in the morning. When That Light shall have begun to rise on the faithful, which had set on sinners. For therefore too did the Lord Jesus Christ rise from the tomb in the morning, that what He hath dedicated in the foundation, the same He might promise to the house. In our Lord it was evening, when He was buried; and morning when He rose again on the third day: thou too wast buried in the evening in Paradise, and hast risen again on the third day. How on the third day? If thou consider the course of the world, there is one day before the Law, another under the Law, a third under grace. What on that third day thy Head shewed, the same is on the third day

of the world shewn in thee. When? In the morning we must hope, we must rejoice; but now we must endure, and groan.

17. Ver. 6. But I said in my abundance, I shall not be moved for ever. In what abundance, hath man said, I shall not be moved for ever? We understand, Brethren, the character of man in his humiliation. Who hath abundance here? Not one. What is man's abundance? Care, calamity. But the rich have abundance? The more they have, the more they want: they are wasted by longings, torn by desires, racked by fears, waste away with sorrow: where is their abundance? There was abundance, when man was settled in Paradise, when nothing was wanting to him, when he enjoyed God; but he said, I shall not be moved for ever. How did he say, I shall not be moved for ever? When he heard with satisfaction the words, Eat, and ye shall be as gods: whereas God said, In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die; and the devil, Ye shall not surely die. In believing then him who thus persuaded him, he said, I shall not be moved for ever.

18. But since the Lord had said truly, that He would take away from the proud, what He had given to the humble, when He created him; the Psalmist proceeds, and says, (ver. 7.) O Lord, in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty: that is, since I was not good and strong of myself, but was both fair and strong of Thee, to my beauty Thou hadst afforded strength, of Thine own will, wherewith Thou hadst made me. And that Thou mightest shew me, that I was this from Thy will, Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I became troubled. He turned away then His Face from him, whom He sent forth out of Paradise. Placed now here, let him cry out and say, To Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and to my God will I pray. In Paradise thou didst not cry out, but didst praise; thou didst not weep, but didst rejoice: having been put without, weep now, and cry. He draweth nigh to him troubled, Who deserted him when proud. For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (Ver. 8.) To Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto my God will I pray.

19. What follows now is in the Person of the Lord, of our Foundation Himself. (Ver. 9.) What profit is there in My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? What then doth He pray for? That He may rise again. For if I shall go down, saith He, to corruption, if My Flesh shall be so corrupted, as

other men's, so as to rise at the last, to what purpose have I shed My Blood? For if I rise not now, I shall shew forth to none, I shall gain none: but that I may shew forth to any Thy marvels, Thy praises, life eternal, let My Flesh rise again, let It not go into corruption. For if It shall go so, as other men's, what profit is there in My Blood? Shall dust confess unto Thee, or shew forth Thy truth? Confession is twofold, either of sin, or of praise. When it is ill with us, let us in tribulation confess our sins; when it is well with us, let us in the exultation of righteousness confess praise unto God: but without confession let us never be.

20. Ver. 10. The Lord hath heard, and had mercy on Me. How? Remember the dedication of the house. He hath heard, and had mercy. The Lord hath become My Helper.

21. Listen now to the resurrection itself! (Ver. 11.) Thou hast turned My mourning into joy to Me, Thou hast rent off My sackcloth, and girded Me with gladness. What is sackcloth? Mortality. Sackcloth is made of goats and kids, and goats and kids are set among sinners. The Lord took from our condition the sackcloth only, He assumed not that of which sackcloth is the desert. That of which sackcloth is the desert, is sin: the sackcloth is mortality. For thee He assumed mortality, Who had no desert of death. For he hath desert of death, who sins; but He Who sinned not, deserved not the sackcloth. In another place He Himself saith, But when they troubled Me, I clothed Myself with hair-cloth. What is this, I clothed Myself with hair-cloth? I opposed to My persecutors that, which I have from the hair-cloth. That they might think Him a man, He hid Himself from the eyes of the persecutors, because the persecutors were not worthy to see Him, clothed with hair-cloth. Therefore, Thou hast put off My sackcloth, and girded Me with gladness.

22. Ver. 12. That My glory should sing unto Thee, and I should not be pricked. As it is in the Head, so in the body. What is, I should not be pricked? I should die no more. For He was pricked, when He hung on the Cross, He was smitten with a spear. Our Head therefore saith, that I should not be pricked, I should die no more. But we, what do we say because of the dedication of the house? That our conscience should not prick us with the goads of our sins. For all will be remitted, and we shall then be free. That

My glory, saith He, should sing to Thee, not My humiliation. If our's, Christ's too, for we are the body of Christ. How? Because although Christ sitteth in heaven, He will say to some, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. He is both there, and here: there in Himself, here in us. What then doth He say? That My glory should sing to Thee, and I should not be pricked. My humiliation sigheth unto Thee, my glory shall sing to Thee. Now at the end: O Lord, my God, I will confess unto Thee for ever. What is, I will confess unto Thee for ever? I will praise Thee for ever, for we have said that there is a confession in praises also, and not only in sins. Confess then now what thou hast done against God, and thou shalt confess what God shall have done to thee. What hast thou done? Sins. What hath God done? On confessing thine iniquity He remitteth thy sins, that afterwards confessing unto Him His praises for ever thou shouldest not be pricked with sin.

PSALM 31

first exposition

To the end, a Psalm of David himself, an ecstasy.

1. To the end a Psalm of David Himself, the Mediator strong of hand in persecutions. For the word ecstasy, which is added to the title, signifies a transport of the mind, which is produced either by a panic, or by some revelation. But in this Psalm the panic of the people of God troubled by the persecution of all the heathen, and by the failing of faith throughout the world, is principally seen. But first the Mediator Himself speaks: then the People redeemed by His Blood gives thanks: at last in trouble it speaks at length, which is what belongs to the ecstasy; but the Person of the Prophet himself is twice interposed, near the end, and at the end.

2. Ver. 1. In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me not be put to confusion for ever. In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me never be confounded, whilst they shall insult Me as one like other men. In Thy righteousness rescue Me, and deliver Me. And in Thy righteousness rescue Me from the pit of death, and deliver Me out of their company.

3. Ver. 2. Bend down Thine ear unto Me. Hear Me in My humiliation, nigh at hand unto Me. Make haste to deliver Me. Defer not to the end of the world, as with all who believe on Me, My separation from sinners. Be unto Me a God Who protecteth Me. Be unto Me God, and Protector. And a house of refuge, that Thou mayest save Me. And as a house, wherein taking refuge I may be saved.

4. Ver. 3. For Thou art My strength, and My refuge. For Thou art unto Me My strength to bear My persecutors, and My refuge to escape them. And for Thy Name's sake Thou shalt be My guide, and shalt nourish Me. And that by Me Thou mayest be known to all the Gentiles, I will in all things follow

Thy will; and, by assembling, by degrees, Saints unto Me, Thou shalt fulfil My body, and My perfect stature.

5. Ver. 4. Thou shalt bring Me out of this trap, which they have hidden for Me. Thou shalt bring Me out of these snares, which they have hidden for Me. For Thou art My Protector.

6. Ver. 5. Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit. To Thy power I commend My Spirit, soon to receive It back. Thou hast redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth. Let the people too, redeemed by the Passion of their Lord, and joyful in the glorifying of their Head, say, Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

7. Ver. 6. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly. Thou hatest them that hold to the false happiness of the world. But I have trusted in the Lord.

8. Ver. 7. I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy: which doth not deceive me. For Thou hast regarded My humiliation: wherein Thou hast subjected me to vanity in hope. Thou hast saved my soul from necessities. Thou hast saved my soul from the necessities of fear, that with a free love it may serve Thee.

9. Ver. 8. And hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy. And hast not shut me up, that I should have no opening for recovering unto liberty, and be given over for ever into the power of the devil, ensnaring me with the desire of this life, and terrifying me with death. Thou hast set my feet in a large room. The resurrection of my Lord being known, and mine own being promised me, my love, having been brought out of the straits of fear, walks abroad in continuance, into the expanse of liberty.

10. Ver. 9. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled. But what is this unlooked for cruelty of the persecutors, striking such dread into me? Have mercy on me, O Lord. For I am now no more alarmed for death, but for torments and tortures. Mine eye hath been disordered by anger. I had mine eye upon Thee, that Thou shouldest not abandon me: Thou art angry, and hast disordered it. My soul, and my belly. By the same anger my soul hath been disturbed, and my memory, whereby I retained what my God hath suffered for me, and what He hath promised me.

11. Ver. 10. For my life hath failed in pain. For my life is to confess Thee, but it failed in pain, when the enemy had said, Let them be tortured until they deny Him. And my years in groanings. The time that I pass in this world is not taken away from me by death, but abides, and is spent in groanings. My strength hath been weakened by want. I want the health of this body, and racking pains come on me: I want the dissolution of the body, and death forbears to come: and in this want my confidence hath been weakened. And my bones have been disturbed. And my stedfastness hath been disturbed.

12. Ver. 11. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies. All the wicked are my enemies; and nevertheless they for their wickednesses are tortured only till they confess: I then have overpassed their reproach, I, whose confession death doth not follow, but racking pains follow upon it. And to my neighbours too much. This hath seemed too much to them, who were already drawing near to know Thee, and to hold the faith that I hold. And a fear to mine acquaintance. And into my very acquaintance I struck fear by the example of my dreadful tribulation. They that did see me, fled without from me. Because they did not understand my inward and invisible hope, they fled from me into things outward and visible.

13. Ver. 12. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart. And they have forgotten me, as if I were dead from their hearts. I have become as a lost vessel. I have seemed to myself to be lost to all the Lord's service, living in this world, and gaining none, when all were afraid to join themselves unto me.

14. Ver. 13. For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circuit. For I have heard many rebuking me, in the pilgrimage of this world near me, following the circuit of time, and refusing to return with me to the eternal country. Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul. That my soul, which should by death easily escape from their power, might consent unto them, they imagined a device, whereby they would not suffer me even to die.

15. Ver. 14. But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God. For Thou hast not changed, that Thou shouldest not save, Who dost

correct.

16. Ver. 15. In Thy hands are my lots. In Thy power are my lots. For I see no desert, for which out of the universal ungodliness of the human race Thou hast elected me particularly to salvation. And though there be with Thee some just and secret order in my election, yet I, from whom this is hid, have attained by lot unto my Lord's vesture. Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

17. Ver. 16. Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant. Make it known to men, who do not think that I belong unto Thee, that Thy Face is bent upon me, and that I serve Thee. Save me in Thy mercy.

18. Ver. 17. O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. O Lord, let me not be put to shame by those who insult me, for that I have called upon Thee. Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down to hell. Let them rather who call upon stones be ashamed, and made to dwell with darkness.

19. Ver. 18. Let the deceitful lips be made dumb. In making known to the peoples Thy mysteries wrought in me, strike with dumb amazement the lips of them that invent falsehood of me. Which speak iniquity against the Righteous, in pride and contempt. Which speak iniquity against Christ, in their pride and contempt of Him as a crucified man.

20. Ver. 19. How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord. Here the Prophet exclaims, having sight of all this, and admiring how manifoldly plenteous is Thy sweetness, O Lord. Which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee. Even those, whom Thou correctest, Thou lovest much: but lest they should go on negligently from relaxed security, Thou hidest from them the sweetness of Thy love, for whom it is profitable to fear Thee. Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee. But Thou hast perfected this sweetness for them that hope in Thee. For Thou dost not withdraw from them what they look for perseveringly even unto the end. In sight of the sons of men. For it does not escape the notice of the sons of men, who now live no more after Adam, but after the Son of Man. Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance: which seat Thou shalt preserve for everlasting in the hidden place of the knowledge of Thee for them that hope

in Thee. From the troubling of men. So that now they suffer no more trouble from men.

21. Ver. 20. Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues. But here meanwhile whilst evil tongues murmur against them, saying, Who hath known this? or, Who hath come thence? Thou wilt protect them in the tabernacle, that of faith in those things, which the Lord wrought and endured for us in time.

22. Ver. 21. Blessed be the Lord; for He hath made His mercy marvellous, in the city of compassing. Blessed be the Lord, for after the correction of the sharpest persecutions He hath made His mercy marvellous to all throughout the world, in the circuit of human society.

23. Ver. 22. I said in my ecstasy. Whence that people again speaking saith, I said in my fear, when the heathen were raging horribly against me. I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine eyes. For if Thou hadst regard to me, Thou wouldest not suffer me to endure these things. Therefore Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I cried unto Thee. Therefore putting a limit to correction, and shewing that I have part in Thy care, Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I raised it high out of tribulation.

24. Ver. 23. Love the Lord, all ye His saints. The Prophet again exhorts, having sight of these things, and saith, Love the Lord, all ye His saints; for the Lord will require truth. Since if the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?—And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly. And He will repay them who even when conquered are not converted, because they are very proud.

25. Ver. 24. Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened: working good without fainting, that ye may reap in due season. All ye who trust in the Lord: that is, ye who duly fear and worship Him, trust ye in the Lord.

second exposition

SERMON I

1. Let us investigate, as we best can, the hidden things of this Psalm, which we have just sung, and let us offer to your ears and minds a discourse framed upon it. Its title is, To the end, a psalm of David himself, an ecstasy. What, to the end, is, we know, if we know Christ. For the Apostle saith, For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. An end, not consuming, but a perfecting. For we use the word end in a double sense; either as that by which it is brought to pass that what was is not, or by which it is brought to pass that what had been commenced is perfected. To the end, therefore, is, to Christ.

2. A psalm to David, an ecstasy. The word ecstasy is Greek; in Latin, as far as we can understand it, it may be expressed in one word, if it be called a transport, (*excessus*.) For a transport of the mind is properly and usually called an ecstasy. Now by transport of the mind two things are understood, either a panic, or a straining after things above, so that in some sort things below glide from the memory. In such an ecstasy have all the Saints been, to whom the secrets of God exceeding this world have been revealed. Of this transport of the mind, that is, ecstasy, when Paul spake, alluding to himself, he says, For whether we be transported in mind, it is to God: or whether we temper ourselves, it is to you; for the love of Christ constraineth us. That is, if we would only do such things and only contemplate such things, as we behold in a transport of the mind, we should not be with you, but should be in things above, as it were despising you: and how should you with weak step follow us to those more lofty and interior things, unless again, the love of Christ constraining us, (Who, when He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,) we should consider that we are servants, and being not ungrateful to Him from Whom we have received higher things, should for their sakes who are weak not despise lower things, and should attemper ourselves to them who cannot with us see things sublime? Therefore it is he says, Whether we be transported in mind, it is to God: for He seeth what we see in a transport of the mind; He Only revealeth His secret things. For he speaks thus, who says that he was caught up and carried away into the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Yea, such was his transport of mind, that he said, Whether in the body, or whether out of the body, I know not: God

knoweth. Therefore if the title of this Psalm signifies this transport of the mind, that is, this ecstasy, we ought indeed to look that he will give utterance to things great, and lofty, who composed the Psalm, that is, the Prophet, yea rather the Holy Ghost by the Prophet.

3. But if this ecstasy is to be understood as panic, the context of the Psalm will not be wanting to this signification of the word either. For he seems to be about to speak of suffering, in which there is panic. But whose panic? Christ's, in that he said, To the end, and we understand Christ to be the end? Or peradventure our panic? For what! can we rightly understand panic to be in Christ on the approach of suffering, Who had come on account of it? when He had come to that for which He had come, had He panic at the prospect of death? If He were so entirely man, as not to be God, He would more rejoice at the prospect of the resurrection, than have panic at the prospect of death. Nevertheless, since He vouchsafed to assume the form of a servant, and therein to clothe us with Himself, He Who disdained not to assume us unto Himself, did not disdain to transfigure us into Himself, and to speak with our words, that we too might speak with His words. For this wonderful interchange hath taken place, and a divine traffic hath been transacted, an exchange of things duly solemnized in this world by the heavenly Merchant. He came to receive reproaches, to give honours; He came to drink the cup of sorrow, to give salvation; He came to submit to death, to give life. Being then about to die from that which he had of ours, He was in panic, not in Himself, but in us: since too He both said this, that His soul was sorrowful, even unto death, and all we ourselves of course with Him. For without Him we are nothing: but in Him is Christ Himself, and we. How? Because Whole Christ is Head and Body. The Head, That Saviour of the Body, Who hath already ascended into heaven: but the body is the Church, which toils on earth. Now unless this Body did cleave to its Head in the bond of love, so as for there to be made One of the Head and the Body, He could not say in reproof from heaven a certain persecutor, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Since no man was touching Him now sitting in heaven, how did Saul, by his violence against Christians on earth, any way inflict injury upon Him? He does not say, Why persecutest thou My Saints, or My servants; but, why persecutest thou Me? that is, My members. The Head cried out for the members, and the Head transfigured

the members into Himself. For the tongue takes up the utterance of the foot. When by chance the foot, bruised in the crowd, is in pain, the tongue cries out, "You are treading upon me." For it does not say, "You are treading on my foot;" but it says that it is itself being trode upon, when no one touched it. But the foot, which has been trode upon, is not separated from the tongue. Therefore thus also by ecstasy is not unfitly understood panic. For what shall I say, Brethren? If there were absolutely no panic in those that are about to suffer, would that be said to Peter himself, which we heard on the Apostle's birthday, when the Lord predicted to him his future suffering, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and wentest whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not? And this, saith he, spake He, signifying what death he should die. If therefore the Apostle Peter, of so great perfection, went unwillingly whither he would not, (he died unwillingly, but was crowned willingly,) what wonder, if there be some panic in the suffering even of the righteous, even of Saints? Panic comes from human weakness, hope from divine promise. That for which thou feelest panic is thine own, what thou hopest is the gift of God in thee. And it is better thou dost acknowledge thyself in thy panic, that in thy deliverance thou mayest glorify Him Who made thee. Let human weakness be panic-struck, divine mercy faileth not in that fear. In fine, this panic-struck one begins with this. (Ver. 1.) In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me not be confounded for ever. You see, that he both is panic-struck, and hopes: you see that this panic is not without hope. Even though there be some disturbance in the human heart, divine consolation withdraws not.

4. Here then Christ speaketh in the Prophet: I venture to say, Christ speaketh. The Psalmist will say some things in this Psalm, which may seem as if they could not apply to Christ, to that excellency of our Head, and especially to That Word Which was in the beginning God with God: nor perhaps will some things here seem to apply to Him in the form of a servant, which form of a servant He took from the Virgin: and yet Christ speaketh, because Christ in Christ's members. And, that ye may know, that the Head and His Body are called One Christ, He saith Himself, when He was speaking of marriage, They shall be two in one flesh: therefore they are no more two, but one flesh. But, peradventure, He may say this of any

marriage. Hear the Apostle Paul; And they shall be two, saith he, in one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ, and the Church. There is produced then as it were out of two, one certain person, of the Head and the Body, of the Bridegroom and the Bride. For the wonderful and excellent unity of this person, the prophet Isaiah also sets forth; for speaking in him too, Christ saith in prophecy, He hath bound a mitre on Me, as on a Bridegroom the chaplet, and adorned Me with ornaments as a Bride. He called Himself the Bridegroom, and the Bride: why called He Himself the Bridegroom, and the Bride, unless because they shall be two in one flesh? If two in one flesh, why not too in one voice? Christ may therefore speak, because the Church speaks in Christ, and Christ in the Church; and the Body in the Head, and the Head in the Body. Hear the Apostle expressing this very thing more clearly, For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. Speaking of the members of Christ, that is, of the faithful, he doth not say, so also are the members of Christ; but to all that he hath expressed he gave the name of Christ. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ many members, one Body. Therefore we all are together with our Head, Christ, without our Head nothing worth. Why? Because with our Head we are the vine: without our Head, which God forbid, lopped branches, destined to no work of the husbandman, but to the fire only. So He Himself in the Gospel, I am the Vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the husbandman, and without Me, saith He, ye can do nothing. O Lord, if without Thee nothing, in Thee all. For whatsoever He worketh by us, we seem to work. He can do much and all without us, we without Him nothing.

5. Therefore in whatever ecstasy he speaketh, whether in panic or transport of the mind, what is said is suitable. Let us speak in the Body of Christ, let us all speak as one, for that all are oneness; let us say, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded for ever. That confusion do I dread, saith He, which is for ever. For there is a certain confusion for a time which is useful, the disturbance of a mind looking back on its sins, amazed at the looking back, in its amazement ashamed, in its shame reforming. Whence too the Apostle saith, For what glory had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? Therefore he saith that they, now faithful, are ashamed,

not of present gifts, but of past sins. Let not the Christian dread this confusion: yea rather, if he have not this, he will have everlasting confusion. What is everlasting confusion? When that shall happen, which is said, And their iniquities shall take them over on the contrary part. And as their iniquities take them over on the contrary part, all the bad flock shall go to the left hand, as goats separated from the sheep; and they shall hear, Go ye into the fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. They ask why? For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat. They despised then, when they gave no meat to Christ as He hungered, when they gave no drink to the thirsty, when they clothed not the naked; took not in the stranger, visited not the sick—then they despised. When these things shall begin to be enumerated to them, they will be confounded, and this confusion will be for ever. And in fear of this, he who is afraid, or whose mind is transported toward God, maketh this request, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded for ever.

6. And in Thy Righteousness rescue me, and deliver me. For if Thou lookest to my righteousness, Thou condemnest me. In Thy Righteousness rescue me. For there is a righteousness of God, which becomes ours too, when it is given to us. Now it is therefore called God's Righteousness, that man may not deem that he hath righteousness of himself. For thus the Apostle Paul saith, To him that believeth on Him Who justifieth the ungodly, (what is, Who justifieth the ungodly? Who of ungodly maketh a man righteous:) his faith is counted for righteousness. But the Jews, because they thought that they could by their own strength fulfil righteousness, stumbled at the stumbling-stone and rock of offence, and did not acknowledge the grace of Christ. For they received a law, whereby they could be made guilty, but could not be freed from guilt. In fine, what saith the Apostle of them? For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. What is, what he says, the Jews have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge? Hear what not according to knowledge is. For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. If then for this reason they have not a zeal of God according to knowledge, because they are ignorant of God's righteousness, and wish to establish their own, as if they were made righteous of

themselves: for this reason have they not come to know the grace of God, because they would not be saved freely. Who is he that is saved freely? In whom the Saviour findeth not what to crown, but what to condemn; findeth not deserts of good things, but findeth deserts of punishment. If He deal as it were strictly according to the rule of the law laid down, the sinner must be condemned. If He were to act by this rule, whom would He deliver? He found all men sinners: He Alone came without sin, Who found us sinners. So saith the Apostle: For all have sinned, and are in need of the glory of God. What means, are in need of the glory of God? That He should Himself deliver, and not thou. Because thou canst not deliver thyself, thou needest a deliverer. Wherein dost thou vaunt thyself? Wherein dost thou rely on the Law and on righteousness? Seest thou not what is inwardly struggling in thee, of thee, against thee? Hearest thou not one fighting, and confessing, and longing for help in the fight? Hearest thou not the Lord's combatant asking of the disposer of the contest help in his fight? For God doth not so look on at thy struggles, as the exhibitor of the games looks on, if so be thou fightest in the amphitheatre. He can give thee a prize if victorious; he cannot help thee in danger. Not so doth God look on. Look there, mark him that saith, For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Why grace? Because it is given gratuitously. Why is it given gratuitously? Because thy merits have not gone before, but the kindnesses of God have prevented thee. Glory then be to Him Who delivereth us. For all have sinned, and are in need of the glory of God. In Thee, then, O Lord, have I trusted, not in myself: let me not be confounded for ever, because I trust in Him, Who confoundeth not. In Thy Righteousness rescue me, and deliver me. Since Thou hast not found in me my own righteousness, rescue me in Thine: that is, let that rescue me which justifieth me, which maketh me of ungodly godly, of unrighteous righteous, of blind seeing, of falling rising, of weeping rejoicing. This delivereth me: not I myself. In Thy Righteousness rescue me, and deliver me.

7. Ver. 2. Bend down Thine ear unto me. God did this, when He sent Christ Himself unto us. He sent Him to us, Who bending His Head wrote with His

Finger on the earth, when the adulterous woman was brought before Him to be punished. But He had before bent Himself to the earth, that is, God to man, to whom it was said, Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go. For God doth not bend His Ear to us as if in bodily space, nor is He bounded by these circumscribed bodily members. Nay, let not human fancies form any such notions as these. God is Truth. Truth is neither square, nor round, nor long. It is every where present, if the eye of the heart be open to It. Nevertheless God bendeth His Ear to us, letting down mercy upon us. What greater mercy, than that He should give us His Only One, not to live with us, but to die for us? Bend down Thine Ear unto me.

8. Make haste to deliver me. For he is heard in this, when he saith, Make haste. For for this purpose this word was used, that thou mayest understand how that all this age, which seems to us while it is passing long, is but a moment. That is not long, which hath an end. The period from Adam to this day is passed, and much more in truth hath been passed already, than remains to be passed. If Adam were still living, and should die to-day; what would it profit him to have been so long, to have lived so long? Why then this haste? Because time flies by, and what is slow to thee, is in God's sight short. This haste he had already understood in ecstasy. Make haste to deliver me. Be unto me a God Who protecteth me, and a house of refuge, that Thou mayest save me. Be Thou unto me a house of refuge, a God Who protecteth, a house of refuge. For sometimes I am in peril, and I would fly: whither do I fly? to what place fly safely? to what hill? to what cave? to what guarded shelter? What castle can I hold? with what walls be encompassed? Whithersoever I go, I accompany myself. For, O man, whatsoever thou wilt, thou canst fly, except thy conscience. Enter into thy house, rest on thy bed, enter the inner chambers; thou canst have no place within, whither thou mayest fly from thy conscience, if thy sins torment thee. But because he hath said, Make haste to deliver me, and rescue me in Thy Righteousness, that Thou mayest remit my sins, and build up Thy Righteousness in me: Thou shalt be to me a house of refuge, to Thee do I fly. For whither shall I fly from Thee? God is angry with thee, whither wilt thou fly? Hear what, in fear of the anger of God, he saith in another Psalm, Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or, whither shall I fly from Thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there: if I go down into hell,

Thou art present. Whithersoever I go, there I find Thee. And if Thou art angry, I find Thee an Avenger; if Thou art propitious, an Helper. Nothing then remains for me, but to fly unto Thee, not from Thee. If Thou art a servant, to escape a human master, Thou fliest to places where Thy master is not: to escape God, fly to the Lord. For there is no place, whither thou mayest fly from God. All things are present and naked to the eyes of the Almighty. Be Thou then to me, saith he, a house of refuge. For if I shall not be made whole, how shall I fly? Make me whole, and I fly to Thee. For if Thou dost not make me whole, I cannot walk: how shall I be able to fly? Whither should he go, whither fly, if he be unable to walk, half dead in the way, maimed and wounded by robbers? Whom the priest going by passed over, the Levite going by passed over, the Samaritan going by pitied, that is, the Lord Himself, Who hath pitied the race of man. For Samaritan is by interpretation keeper. And who keepeth us, if He deserteth us? With good reason, when the Jews said railing at Him, Say we not truly that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? He rejected the one, accepted the other, saying, I have not a devil. He did not say, I am not a Samaritan: wishing it to be understood that He is our Keeper. In pity then He drew nigh, He took care of him, brought him to an inn, fulfilled His mercy towards him: now he is able to walk, he is able even to fly. Whither should he fly but to God, where he hath made for himself a house of refuge?

9. Ver. 3. For Thou art my strength and my refuge; and for Thy Name's sake Thou shalt be my guide, and shalt nourish me. Not for my merit's sake, but for Thy Name's sake, that Thou mayest be glorified, not because I am worthy. Thou shalt be my guide, that I go not astray from Thee; and Thou shalt nourish me, that I may be strong to eat the food, wherewith Thou feedest angels. For here hath He nourished us with milk, Who hath promised us heavenly food; and hath exercised a mother's pity. For as a mother, when suckling, conveys through the flesh the same food which the infant is not able to take, and infuses milk; (for the little one receives the same as he would receive at table, but what is conveyed through the flesh is suited to the little one;) so the Lord, that He might make His wisdom milk to us, came to us clothed with Flesh. Hence the Body of Christ speaketh, Thou shalt nourish me.

10. Thou shalt bring me out of this trap, which they have hidden for me. Now is suffering intimated, Thou shalt bring me out of this trap which they have hidden for me. Nor is it that suffering only, wherewith our Lord Jesus Christ suffered; the devil hath spread his trap even unto the end. And woe to that man that falleth into it; now every one doth fall, who trusteth not in God, who saith not, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded for ever, and in Thy righteousness rescue me, and deliver me. The trap of the enemy hath been spread, and prepared. He hath baited the trap with error and terror; error to entice with, terror to crush and hurry away. Shut thou the door of desire against error, shut the door of fear against terror, and thou shalt be led out of the trap. Of this kind of fight thy Captain Himself, Who for thy sake vouchsafed even to be tempted, hath given thee an example in Himself. And He was first tempted with enticements; for the door of desire was tempted in Him, when the devil tempted Him, saying, Command these stones, that they be made bread. Worship me, and I will give Thee these kingdoms. Cast Thyself down, for it hath been written, He hath given His angels charge over Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. All this enticement tempts desire. But when he found the door of desire shut in Him, Who was tempted for us, he betook himself to tempting the door of fear, and prepared suffering for Him. In a word, the Evangelist speaketh thus, And the temptation being ended, the devil departed from Him for a season. What is, for a season? As if he would return, and tempt the gate of fear, because he found the gate of desire closed. The whole Body then of Christ is tempted even unto the end. My Brethren, when some evil or other was enjoined against the Christians, this Body was attacked together, the whole was attacked: hence it was said in the Psalm, As a heap of sand I was shaken that I might fall, and the Lord held me up. But when these things were over, which attacked the whole Body that it might fall, temptation began in its separate parts. The Body of Christ is tempted part by part: one Church does not suffer persecution, another does. It suffers not the rage of the Emperor, but the rage of an evil people. How great devastations from the populace! How great evils have been heaped upon the Church by bad Christians, by those, who, having been taken in that net, have so multiplied, as to weigh down the ships in that fishing of the Lord before the Passion! There is no want then of the weighing down of

temptation. Let no one say to himself, "It is not a time of temptation." Whoso saith this to himself, promiseth himself peace: whoso promiseth himself peace, is assaulted off his guard. Let the whole Body of Christ then say, (ver. 4.) Thou wilt bring me out of this trap, which they have hidden for me: because our Head even hath been brought out of the trap, which they hid for Him, to Whom it was just now said in the Gospel, that they would say, This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance will be ours. And on being questioned, What will the Lord of the vineyard do to the wicked husbandmen? they pronounced sentence against themselves: He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen. What, and have ye never read, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner? For what is here, the builders rejected; is expressed in the Gospel, they cast out of the vineyard, and slew. He too then hath been delivered. Our Head is above, is free. Let us cleave to Him by love, that we may be hereafter the better united to Him by immortality; and let us say all, Thou wilt take me out of that trap which they have hidden for me; for Thou art my Protector.

11. Let us listen to the words of the Lord, which He spake on the Cross, Into Thy hands I commend My spirit. At least when we meet in the Gospel with His words from this Psalm, let us not doubt that He Himself hath spoken here. We have this in the Gospel: He said, (ver. 5.) Into Thy hands I commend My spirit: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. It was not without a cause that He would have the words of this Psalm to be His own words, but only that He might warn you that He hath spoken in this Psalm. Seek Him here: consider how He wished to be sought for in that Psalm, For the taking up of the morning: They pierced My Hands and My Feet; they numbered distinctly all My bones; yea, they regarded and beheld Me; they divided My garments for themselves, and cast the lot upon My vesture; that He might warn thee that this was fulfilled in Himself, He placed in His mouth the heading of this very Psalm, O God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? And yet He transferred in a figure the voice of His Body unto Himself; for the Father never at any time forsook His Only Son. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Doing what Thou hast promised, not failing in Thy promise, O God of truth.

12. Ver. 6. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly. Who holds to vanity? He that by fear of death dieth. For by fear of death he lieth, and dieth before he dies, who therefore lied that he might live. Thou wouldest lie that thou mayest not die: thou both liest, and diest; and whereas thou shunnest one death, which thou canst put off, but canst not put away, thou fallest into two, so as that thou diest first in soul, and afterwards in body. Whence is this, but from holding to vanity? Because the passing day is sweet to thee, because the flying seasons, of which thou retainest nothing and art moreover thyself retained, are sweet to thee. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly. But I, who do not hold to vanity, have trusted in the Lord. Thou trustest in money, thou holdest by vanity: thou trustest in honour and in some eminence of human power, thou holdest to vanity: thou trustest in some powerful friend, thou holdest to vanity. When thou trustest in all these things, either thou diest and leavest them here; or in thy lifetime they all perish, and thou failest in thy trust. Of this vanity Isaiah maketh mention, when he saith, All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof is as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth; but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. But I am not as they who trust in vanity, and do hold to vanity; but have trusted in the Lord, Who is not vanity.

13. Ver. 7. I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy, not in mine own righteousness. For Thou hast regarded my humiliation, Thou hast saved my soul from necessities, and hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy. What are the necessities, from which we wish our soul to be saved? Who can number them? Who duly amplify them? Who fitly set them forth, to be shunned and avoided? First it is a hard necessity in the human race, not to know another's heart, to think ill frequently of a faithful friend, to think well frequently of a faithless friend. O hard necessity! And what canst thou do to look into hearts? what eye apply, O weak and lamentable mortality? What canst thou do to see to-day thy brother's heart? Thou hast nothing thou canst do. There is another greater necessity, thou seest not even thine own, how it will be to-morrow. What shall I now say of the necessities of mortality itself? Death is inevitable, and no man wishes it. No man wishes what is inevitable. No man wishes that, which will be, whether he will or no. Hard necessity, not to wish that which cannot be shunned! For if it were possible, we should be unwilling doubtless to die; and should wish to be

made as Angels, but by some transformation, not by death: as the Apostle saith, We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that we be found clothed and not naked. For we who are in this habitation do groan, being burdened: wherein we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. We wish to attain unto the kingdom of God, but we do not wish it through death: and yet necessity saith unto thee, This way shalt thou come. Dost thou hesitate, O man, to come this way, when God hath come this way to thee? What again are the necessities in conquering most inveterate lusts, and evil habits the growth of years? To conquer habit, you know, is a hard battle. Thou seest how evil are thy deeds, how detestable, how unhappy; and yet thou doest the same: thou didst so yesterday, thou wilt do so to-day. If they are thus displeasing to thee, whilst I am speaking, how do they displease thee, when thou thinkest on them? And yet thou wilt do the same. By what art thou hurried along? who drags thee captive? Is it that law in thy members warring against the law of thy mind? Cry out then, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord: and so that is fulfilled in thee, which we just now said, But I have trusted in the Lord: I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy; for Thou hast regarded my humiliation, Thou hast saved my soul from necessities. For how hath thy soul been saved from necessities, but because thy humiliation hath been regarded? Unless thou wert first humbled, He would not hear thee, Who should deliver thee from necessities. He was humbled, who said, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? They were not humbled, who being ignorant of God's Righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God.

14. Ver. 8. And Thou hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy. Not thy neighbour, not thy partner, not him with whom thou hast been on service, and injured him, or it may be in thine own city hast done wrong to: for these are such as we ought to pray for. We have another enemy, the devil, the old serpent. We all at death, if we die well, are delivered out of his hands. For whoever die ill, in their iniquities, are shut up into his hands, that they should be condemned with him at the end. The Lord our God then

delivereth us from the hand of our enemy; for he wishes to catch us by our lusts. Now our lusts, when they are strong, and when we serve them, are called necessities. But when God delivereth our soul from our necessities, what shall there be which the enemy can lay hold of in us, that we should be shut up into his hands?

15. Thou hast set my feet in a large room. But yet, the way is narrow: it is narrow to the toiling, broad to the loving. The same way which is narrow, is made broad. In a large room, saith he, Thou hast set my feet, that my feet straitened for room should not knock against each other, and by such knocking throw me down. What then doth he mean by saying, Thou hast set my feet in a large room? Thou hast plainly made righteousness easy to me, which once was difficult to me: this is, Thou hast set my feet in a large room.

16. Ver. 9. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled; mine eye hath been disordered by anger, my soul, and my belly. For my life hath failed in pain, and my years in groanings. Let this suffice you, dearly beloved: with the help of the Lord, we will perhaps fulfil our engagement, that this Psalm ended, we may proceed on our way.

SERMON II

1. Let our attention turn again to the rest of the Psalm, and let us recognise ourselves in the words of the Prophet. For if we look into ourselves in the time of tribulation, we shall rejoice in the time of retribution. I set forth to you, dearly beloved, when I was expounding the first part of this Psalm, that it is Christ Who speaketh; and I did not omit to say how that Christ is to be taken. Wholly, with the Head and the Body. I established this also by testimonies of Scripture, as it appeared to me, adequate enough and clear; so that it could not in any wise be doubted that Christ is Head and Body, Bridegroom and Bride, the Son of God and the Church, the Son of God made Son of Man for our sakes, that He might make the sons of men sons of God; and so there might be two in one flesh in a great mystery, who are recognised in the Prophets as two in one voice. The thanksgiving of the Psalmist himself hath been expressed above in the words, Thou hast regarded my humiliation, Thou hast saved my soul from necessities, and

hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy; Thou hast set my feet in a large room. It is the thanksgiving of Man delivered from tribulation, of Christ's members delivered from affliction and snares. And again he saith, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled. In tribulation of course there is straitness: how then, Thou hast set my feet in a large room? If he be still troubled, how are his feet in a large room? Is it haply so that there is one voice, because there is indeed one Body; but in some of the members thereof largeness is felt, in others straitness, that is, some feel the easiness of righteousness, others are distressed in tribulation? For if the condition of different members was not different, the Apostle would not say, If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Some Churches, for instance, have peace, some are in tribulation; in such as have peace the feet are in a large room; such as are in tribulation suffer straitness; but both the tribulation of the latter saddens the former, and the peace of the former comforts the latter. For the Body is in such wise one, that there is no schism; now nothing maketh schism but dissension. But charity produceth closeness, closeness embraceth unity, unity preserveth charity, charity attaineth to glory. Let her say then in the person of some members, (ver. 9.) Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled; mine eye hath been disturbed by anger, my soul, and my belly.

2. We ask, whence comes this trouble, since a little before he seemed to rejoice in his deliverance, through a certain righteousness poured in upon him bountifully by the gift of God, and room thereby made for his feet in the expanse of charity. Whence then is this trouble also, unless peradventure from that which the Lord saith, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold? For when at first the fewness of the saints had been set forth, by the casting as it were of the net, the Church was multiplied, and countless numbers were taken, of whom it had been foretold, I declared, and spake, they were multiplied out of number. Who were even to overload the ships, and break the nets, as it was recorded in that first fishing before the Lord's Passion. Out of these multitudes then are those numbers swelled, by whom the Churches throughout Easter are so crammed, that the confined space of the walls cannot contain the crowds of them. Now how should he not be troubled for this multitude, when he seeth those very same filling the

theatres and amphitheatres, who a little before filled the Churches? those very same in their iniquities, who were a little before in the praises of God? those very same blaspheming God, who were answering Amen unto God? Let him abide, let him endure, let him not fail, even in the abounding multitude of the wicked, because neither does the grain of corn fail in the multitude of the chaff, until that after the time of fanning he be sent into the barn, and there be in the company of the saints, and suffer nothing from the clouds of dust. Let him then endure to the end, because the Lord too, when He had said, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold, lest through this, that abundance of iniquity is fore-announced, our feet should slip and stumble, immediately added for the encouragement and consolation and confirmation of the faithful, saying, He that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved.

3. Give heed accordingly to the Psalmist, situated, as it appears to me, in this trouble. When as being in trouble he ought as it were to grieve, (for trouble hath a suitable partner in grief,) he declares that he is angry in trouble, and saith, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble, mine eye hath been disordered by anger. If thou art in trouble, why art thou angry? He is angry for others' sins. Who would not be angry, seeing men confessing God with their mouths, and in their lives denying Him? Who would not be angry, seeing men renouncing the world in word, and not in deed? Who would not be angry, seeing brethren plotting against brethren, not keeping good faith with the kiss, which they imprint in the Sacraments of God? And who can enumerate all the things, at which the Body of Christ is angry, which liveth interiorily by the Spirit of Christ, which groaneth as the grain among the chaff? For they scarcely appear who thus groan, who are thus angry; as the grain scarcely appears, when the floor is being threshed. He who knows not how many ears have been gathered in, thinks the whole chaff; and out of this which is all thought to be chaff, a large heap will be cleansed. Among these then, who do not appear and who groan, he is angry, who saith in another place, The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up. He saith too in another place, when he seeth many doing evil, Weariness possessed me, at sinners forsaking Thy law. He saith again in another place, I saw the senseless, and I wasted away.

4. But for this anger, there is cause for fear, lest it be so great, as to be turned into hatred. For anger is not yet hatred. For thou art angry with thy son, thou dost not hate the child; thou art keeping his inheritance for him, who is sensible of thine anger; and therefore thou art angry, lest he lose what thou mayest have kept for him, should he turn out ill, by depraved habits. Anger then is not yet hatred: we do not yet hate them, with whom we are angry; but if this anger abide and be not quickly plucked out, it increases and becomes hatred. Therefore that new born anger be plucked out, and turn not into hatred, Scripture thus teacheth us, saying, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Now thou dost sometimes meet with a brother cherishing hatred, and he reproveth one who is angry: there is hatred in him, and he blames anger in another; he hath a beam in his own eye, and reproveth a mote in his brother's eye. But that mote and shoot, if it be not quickly plucked out, will become a beam. He doth not therefore say, Mine eye hath been put out by anger, but disordered. For, if it be put out, it is now hatred, not anger. And, see how that it is put out. Hence John saith, He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now. Before one then pass into darkness, the eye is disordered by anger; but care must be taken that the anger turn not into hatred, and the eye be put out. Therefore he saith, Mine eye hath been disordered for anger, my soul and my belly, that is, my inward parts have been disturbed. He used belly for inward parts. For sometimes with the wicked, and perverse, with those who wander from the law, and live evilly, one may be angry, one may not cry out. When we are angry and may not cry out, our inward parts are disturbed. For so great sometimes is the perversity that it cannot be corrected.

5. Ver. 10. For my life hath failed in pain, and my years in groanings. My life hath failed in pain, he saith. Now we live, saith the Apostle, if ye stand fast in the Lord. Whosoever are perfect through the Gospel and the grace of God, live not here but for others; for their life in this world is no more necessary for them. But, because their services are necessary for others, there occurs in their case what the same Apostle saith, Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; for it is far best: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is needful for you. Now when a man sees that from his services, from his labours, from his preaching men make no progress, his life is weakened by want. A truly miserable want and hunger, since those whom we gain to

the Lord the Church in a manner eateth. What is eateth? Passeth into her body. For whatever we eat we pass into our body. This the Church doeth by the Saints. She hungereth after those she would gain, and those whom she has gained in any way she in a manner eateth. Peter represented this Church, when a vessel was let down to him from heaven, full of all manner of four-footed beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air: by which kinds all the Gentiles are denoted. The Lord shewed the Church in figure beforehand, that she should devour all the Gentiles, and change them into her own body: and He said to Peter, Kill and eat. O Church, (that is, O Peter, for upon this rock I will build my Church,) kill and eat. First kill, and so eat. Kill what they are, and make them what thou art. When then the Gospel is preached, and he who preaches it sees that men make no progress, how can he not cry out, For my life hath failed in pain, and my years in groanings? My strength hath been weakened by want, and my bones have been disturbed. These years of ours, which we pass here, are in groanings. Why? Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many waxeth cold. In groanings, not in plain speeches. When the Church seeth many going wrong, she stifles her groans in her own breast, so as to say to God, My groaning is not hid from Thee. So it is said in another Psalm, but it is suitable here; My groaning, though hidden from men, hath not been hidden from Thee. My strength hath been weakened by want, and my bones have been disturbed. Of this want we have spoken above. By bones are meant the strong ones of the Church, who, though they be not disturbed by the persecutions of aliens, are nevertheless disturbed by the iniquities of brethren.

6. Ver. 11. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies, and to my neighbours too much, and fear to mine acquaintance. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies. Who are the Church's enemies? Heathens? Jews? Bad Christians live worse than all. Would ye see how bad Christians live worse than all? Of such the prophet Ezekiel saith that they are like useless vine-branches. Grant that the heathen are wood of the trees of the forest without the Church, still something can be made of it, as of carpenter's woods is made wood fit for the carpenter. And if it be as yet knotty, and crooked, and covered with bark, still it may be trimmed, chipped, planed, and can come to some work for man's use. But of vine

branches cut off carpenters can make nothing; the fire only awaits them. Mark, Brethren; seeing that the branch which abideth in the vine is every where preferred to the wood of the trees of the forest, because the branch yieldeth fruit, and that wood doth not; yet, if the wood of the trees of the forest be compared with the branch cut off from the vine, the wood is understood to be better, because of it the carpenter can make something, while the other none seeketh but to supply the hearth. Giving heed therefore to the multitude of evil livers in the Church, he saith, I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies. Bad men, saith he, live worse in my Sacraments, than they who have never approached them. Why should we not speak out plainly in Latin, even when we explain the Psalm? Even if we do not dare to speak at other times, at least let the obligation of exposition have the liberty of rebuking. I have been made, saith he, a reproach above all mine enemies. Of such the Apostle Peter saith, The latter end with them is worse than the beginning: for it were better for them not to know the way of righteousness, than, knowing it, to turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them. When he saith, It were better for them not to know the way of righteousness, did he not judge that enemies stationed without are better than evil livers within, by whom the Church is oppressed and weighed down? It had been better, saith he, for them not to know the way of righteousness, than, knowing it, to turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Finally, see to how shocking a thing he compared them. It hath happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog hath turned to his vomit again. Seeing then that the Church is full of such as these, do not the few say truly here, yea rather the Church herself by the voice of the few, I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies, and to my neighbours too much, and fear to mine acquaintance? I have been made a reproach to my neighbours too much, that is, to those who were already drawing near to me that they might believe; that is; My neighbours have been too much frightened by the bad life of bad and false Christians. For how many do you think, my Brethren, wish to be Christians, but are offended by the evil conversation of Christians? These are the neighbours who were already drawing near, and we have seemed too great a reproach unto them.

7. I have been made a fear to mine acquaintance. What is so much to be feared? I have been made, saith he, a fear to mine acquaintance. What is so much to be feared, as when a man sees many living evilly, and those of whom good was hoped found in many evil practices? He fears lest all, whom he thought good, be such, and almost all the good come into evil suspicion. What a man! How has he fallen? How has he been found in that disgraceful business, in that wickedness, in that evil deed? Think you all are not the same? This is a fear to mine acquaintance, that even with those to whom we are known we very often come into suspicion. And unless, if thou art any thing, what thou art thyself console thee, thou dost not believe there is any other like thee. A good conscience, whatever it be, consoleth a man, so as that a man whose life is good may say to himself, “O thou, who art fearing now lest all be such, art thou such?” Conscience makes answer, “I am not.” Then, if thou art not such, art thou alone? Beware lest this pride be worse than that wickedness. Say not that thou art alone. For so Elias once for weariness of the multitude of the ungodly said, They have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thy altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal. Therefore, Brethren, amid these offences, there is one remedy—that thou think not badly of thy brother. Be thou in humility, what thou wouldest have him be, and thou wilt not think him to be what thou art not. But still he is made a fear even to his acquaintance, even to those who have had proof of him.

8. They that did see me, fled without from me. It were pardonable, if they that did not see me, had fled without from me; for even they that did see me, fled without from me. But if they that did not see me, have fled without from me; (and it must not be said, they fled without, for they were never within; for if they had been within, they would have seen me; that is, they would have recognised the Body of Christ, they would have recognised the members of Christ, they would have recognised the unity of Christ.) This is more to be lamented, this is altogether unbearable, that many who saw me, fled without from me; that is, many, who had knowledge of what the Church was, went out, and made heresies and schisms against the Church. To-day, for instance, you find a man born in Donatus’ party, he knows not

what the Church is, he holds to what he was born in; you cannot tear him away from the usage which he has sucked in with his nurse's milk. Give me a man who is daily conversant with Scripture, who reads it, who preaches it. Is it possible, I ask, that he does not see there, Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the limits of the earth for thy possession? Does he not see there, All the ends of the world shall remember themselves and be turned unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him? If thou seest there the unity of the whole world, why dost thou fly without, so as not only thyself to suffer blindness, but also to create blindness for others? They that did see me, that is, who knew what the Church was, who saw it in the Scriptures, fled without from me. For think ye, my Brethren, that all they who have made heresies in divers parts and places, have not known in the Scriptures of God that the Church hath not been foretold but as diffused throughout the whole globe? I say the truth, dearly beloved; we are all at least Christians, or are all called Christians, and all sign ourselves with the sign of Christ; the prophets have spoken more obscurely of Christ, than of the Church: I suppose because they saw in the spirit that men would make parties against the Church, and would not have so much strife concerning Christ, concerning the Church would stir up great contentions. And hence that out of which greater contentions were to arise was more plainly predicted and openly prophesied of, that it may avail for the conviction of those who have seen and fled without.

9. For example I will mention one instance: Abraham was our father not by reason of carnal propagation, but of the imitation of faith. Righteous and well-pleasing to God, by faith he begat a son, Isaac, who had been promised to him, of Sarah his wife being barren, in his old age: this same son he was commanded to offer up to God, he doubted not, nor disputed, nor argued about God's command, nor thought that evil which The Best could enjoin. He led his son to be offered up, placed upon him the wood for the sacrifice, came to the spot, raised his right hand to strike him, lowered it at His prohibition at Whose command he had lifted it up; he who had obeyed to strike the blow, obeyed to spare; every where obedient, never fearful; but that the sacrifice might be completed and they might not go away without blood, a ram was found caught in a thicket by his horns; it was offered up,

the sacrifice was accomplished. Search what this means: it is a figure of Christ wrapped up in a mystery. Now that it may be seen, it is examined: that it may be seen, it is thoroughly discussed that what is wrapped up may be unrolled. Isaac as the only beloved son, having the type of the Son of God, carrying the wood for himself, as Christ carried the cross. Finally, that very ram signified Christ. For what is it to be caught by the horns, but in a manner to be crucified? This is a figure of Christ. Forthwith the Church was to be preached; the Head having been fore-announced, the Body was to be fore-announced too. The Spirit of God began, God began to wish to preach the Church to Abraham, and took away all figure. He was preaching Christ in figure, He preached the Church openly; for He saith to Abraham, Because thou hast obeyed My voice, and hast not spared thy beloved son, for My sake, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the sea, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. And almost every where Christ is preached by the prophets in some cover of a mystery, the Church openly; that they even might see her who were to rise against her, and this wickedness might be fulfilled in them which the Psalm foretold, They that did see me, fled without from me. They went out from us, but they were not of us: this the Apostle John said of them.

10. Ver. 12. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart. I have been forgotten, I have fallen into oblivion, they that saw me have forgotten me; they have forgotten me, and so forgotten me as if I were dead from their hearts. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart. I have become as a lost vessel. What is this, I have become as a lost vessel? He was toiling, and profiting none: he saw that he was a vessel, and profited none, and he saith that he is as it were a lost vessel.

11. Ver. 13. For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circle. Many dwell by in my circle, and blame me daily. How many evil words do they speak against wicked Christians—evil words which reach to all Christians. For does he, who speaks evil of, or blames, Christians, does he say, “See what bad Christians do?” No, but, “See what Christians do.” He makes no separation, does not discriminate. Yet they say this, who dwell by in a circle; that is, who go round about and do not enter. Why go they round

about and do not enter? Because they love the wheel of time. They do not enter into truth, because they do not love eternity: devoted to things temporal, as it were fast bound to a wheel; of whom it is said elsewhere, Make their princes as a wheel; and again, The ungodly walk in a circle. Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul. What is, they have conspired that they might take my soul? That I might consent to their wickednesses. For it is a little matter for those that speak evil and do not enter in, that they do not enter in; they would moreover cast men out hence by their rebuking. If they have cast thee out of the Church, they have taken thy soul; that is, have obtained thy consent, and thou wilt be in a circle, not in rest.

12. But I, amidst those reproaches, amidst those scandals, amidst those evils, amidst these seductions, ungodlinesses without and perversenesses within, when I was looking for righteous men and seeking whom to imitate, and there were none, what did I do? what counsel did I find? (Ver. 14.) But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord. Nothing more healthful, nothing more secure. Thou wast wishing to imitate some one, thou didst find him not good. Away with this imitation. Thou didst seek another; something or other displeased thee; thou didst seek a third, and he too did not please; what, because this one and that one did not please, shalt thou too be lost? Take away thy hope from man, for cursed be every one who putteth his hope in man. If thou look still to man, and seekest to imitate him and depend on him, thou dost wish still to be fed with milk, and thou wilt become a breast-bred, as those children are called who suck longer than they ought. For to use milk, to wish food to be passed into one as it were through the flesh,—this is to live by man. Get strength for the table, thence take nourishment from whence he took it or perchance did not take it. Perhaps thou hast to thy profit fallen in with a bad one whom thou thoughtest good, that so thou mightest find bitterness as it were in thy mother's milk, and so by that distaste be repelled, and attracted to stronger food. For nurses act thus to the breast-bred, place something bitter on the nipples of their breasts; by which infants being disgusted, refuse the breast, and crave after the table. Therefore let him say, But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God. Thou art my God. Let Donatus retire, Cæcilianus retire; neither the one or the other is my God. I do not walk after man's name, I hold to the Name of

Christ. Hear Paul himself saying, Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I should be lost, if I were of Paul's party: how shall I not be lost, if I shall be of Donatus' party? Yes, let them retire altogether, men's names, men's charges; men's fictions. In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; I have said, Thou art my God. Not any man, but Thou art my God. One man faileth, another advanceth; my God neither faileth, nor advanceth; nor hath the Perfect One any whither to advance, nor the Eternal any whither to fail. I said to the Lord, Thou art my God.

13. Ver. 15. In Thy Hands are my lots. Not in hands of men, but in Thy Hands. What are these lots? How lots? When we hear the word lots, we must not look out for lot-diviners. For the lot is no evil thing, but it is an event, in human doubt, indicating the Divine will. For so the Apostles cast lots, when Judas perished after betraying his Lord, and, as it was written of him, He went to his own place; then began search to be made, who should be ordained in his place, two were chosen by man's judgment, and of the two, one was chosen by Divine judgment. God was consulted concerning the two, which of them it would be, and the lot fell upon Matthias. What then is, In Thy Hands are my lots? By lots, to the best of my opinion, he expressed the grace whereby we are saved. Why does he call the grace of God by the name of lot? Because in a lot there is no choice, but the will of God. For when it is said, this man does so, that man does not, there is an estimate of deserts; and when deserts are estimated, there is choice, not lot. But since God hath found no deserts of ours, He hath saved us by the lot of His own will, because He willed, not because we were worthy. This is a lot. With much significance upon that vesture of the Lord woven from the top, which signifies the eternity of love, when it could not be divided by the persecutors was the lot cast. By them to whom it came it signified those who seem to attain to the lot of the Saints. By grace ye are saved through faith, saith the Apostle. By grace ye are saved through faith, and this not of yourselves. (Recognise the lot.) And this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, (as if ye did any good, and so were worthy of attaining thereunto;) not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works. This so to say hidden lot is the will of God; it is a lot among mankind, a lot coming from

the hidden will of God, with Whom there is no unrighteousness. For He accepteth no man's person, but His hidden justice is to thee a lot.

14. Mark therefore, dearly Beloved, see, how this very thing is confirmed by the Apostle Peter. When that Simon, the sorcerer, having been baptized by Philip, continued with him, believing the Divine miracles which were performed in his sight; the Apostles came to Samaria, where this sorcerer also had himself believed, and where he had been baptized; the Apostles laid their hands on the baptized, and they received the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues; Simon wondered, and was astounded at so great a Divine miracle, that at the laying on of men's hands the Holy Ghost came and filled men; and he longed for this, not grace, but power; not whereby he might be set free, but whereby he might be puffed up. But when he longed for this, and pride and devilish ungodliness, and exaltation which deserved a fall, had filled his heart, he said to the Apostles, How much money would you take of me, that men may receive the Holy Ghost at the laying on of my hands too? He who was seeking after things of this world, who was dwelling by in a circle, thought that for money he could buy the gift of God. He who thought that he could by money procure the Holy Ghost, judged the Apostles also to be covetous, as he was himself ungodly and proud. Forthwith Peter said, Thy money go into perdition with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this faith; that is, thou dost not belong to this grace, which we all receive freely, because thou dost think to buy that which is given freely. Now from this, that it is given freely, it is called a lot. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this faith. I have said thus much, that we might not be alarmed at what he saith, In Thy Hands are my lots. For what are lots? The Church's inheritance. To what extent is the Church's inheritance? Within what bounds? Even unto all bounds. I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the boundaries of the earth for thy possession. Let not man promise me some small portion or other; O my God, in Thy Hands are my lots. Let this suffice you, dearly Beloved, for the present; the remainder in the Lord's Name and with His help we will make good to-morrow.

SERMON III

1. The remainder of this Psalm, on which we have already delivered two discourses, is somewhat more than a third part of it, and we see that to-day our task must be fulfilled. Wherefore I beg of you, dearly Beloved, to be content that we do not dwell on the plainer words of it, that those parts may occupy us which it is necessary to explain. For there are many things which occur spontaneously to the minds of the faithful, many which need a brief hint, while there are some, though more infrequent, on which much labour must be bestowed that they may be understood. That the time then may suffice both for your strength and mine, see how evident these parts are, and recognise them without further delay together with us, and praise God in them with us; and if the Psalm pray, do ye pray; and if it lament, do ye lament; and if it joy, do ye rejoice; and if it hope, do ye hope; and if it fear, do ye fear. For all that is here written, is a mirror for us.

2. Ver. 15. Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies and from them that persecute me. Let us say this, yea let each one, for his own enemies, say this. For good it is, and we ought to pray that God would deliver us from the hands of our enemies. But we must understand for what enemies we are to pray, and what to pray against. Men, who are our enemies, whatsoever they be, must not be held in hatred, lest, when a bad man hates a bad man, from whom he is suffering, there be two bad men. Let the good man love even the bad man from whom he suffers; that there be at all events but one bad man. Those are the enemies against whom we must pray, the devil and his angels; they envy us the kingdom of heaven, they would not that we should ascend up whence they have been cast down; from these let us pray that our soul be delivered. For even when men are stirred up against us, they are made the instruments of these. Wherefore the Apostle Paul, warning us how guarded we ought to be against our enemies, saith to the servants of God who were suffering tribulations, and that questionless by the dissensions, unfairnesses, enmities of men, We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, that is, not against men, but against princes and powers and the rulers of the world. What world? The heavens and the earth? God forbid. There is no ruler of this world but the Creator. But what world doth he mean? The lovers of the world. In fine, he goes on in continuation and explains, when I say of the world, I mean of this darkness. What darkness forsooth, but unbelievers and ungodly? For when from ungodly and

unbelievers they have been made godly and believers, the same Apostle addressed them thus, For ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord. Against spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places, saith he, against the devil and his angels ye fight: your enemies ye see not and ye conquer. Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute Me.

3. Ver. 16. Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant; save me in Thy mercy. We were saying before, if such of you as were present, dearly beloved, remember yesterday's discourse, that those are the greatest persecutors of the Church who being Christians will not live good lives. For through these the Church incurs obloquy, and from them sustains enmity: when they are reprov'd, when they are not permitted to live evilly, when they are dealt with even by a word, they meditate evil in their hearts, and seek an opportunity of breaking out. Among them is the Psalmist mourning, and so are we if we will; for they are the more numerous, and amidst their great numbers the good are scarcely seen as grains of wheat in the floor, by which nevertheless when they are cleansed the Lord's garners are to be filled. Therefore in the midst of these the Psalmist mourning, saith, Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant. For a sort of confusion is supposed, when all are called Christians: and good livers and evil livers all are marked with the same mark, all draw near to one altar, all are washed in one baptism, all utter the same Lord's prayer, all are present at the celebration of the same mysteries. When are they that mourn distinguished, and they for whom they mourn, except He make His face to shine upon His servants? What then is, Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant? Let it appear that I belong to Thee; and let not the ungodly Christian say so too, that he belongs to Thee, lest I shall have said to Thee in vain in another Psalm, Judge me, O God, and divide my cause from the ungodly people. What he said there, Divide my cause, he expresses here, Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant. And nevertheless that he too be not proud, and seem as it were to justify himself, he goes on to say, Save me in Thy mercy. That is, not in mine own righteousness, not in my merits, but in Thy mercy; not because I am worthy, but because Thou art merciful. Hear me, not according to judicial severity, but according to most merciful goodness. Save me in Thy mercy.

4. Ver. 17. O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. He hath pleaded a weighty cause, Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. Wouldest Thou that he should be confounded who hath called upon Thee? Wouldest Thou it should be said, Where is He in Whom he trusted? But who even of the very ungodly doth not call upon God? Unless then in some special way he said, I have called upon Thee, which cannot be common with the many, he would by no means venture to claim so great a reward from this calling upon God. For God might answer him after a sort in thought, and say, “Why dost thou ask of Me that thou mayest not be confounded? Wherefore? Because thou hast called upon Me? Do not men daily call upon Me, that they may fulfil it may be the adulteries which they lust after? Do not men daily call upon Me, that those may die from whom they are expecting an inheritance? Do not men daily call upon Me, who are devising some fraud, that they may execute it with a prosperous issue? How then dost thou claim so great a reward as to say, Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee? All those men it is true call, but do not call upon Thee. Thou dost call upon God, when thou dost call God unto thyself. For this is to call upon Him, to call Him unto thyself, to invite Him, so to say, into the home of thine heart. Now thou wouldest not dare to invite any householder merely, unless thou first knewest how to prepare an habitation for him. For what if God say to thee, “Lo, thou hast called upon Me, I come to Thee. Where shall I enter in? Shall I bear this great filth of thy conscience? If thou wast to invite My servant into thine house, wouldest thou not first take care to cleanse it? Thou dost call Me into thine heart, and it is full of rapine. The place into which God is called is full of blasphemies, is full of adulteries, is full of frauds, is full of evil lusts; and dost thou call upon Me?” Of such men in short what saith the Psalm in another place? They have not called upon the Lord. And in very truth they have called, and yet they have not called upon Him. I say briefly, since the question has arisen how a man can claim so great a reward, by alleging one only merit, in saying, for I have called upon Thee, when we see that God is called upon by so many bad men; the question has arisen, and we must not pass from it: I say briefly then to the covetous man, Dost thou call upon God. Why dost thou call upon God? That He may give thee gain? Thou dost call then upon gain, not upon God. Because thou canst not have this gain, which thou covetest, by thy servant, because thou canst not have it by thy tenant, by thy

client, by thy friend, by thy satellite, thou dost call upon God, thou makest God the minister of thy gain. God is held cheap by thee. Wouldest thou call upon God? Call upon Him for His own sake. Thou covetous one! is it a little thing to thee if God Himself fill thee? If God come to thee without gold and silver, wouldest thou have none of Him? What then of those things which God hath made is sufficient for thee, for whom God Himself sufficeth not?" With good reason then doth the Psalmist pray, Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. Call ye upon the Lord, Brethren, if ye would not be confounded. For the Psalmist dreads a confusion of some sort, of which he spoke in the former part of the Psalm, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be put to confusion for ever. For that ye may know that he fears this confusion, what did he add when he had said, Let me not be confounded for ever, for I have called upon Thee? Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down to hell: with that confusion, of course, for ever.

5. Ver. 18. Let the deceitful lips be made dumb, which speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. This Righteous One is Christ. Many lips speak iniquity against Him in pride and contempt. How in pride and contempt? Because He, Who came in such humility, appeared contemptible to the proud. Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by them that love honours, He Who endured so great reproaches? Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by these that so highly prize this life, He Who died? Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by those who think the death of condemnation on the Cross shameful, He Who was crucified? Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by the rich, He, Who spent a life of poverty in the world, when He was the Creator of the world? All these things which men love, because Christ would not have them, that He might shew by His not having them that they were to be contemned, not because He had it not in His power to possess them, all that love these things condemn Him. And whosoever of His servants would follow His footsteps, to walk himself in that lowliness in which He hath learnt that his Lord walked, is contemned in Christ, as a member of Christ; and when the Head and the members are contemned, whole Christ Himself is contemned, for this whole Righteous One is the Head and the Body. And it must needs be that Whole Christ Himself be despised by the proud and

the ungodly, that that may befall them which is said, Let the deceitful lips be made dumb, which speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. When will those lips be made dumb? In this life? Never. Day by day do they cry out against Christians, most of all against the lowly, day by day do they blaspheme, day by day do they bark, multiply punishment by those tongues, with which they shall thirst in hell, and long in vain for a drop of water. It is not now then that these men's lips are made dumb. But when? When their iniquities shall lead them over on the contrary part; as it is said in the book of Wisdom, Then shall the righteous stand in great boldness against those that have afflicted them. Then shall they say, These are they whom we had sometimes in derision and in a proverb of reproach. How are they numbered among the sons of God, and their lot is among the Saints? We fools counted their life madness. Then shall their lips be made dumb, who speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. For just now they say to us, Where is your God? What do ye worship? What do ye see? Ye believe, and ye are distressed; that ye are distressed is certain, what ye hope for is uncertain. When that we hope for shall come in certainty, then shall the deceitful lips be made dumb.

6. Wherefore see what follows, for that the deceitful lips shall be made dumb, which speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. The Psalmist, who thus lamenteth, hath given heed, he hath seen the good things of God within in the spirit, hath seen these good things which are seen in secret, but are not seen by the ungodly. He seeth that they therefore speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt, because they have skill to see the good things of this life, but the good things of the life to come they skill not even to imagine. But that he might set forth the value of good things of the life to come to men whom He enjoins to endure, not love things present, he cried out and added,

Ver. 19. How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord. Here if an ungodly man should say, "Where is this multitude of sweetness?" I will answer, How can I shew thee the multitude of this sweetness, who hast lost thy palate from the fever of iniquity? Didst thou not know what honey is, thou wouldest not cry out, "how good it is," unless thou hadst tasted it. Thou hast no palate of the heart for tasting these good things: what shall I

do for thee? How shall I shew thee? He is not one to whom I can say, Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee. What is, “hast hid for them?” Thou hast preserved for them, not denied to them, to the end that they alone may attain unto it, (for that is good which cannot be common to the just and to the ungodly,) to the end that they may by fear attain unto it. For as long as they still fear, they too have not yet attained; but they believe that they shall attain, and they begin with fear. For nothing is sweeter than the immortality of wisdom; but the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee.

7. But Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee in sight of the sons of men. Not “Thou hast perfected it in sight of the sons of men,” but, “for those that hope in Thee in sight of the sons of men;” that is, Thou hast perfected Thy sweetness for those that hope in Thee in sight of the sons of men. As the Lord saith, Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father. Therefore if thou trust in the Lord, trust before men; lest haply thou hide this trust of thine in thine heart, and fear to confess Him when it is objected to thee as a crime that thou art a Christian. But to whom is it objected now that he is a Christian? There are so few left who are not Christians, that it may rather be objected to them that they are not Christians, than that they should dare to object to any that they are Christians. Notwithstanding I say to you, my Brethren, begin, whosoever thou art that hearest me, to live as a Christian, and see if it be not objected to thee even by Christians, Christians that is in name, not in life and conversation. No man feels this but he who has had trial of it. Give heed then, look well into what thou hearest. Wouldest thou live as a Christian? Wouldest thou follow the steps of thy Lord? It is objected to thee; thou art ashamed, and in thy shame thou dost leave off. Thou hast lost the way. Thou seemest to thyself to have believed with the heart unto righteousness; but thou hast lost, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. If then thou wouldest walk the way of the Lord, trust in God even in the sight of men; that is, be not ashamed for thy trust. As He liveth in thine heart, so let Him dwell in thy mouth; for not without a cause hath Christ been pleased that His mark should be imprinted on our forehead, as on the seat of shame, and that a Christian should not be ashamed at the reproach of Christ. If then

thou shalt have done this in the sight of men, if thou shalt not have been ashamed thereof before men, if thou shalt not have denied Christ in sight of the sons of men, either by word or deed, hope thou that the sweetness of God is perfected for thee. What comes next?

8. Ver. 20. Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance. What is this place? He said not, Thou wilt hide them in Thy heaven; he said not, Thou wilt hide them in paradise; he said not, Thou wilt hide them in Abraham's bosom. For the future places of the Saints are designated in Holy Scripture by many names. Let all whatsoever is out of God, be held cheap. Let Him Who defendeth us in the place of this life, be Himself our place after this life. Because even this very Psalm above saith this to Him, Be Thou unto me a God, Who protecteth me, and a house of refuge. Therefore shall we be hidden in the countenance of God. Are ye waiting to hear from me what retreat there is in the Face of God? Cleanse the heart, that He may Himself enlighten you, and He upon Whom ye call may enter in. Be thou His house, and He will be thy house; let Him dwell in thee, and thou shalt dwell in Him. If thou shalt entertain Him in this life in thy heart, He shall entertain thee after this life with His Countenance. [Thou wilt hide them, saith he. Where? In the hidden place of Thy Countenance.] From the troubling of men. For there they are not troubled when they are hid. In the hidden place of Thy Countenance they are not troubled. Is there, think ye, a man in this world so happy, as, that when he begins to hear men's reproaches because he serveth Christ, he flieth in heart to God, and beginneth to have trust in His sweetness, and enter, with his conscience, into the countenance of God from the troubling of men from whom he heareth reproaches? He doth enter doubtless, if he have wherewith to enter, that is, if this same conscience be not laden, if it make not a heavy burthen for him—at the narrow gate. Thou wilt hide them, then, in the hidden place of Thy Countenance from the troubling of men. Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues. Some time or other Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance from the troubling of men, that thenceforward no troubling of men may harrass them; but meanwhile, whilst they sojourn in this life, since they who serve thee are exposed to many contradicting tongues; what dost Thou do for them? Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle. What is the tabernacle? The Church of

the present time, for is it for this reason called a tabernacle, because as yet it sojourneth on this earth. For a tabernacle is the habitation of soldiers encamped in an expedition. These are called tabernacles. A tabernacle is not a home. Fight thou as a sojourner on thy expedition; that having been saved in thy tabernacle, thou mayest be received in glory into thy house. For thy everlasting home will be in heaven, if only thou shalt have lived well in this tabernacle. Therefore in this tabernacle Thou wilt protect them from the contradiction of tongues. Many tongues contradict, divers heresies, divers schisms make a noise, many tongues contradict the true doctrine, do thou run to the tabernacle of God, hold to the Catholic Church, depart not from the rule of truth, and thou shalt be protected in thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues.

9. Ver. 21. Blessed be the Lord, for He hath made His mercy marvellous in the city of compassing. What is the city of compassing? In Judæa alone were God's people placed, as it were, in the midst of the world, where the praises of God were celebrated, and sacrifices offered unto Him, where prophecy did not cease foretelling those future events which we now see in course of fulfilment. This people were, as it were, in the midst of the nations. This Prophet marked and saw that the Church of God should be in all nations; and because all nations were around on every side, which placed the single nation of the Jews in the midst of them, he called these nations compassing her about on every side the city of compassing. Thou didst indeed, O Lord, make Thy mercy marvellous in the city Jerusalem; there Christ suffered, there He rose again, there He ascended up into heaven, there He did many wonderful things: but greater is Thy praise, for that Thou hast made Thy mercy marvellous in the city of compassing, that is, in all nations hast spread abroad Thy mercy. Nor hast Thou kept Thine ointment in that Jerusalem, as in a vessel; but as from a broken vessel the ointment hath been poured forth throughout the world, that it might be fulfilled which is said in holy Scripture, Thy name is as ointment poured out. And so Thou hast made Thy mercy marvellous in the city of compassing. For He ascended up into heaven, He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, after ten days He sent the Holy Ghost: the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, they began to preach the wonderful works of Christ; they were stoned, slain, dispersed in flight. And when they were made to flee from thence as

from one place, as brands burning with Divine fire, they filled the whole wood of the world, kindled by the heat of the Spirit and the light of truth; and the Lord made His mercy marvellous in the city of compassing.

10. Ver. 22. I said in my ecstasy. Call to remembrance the title of the Psalm. See here is that ecstasy. Mark what he saith, I said, saith he, in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes. I said in my panic, that is, I said in my ecstasy. He saw that he was panic-struck inwardly by some great tribulation or other, such as there is no want of: he gives heed to his panic-stricken and trembling heart, and saith, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes. If I were in Thy sight, I should not fear thus: if Thou hadst Thine Eye upon me, I should not tremble thus. But as he saith in another Psalm, If I said my foot hath been moved, Thy mercy, O Lord, helped me; so at once he saith here, Therefore Thou hast heard the voice of my prayer. Because I confessed, because I said, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes, because I have not been proud, but accused my own heart, and staggering in my tribulation have cried out to Thee, Thou hast heard my prayer. That therefore hath been fulfilled which I set forth from that other Psalm. For what is here, I said in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes, is there, If I said my foot hath been moved. And what is there, Thy mercy, O Lord, helped me, is here, Therefore Thou hast heard, O Lord, the voice of my prayer. Mark that in Peter's case, He seeth the Lord walking on the water, he thinks Him a spirit: the Lord crieth out, It is I; be not afraid. Peter hath affiance, and saith, If it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. So hereby do I prove whether it be Thou, if in Thy word I am able to do as Thou art able. He saith, Come. And the word of the Bidder is made the power of the hearer. Come, saith He; and he came down: he began to go, he was going without fear, as trusting in Him; but when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid. I said in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes. And beginning to sink, he cried, Lord, I perish. And Jesus, stretching forth His hand to him, raised him up, saying, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? I said, therefore, in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes; and, as though I were now beginning to perish in the sea, Thou hast heard, O Lord, the voice of my prayer. Now Thou heardest, when I cried unto Thee. Crying unto God is not

with the voice, but with the heart. Many who are silent with the lips, cry with the heart; many clamorous with the mouth, with heart averted are able to obtain nothing. If then thou criest, cry inwardly where God heareth. When I cried unto Thee, saith he, Thou heardest the voice of my prayer.

11. Now then that he made trial, to what doth he exhort us? (Ver. 23.) Love the Lord, all ye His Saints. As if he should say, Trust me, I have made trial of it; I have had tribulations, I have called upon Him, and have not been deceived; I have hoped in God, and have not been confounded; He hath enlightened my thoughts, He hath established my fear. Love the Lord, all ye His Saints; that is, Do ye love the Lord, who love not the world, that is, all His Saints. For how do I tell him to love the Lord, who still loves the amphitheatre? How do I tell him to love the Lord, who still loves the stage-player, still loves the harlequin, still loves wine-bibbing, still loves all the pomps and all the vanities and lying madnesses of the world? I tell such, "Learn not to love, that thou mayest learn to love; turn away, that thou mayest be turned to; pour out, that thou mayest be filled." Love the Lord, all ye His Saints.

12. For the Lord will require truth. You know that now many evil doers are seen; you know that now they are puffed up in their vanities: the Lord will require truth. And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly. Bear with them until you bear them to their graves, endure them until ye are free from them; for it must needs be that the Lord who requireth truth will repay them that do exceeding proudly. Art thou at once about to ask, When will He repay? When He wills. Thou mayest be certain that He will repay; doubt not of His repaying; for the time, do not venture to give counsel to God. Assuredly He will require truth, and will repay them that do exceeding proudly. Some He will repay even here; and we have seen and learnt that He doth repay. For when they that fear the Lord are abased, if perchance they had been distinguished in some dignity of this world, though abased they have not fallen, because they have not shut out God from their hearts: God is their exaltation. Job seemed abased when he lost his property, when he lost his children; when he lost what he was keeping, when he lost those for whom he was keeping; he was left without inheritance, and what is sadder, without an heir; he was left with his wife alone, no comforter to

him, but rather the devil's helper; he seemed abased: see whether he were wretched, see whether he were not in the hidden place of God's Countenance. Naked, saith he, came I out of my mother's womb, naked shall I return into the earth. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so hath it been done. Blessed be the name of the Lord. These pearls of praise of God, whence are they? Behold him poor without, rich within. These pearls of praise of God would not proceed out of his mouth, except he had a treasure in his heart. Ye who would be rich, covet such riches as ye cannot lose even by shipwreck. Therefore, when such as these are abased, deem them not wretched. Ye are mistaken, ye know not what they possess within. Ye who love the world, judge from your own selves, because, when ye lose such things, ye are reduced to wretchedness. Do not by any means think this; they possess within wherewith to rejoice. Their Ruler is within, their Shepherd and their Comforter is within. These are they who fall miserably, even they who place their trust in this world. Their outward glitter is taken away, nothing remains within but the smoke of an evil conscience. They have no source of comfort, they have no place whither they may go abroad, they have no place whither they may return within: abandoned by the pomp of the world, void of the grace of the Spirit, they are in deed abased. And with many God dealeth thus in this life, but not with all. For if He dealt thus with none, Divine Providence would seem as it were to slumber; if He dealt thus with all, Divine long-suffering would not be preserved. Nevertheless, thou, Christian, hast learnt to forbear, not to repay vengeance. Wouldest thou avenge thyself, O Christian? Christ is not yet avenged. Hast thou suffered from the evil, and hath not He suffered? Did not He first suffer for thee, Who had no cause for suffering? For in thee tribulation is the refiner's furnace, (if so be thou art gold and not chaff,) that thou mayest be cleared of dross, not be turned into ashes.

13. Love the Lord, all ye His Saints, for the Lord will require truth, and will repay them that do exceeding proudly. But when will He repay? O that He would repay now, now would I see these men abased, and laid low! Hear what follows, Quit you like men. Do not hang down the weary hands in tribulation, let not your knees totter. (Ver. 24.) Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened. Let your heart be strengthened to endure and

bear all the ills of this life. But who are they to whom the Prophet saith, Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened? Is it to them who love the world? Nay. But listen to whom he speaketh, All ye who trust in the Lord.

PSALM 32

first exposition

To David himself; for understanding.

1. To David himself; for understanding; by which it is understood that not by the merits of works, but by the grace of God, man is delivered, confessing his sins.

2. Ver. 1. Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered: and whose sins are buried in oblivion. (Ver. 2.) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, nor is there guile in his mouth: nor has he in his mouth boastings of righteousness, when his conscience is full of sins.

3. Ver. 3. Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old: because I made not with my mouth confession unto salvation, all firmness in me has grown old in infirmity. Through my roaring all the day long: when I was ungodly and a blasphemer, crying against God, as though defending and excusing my sins.

4. Ver. 4. Because day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me: because, through the continual punishment of Thy scourges, I was turned in misery, while a thorn was fixed through me: I was made miserable by knowing my misery, being pricked with an evil conscience.

5. Ver. 5. I acknowledged my sin, and my unrighteousness have I not hid: that is, my unrighteousness have I not concealed. I said, I will confess against myself my unrighteousness to the Lord: I said, I will confess, not against God, (as in my ungodly crying, when I kept silence,) but against myself, my unrighteousness to the Lord. And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart; hearing the word of confession in the heart, before it was uttered with the voice.

6. Ver. 6. For this shall every one that is holy pray unto Thee in an acceptable time: for this wickedness of heart shall every one that is righteous pray unto Thee. For not by their own merits will they be holy, but by that acceptable time, that is, at His coming, Who redeemed us from sin. Nevertheless in the flood of great waters they shall not come nigh him: nevertheless, let none think, when the end has come suddenly, as in the days of Noah, that there remaineth a place of confession, whereby he may draw nigh unto God.

7. Ver. 7. Thou art my refuge from the pressures, which have compassed me about: Thou art my refuge from the pressure of my sins, which hath compassed my heart. O Thou, my Rejoicing, deliver me from them that compass me about: in Thee is my joy: deliver me from the sorrow, which my sins bring upon me.

8. Diapsalma. The answer of God: (ver. 8.) I will give thee understanding, and will set thee in the way, in which thou shalt go; I will give thee understanding after confession, that thou depart not from the way, in which thou shouldest go; lest thou wish to be in thine own power. I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee: so will I make sure upon thee My Love.

9. Ver. 9. Be not ye like unto horse or mule, which have no understanding: and therefore would govern themselves. But saith the Prophet, Hold in their jaws with bit and bridle. Do Thou then, O God, unto them, that will not come nigh Thee, what man doth to horse and mule, that by scourges Thou make them to bear Thy rule.

10. Ver. 10. Many are the scourges of the sinner: much is he scourged, who, confessing not his sins to God, would be his own ruler. But he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy compasseth him about; but he that trusteth in the Lord, and submitteth himself to His rule, mercy shall compass him about.

11. Ver. 11. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: be glad, and rejoice, ye righteous, not in yourselves, but in the Lord. And glory, all ye that are right in heart: and glory in Him, all ye who understand that it is right to be subject unto Him, that so ye may be placed above all things beside.

EXPOSITION II

1. A Psalm of the Grace of God, and of our justification, by no merits of ours preceding, but by the Mercy of our Lord God preventing us, highly commended by the mouth of the Apostle, as the lesson preceding this Psalm hath conveyed unto all, is undertaken by my weakness to be handled together with you, My Beloved. Wherefore first I recommend my infirmity to your prayers, as saith the Apostle, that utterance may be given unto me in the opening of my mouth, so to speak, as may be both to me not dangerous to utter, and for you wholesome to hear. For the human mind doubting and wavering between confession of infirmity, and the boldness of presumption, is ever buffeted on this side and on that, and in such wise driven, that yet to fall to either side is to be cast headlong. For if one hath wholly given himself up to his own infirmity, and hath inclined to such thoughts as to say, The Mercy of God to all sinners, in whatever sins persisting, so they believe that God delivereth, God pardoneth, is so sure at the last, that none can perish of ungodly believers, that is, that none can perish of those who say to themselves, Whatever I do, with whatever crimes and wickednesses I be defiled, how much soever I sin, God delivereth me by His Mercy, because I have trusted in Him. Whoever then saith that none of such can perish, by evil thoughts is led to look for impunity of sin; and the Righteous God, to Whom the Psalmist sings of Mercy and Judgment, not Mercy only, but also Judgment, finds one mispresuming of himself, and abusing God's Mercy to his own destruction, and so must needs condemn him. Such a thought therefore casteth a man headlong: but if any, terrified thereby, hath lifted up himself to a certain bold presumption, and hath presumed on his own strength, his own righteousness, and hath proposed in his heart to fulfil all righteousness, and so to do all things which are commanded in the Law, as in none to offend, and to have his own life in his own power so that he nowhere slip at all, nowhere fail, nowhere stumble, nowhere be in the dark, and attribute this to himself, and to the power of his own will: even if haply he hath fulfilled all things which seem righteous in the eyes of men, so that nothing be found in his life, which can be reprov'd by men, that very presumption and proud boasting God condemneth. What then, if a man justify himself, and presume on his own righteousness? He falleth. If one considering and weighing his own infirmity, and presuming on God's

mercy, neglect to cleanse his life from sins, and hath plunged himself in all the depths of wickedness; he also falleth.

The presumption of righteousness is as the right hand, the thought of impunity of sin is as the left. Let us hear the voice of God, saying to us, Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left. Presume not of thy righteousness, so to reign; presume not of God's Mercy unto sin. From both the Divine command recalleth thee, both from this height, and from that depth. Hither if thou ascend, thou wilt fall headlong; thither if thou sink, thou wilt drown. Turn not (saith He) to the right hand, nor to the left. Again I say briefly, what ye should all keep fixed in mind; Presume not of thy righteousness, so to reign; presume not of God's Mercy unto sin. Thou wilt answer, What then shall I do? This very Psalm teacheth us, which being read through and handled, I trust, God's Mercy assisting us, we shall see that way wherein we either already walk, or which we ought to hold. Let every one according to his own measure hearken, and as he shall be conscious unto himself, either lament, if needing correction, or rejoice, if to be approved. If he find himself to have strayed from the way, let him return to walk therein; if he find himself in the way, let him walk on, that he may arrive at the end. Let none out of the way be proud, none in the way slothful.

2. Now that this Psalm doth relate to that grace whereby we are Christians, the Apostle Paul hath testified; wherefore we have chosen to have that very lesson read unto you. This shewed the Apostle, when he was commending the righteousness which is by faith, against those who boasted of the righteousness which is by works, thus saying, What shall we then say that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. God Himself avert from us such glorying, and let us rather hearken to that saying, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For many glory in their own works, and we find many pagans therefore unwilling to become Christians, because they are in a manner satisfied with their own good lives. To live well is needful, saith one. What will Christ command of me? That I should live well? I live well already; wherein is Christ necessary to me? I commit no murder, no theft, no violence; I covet not another's goods; I am defiled with no adultery: for let any thing be found in my life worthy of

blame, and he, who can blame it, shall make me a Christian. He hath whereof to glory; but not before God. But not so our father, Abraham. For this passage of Scripture would direct our attention to this very thing. For because we confess, and such is our belief concerning the holy Patriarch, who pleased God, that we both say and know that he hath whereof to glory before God; therefore saith the Apostle, It is evidently known unto us and manifest, that Abraham hath whereof to glory before God: But if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God: but he hath whereof to glory before God: therefore is he not justified by works. If then Abraham is not justified by works, whereby is he justified? The answer follows, for saith he, For what saith the Scripture? that is, Whereby saith the Scripture that Abraham is justified? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Therefore Abraham was justified by Faith.

3. But whoever hears this, Not by works, but by faith, must beware of that gulf, of which I spoke. Thou seest then that by faith, not by works, is Abraham justified; therefore (sayest thou) I will do what I will, because, though I have not good works, but only trust in God, that is counted to me for righteousness. If so one hath spoken and determined, he falleth and is drowned; if yet he thinketh and wavereth, he is perilled. But the Scripture of God, and its true understanding, not only when perilled freeth him from peril, but even when drowned raiseth him out of the deep. I answer, therefore, as against the Apostle, and say of Abraham himself, what we find indeed in the Epistle of another Apostle, who wished to correct certain men that had misunderstood this Apostle. For James in his Epistle, writing against those who would not do good works, presuming on faith only, commended the works of that same Abraham, as Paul his faith: and the two Apostles are not contrary to each other. But he speaks of a work known unto all, that Abraham offered unto God his own son for a sacrifice. A great work! but of faith. I laud the superstructure of works, but I see in faith the foundation: I laud the fruit of good works, but I discern in faith the root. But if Abraham had done this without a right faith, it would have profited him nothing, however good that work might be. Again, if Abraham had so held his faith, as that when God commanded him to offer up to Him his son for a sacrifice, he should say with himself, "I do it not, and yet I believe that God

will deliver me, even despising His commands;" his faith without works had been dead, and had remained dry and barren as a root without fruit.

4. What then? Ought no works to be placed before faith, so that before faith one may be said to do good works? (No,) for those very good works, so called, before faith, although they may seem to men worthy of praise, are nothing worth. To me they seem to be such, as great strength, and the swiftest speed, out of the way. Let none then count his works before faith good; where faith was not, good works were not. For it is the intention that maketh the work good; faith that directs the intention. Attend, not so much to what one doth, as to what, in doing it, he hath regard, whither he is directing his arms which steer so excellently. For suppose a man to steer a ship right well, and yet to have lost his course; what avails, that he holds the topsail bravely, moves it bravely, keeps the head to the waves, careth lest the sides be beaten in, hath so great strength that he turn the ship whither he will, and whence he will? And suppose it be said to him, Where goest thou? and he say, I know not; or say not, I know not, but, I am going to such a port; and yet goeth not to that port, but hurrieth on to the rocks: doth not such an one, the more he seemeth to himself active and powerful in steering the ship, so much the more dangerously steer it, so as through haste to bring it to shipwreck at last? Such is he who runs the best, out of the way. Were it not better and more tolerable, that the pilot should be somewhat weaker, so as to direct the ship with some labour and difficulty, and yet hold his right and due course; and that the other again should walk even somewhat slowly and feebly, yet in the way, than out of the way run bravely? He then is the best who both holds the way, and walks well therein; but he is next in hope, who though he halteth somewhat, yet not so much as to go astray, or stand still, but advances though by little and little; for haply there is hope that he will arrive whither, though slowly, he tendeth.

5. Therefore, Brethren, by faith was Abraham justified; but if works did not precede his faith, yet they followed it. For can thy faith be barren? If thou art not barren, thy faith is not barren. Thou hast believed somewhat of evil, and in the fire of thy evil hast burned up the root of thy faith. Therefore hold fast thy faith, and work. But thou sayest, The Apostle Paul said not this. Nay, this said the Apostle Paul, Faith, which worketh by love; and in

another place, Therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law; and in another, For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. See if he does not will thee to work, who saith, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not covet; and if there is any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Doth love permit thee to do any evil to him whom thou lovest? But perhaps thou only doest no evil, and dost not farther any good. Doth love then permit thee not to do whatever thou canst for him whom thou lovest? Is not that Love which prayeth even for enemies? Doth he then desert his friend who blesseth his enemies? Therefore if faith be without love, it will be without works. But lest thou think much of the works of faith, add unto it hope and love, and think not what thou workest. Love itself cannot be empty. For what is there in any man that worketh at all, even to evil, except love? Shew me the love that is empty and doth no work. Uncleaness, adulteries, violence, murders, every luxury; doth not love work these? Therefore cleanse thy love: the waters flowing into the draught, turn into the garden: what desires it had for the world, the same let it have for the world's Creator. Do we say unto you, Love nothing? God forbid. Dull, dead, hateful, miserable will ye be, if ye love nothing. Love, but look well what ye love. The love of God, the love of our neighbour, is called charity: the love of the world, the love of this life, is called covetousness. Let covetousness be bridled, charity stirred up. For the very charity of him that doeth good works, gives him hope out of a good conscience; for a good conscience produceth hope; as an evil conscience is wholly in despair, so a good conscience is wholly in hope. And so there will be these three, of which the Apostle speaketh, faith, hope, charity. Also in another place speaketh he of three likewise, but instead of hope he has placed a good conscience. For the end of the commandment, said he; What is the end of the commandment? That by which the commandments are perfected, not whereby they are destroyed. For in one sense, we say, The meat is ended; in another, The coat is ended, which was being woven; meat is ended, so that it be not; a coat is ended, so that it be made perfect: and yet both in this we say the end, and in that. Here then he calleth not that the end of the commandment, whereby as it were the commandments perish, but that whereby they are perfected and

consummated, not consumed. The end then is for these three: The end of the commandment, (saith he,) is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. Instead of hope, he placed a good conscience. For he hath hope, who beareth a good conscience. But he whom an evil conscience pricketh, draws back from hope, and expects nothing for himself but condemnation: that he may then hope to reign, let him have a good conscience; and that he may have a good conscience, let him believe, and work. That he believeth, is of faith; that he worketh, is of charity. In one place, then, the Apostle begins from faith, faith, hope, charity; in the other he begins from Charity itself; Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. We but now began from the middle, from conscience itself and from hope. Who wishes, I say, to have good hope, let him have a good conscience; and that he may have a good conscience, let him believe, and work. From the middle we go to the beginning and end; let him believe, and work. That he believeth, is of faith; that he worketh, is of charity.

6. How then saith the Apostle, that man is justified without works, by faith; when in another place he saith, Faith which worketh by love? Let us then oppose not the Apostle James to Paul, but Paul himself to Paul, and say unto him, Here thou permittest us in some wise to sin with impunity, where thou sayest, We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law. There thou sayest, Faith which worketh by love. How am I here made as it were secure, even if I have not worked; but there seem to have neither hope nor faith itself aright, unless I have worked by love? I hear thyself speak, O Apostle; certainly thou wouldest here commend unto me faith without works; but the work of faith is love, which love can not so be void, but that it must both work no evil, and work whatever it can of good. For what doth love? Depart from evil, and do good. This faith then without works thou commendest; and in another place thou sayest, Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. If, then, faith without charity profiteth nothing, but where charity is, needs must that it works, faith itself worketh by love. How then shall man be justified by faith without works? The Apostle himself answers, For this cause said I this to thee, O man, lest thou shouldest seem as it were to presume of thy works, and for the merit of thy works to have received the

grace of faith. Therefore presume not of works before faith. Thou knowest that faith found thee a sinner; although faith given made thee righteous, it found ungodly whom it made righteous. To him that believeth, (saith he,) on Him That justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. If the ungodly is justified, from being ungodly he becometh righteous: if from being ungodly he becometh righteous, what are the works of the ungodly? The ungodly may boast indeed his works, and say, I give to the poor, I take nothing from any, I covet not another man's wife, I do no murder, I do no wrong to any, that which is pledged with me, no man witnessing, I restore; all this may he say; I ask whether he be godly or ungodly. And how am I ungodly, saith he, doing all these things? Even as they, of whom it was said, They served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. How art thou ungodly? What if for all these good works, thou either hope for that which is to be hoped for, but not from Him from Whom alone it is to be hoped for; or hope for that which is not to be hoped for, even from Him from Whom eternal life is to be hoped for? For thy good works thou hast hoped for some earthly happiness; thou art ungodly. That is not the reward of faith. A precious thing is faith, to a vile thing hast thou devoted it. Ungodly, then, art thou, and vain are those works of thine. Though in good works, thou mayest move thine arms, and seem to steer the ship exceeding well, thou art running on the rocks. What if thou hope for that which is to be hoped, that is, life eternal, but not from the Lord God, through Jesus Christ, through Whom alone eternal life is given, but thinkest that thou canst arrive at life eternal through the host of Heaven, through the Sun and Moon, through the Powers of the air, of the sea, of the earth, of the stars? Thou art ungodly. Believe in Him That justifieth the ungodly, that thy good works may be indeed good works: for neither call I them good, as long as they proceed not from a good root. What is this? either thou hopest for life temporal from God the Eternal, or life eternal from devils; on either side thou art ungodly. Correct thy faith; direct thy faith aright, direct thy way aright; and if thou have good feet, walk on secure, run, thou holdest the way. The better thou runnest, the more speedily wilt thou arrive. But perhaps thou haltest somewhat. At least wander not out of the way; though but slowly, thou wilt arrive: stand not still; turn not back; go not astray.

7. What then? Who are blessed? Not they in whom God findeth no sin, for He findeth it in all; For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. If, then, sins are found in all, it remains that none are blessed, but they whose sins are forgiven. This, then, hath the Apostle thus commended; Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. And to him that worketh, that is, presumeth of works, and saith that for their merits the grace of faith is given him, is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt. What is this, but that our reward is called Grace? If it be Grace, it is given gratis. What meaneth, It is given gratis? Gratis is evident. Thou hast done nothing good, and yet forgiveness of thy sins is given thee. Thy works are considered, and are found all evil. If God should pay thee what is due to those works, He would surely condemn thee. For the wages of sin is death. To evil works what is due? What but condemnation? To good works what is due? The Kingdom of Heaven. But thou art found in evil works; if that be paid thee, which is thy due, thou must needs be punished. What befalls then? God payeth thee not the punishment due, but giveth thee Grace not due. He owed vengeance, He giveth mercy. Thou beginnest then to be in faith, through mercy; now thy faith, having added to itself hope and love, beginneth to do good works: but even so glory not, nor lift up thyself: remember by Whom thou art set in the way; remember that with strong and swift feet thou wast wandering; remember that when thou wast languishing and lying in the way half dead, thou wast set upon a beast, and brought to an inn. But to him that worketh, saith he, is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt. If thou wouldest be an alien unto Grace, boast of thy merits. Yet He seeth what is in thee, and knoweth what He oweth to each. But to him that worketh not—What? Suppose here some ungodly sinner; see, he worketh not. What then? He believeth on Him That justifieth the ungodly. But in that he doeth not good works, he is ungodly: though he seem to do good works, yet, because without faith, neither are they to be called good. But believing on Him That justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. But what righteousness? That of faith, which good works have not preceded, but which good works do follow.

8. Attend ye then; otherwise by misunderstanding ye will plunge yourselves into that gulf of sinning with impunity; but I am free, as the Apostle himself was, from all who misunderstood him, free. For they misunderstood him wilfully; lest good works should follow. Be not ye, my Brethren, in the number of such. It is said in a certain Psalm of a certain man such as this, that is, of a class of men as it were under the name of one; He hath refused to understand, that he might do good. It is not said, He could not understand. It behoveth you then to be willing to understand, that ye may do good. For so ye will not fail of clear understanding. What is the clear understanding? Let none boast his good works before faith, none be slothful in good works after faith received. God sheweth mercy then to all ungodly, and justifieth them, through faith.

9. Ver. 1, 2. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. Now the Psalm beginneth, and therewith beginneth understanding. Understanding then or intelligence is this, to know that thou oughtest not to boast thyself of thine own merits, nor to presume upon impunity of sin. For so is the title of this Psalm, To David himself; for understanding. This Psalm is called a Psalm of Understanding. The first understanding then is this, to know thyself a sinner. The understanding next following is, that when through faith thou hast begun to do good works by love, thou impute not this to thine own strength, but to the grace of God. So will not guile be in thy heart, that is, in thine inward mouth; nor wilt thou have one thing on thy lips, another in thy thoughts. Thou wilt not be of those Pharisees of whom it is said, Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, for ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Whoso then, being unrighteous, pretendeth himself righteous; is not he full of hypocrisy? He is not that Nathaniel, of whom the Lord saith, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. But whence was there no guile in that Nathaniel? When, saith he, thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. Under the fig-tree was he; under the condition of flesh was he. If he was under the condition of flesh, because he was holden by original sin, under that fig-tree was he, wherein one groaneth in another Psalm, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity. But He Who came with Grace, saw him. What is, saw him? Had mercy on him.

Therefore He so commendeth a man without guile, as to commend His own grace in him. When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. I saw thee. What is that so great, unless thou understand it as said in a particular manner? What is it so great, to see a man under a fig-tree? If Christ had not seen under that fig-tree the human race, we had either withered away wholly, or been as the Pharisees, in whom was guile, that is, who justified themselves in words, but in deeds were wicked: and so there would be found in us leaves only, no fruit. For such a fig-tree when Christ saw, He cursed it, and it withered away. "I see," said He, "leaves only," that is, words only, "without fruit. Let it wither away," saith He, "that it have not even leaves." And taketh He away words also? Yes, for a withered tree cannot have even leaves. So then were the Jews; the Pharisees were that tree: words they had, deeds they had not. According to the sentence of the Lord, they purchased to themselves barrenness. Let Christ then see us under the fig-tree, let Him see in our flesh the fruit of good works, lest we under His curse wither away. And since all is imputed to His Grace, not to our merits, Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered; not they in whom are not found sins, but they whose sins are covered. Are sins covered? they are hidden, they are blotted out. If God hath covered sins, He hath willed not to advert unto them; if He hath willed not to advert unto them, He hath willed not to animadvert upon them; if He hath willed not to animadvert upon them, He hath willed not to punish; if He hath willed not to punish, He hath willed not to acknowledge them, He hath willed rather to pardon them. Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Neither so understand ye what he said, Whose sins are covered, as though they should be in the same, and yet live. Why then spake he of sins covered? That they might not be seen. For what else is it for God to see sins, but to punish sins? That thou mightest know that this it is for God to see sins, namely, to punish sins, what is said unto Him? Turn Thy face from my sins. Thy sins then let Him not see, that He may see thee. How see thee? As He saw Nathaniel; When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. The shade of the fig-tree hindered not the Eyes of God's mercy.

10. And in whose spirit there is no guile. But they truly who will not confess their sins, labour in vain in defence of their sins. And the more they

labour in defence of their sins, boasting their own merits, seeing not their own iniquities, the more their strength and courage faileth. For he is strong, who not in himself but in God is strong; according to that saying, I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me; and He said unto me, My Grace is sufficient for thee. My Grace, saith He, not thy strength. My Grace, saith He, is sufficient for thee, for My Strength is made perfect in weakness. Whence the same saith in another place, When I am weak, then am I strong. He then who would be strong, as presuming upon himself, and boasting his own merits, of whatever sort they be, will be like that Pharisee, who, what he said that he had received from God, yet proudly boasted of this: I thank Thee, saith he. Observe, my Brethren, what kind of pride God bringeth to notice; truly such as can enter into even a righteous man, such as can creep over even one of good hopes. I thank Thee, said he; therefore when he said, I thank Thee, he confessed that he had received from Him what he had. For what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Therefore, I thank Thee, said he; I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. Whence then was he proud? Not because he thanked God in his own good works, but because he exalted himself above the other for his good works.

11. Attend, Brethren; for wherefore the Lord began to speak that same parable, the Evangelist hath premised. For when Christ had said, When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? then, lest there should arise certain heretics, who, considering and thinking the whole world as fallen, (for all heretics are among the few, and of the smaller part,) should boast of themselves, that that remained still in them, which had perished to all the world beside; then immediately when the Lord had said, When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? the Evangelist added and said, And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican, and the rest, which ye know. The Pharisee, then, said; I thank Thee. But where was he proud? In that he despised others. Whence provest thou this? From his own words. The Pharisee, saith he, despised him that stood afar off, unto whom, confessing his sins, God drew nigh. The Publican, saith he, stood afar off. But God stood not afar off from him. Why stood not God afar off from

him? Because, as is said in another place, The Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart. See if that Publican had broken his heart, and then will ye see that the Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast. The smiting of the breast is the contrition of the heart. What said he smiting his breast? God be merciful to me a sinner! And what, in sentence, the Lord? I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. Whereby? It is the judgment of God. I am not as this Publican. I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. The other dares not lift up his eyes unto Heaven, he mindeth his own conscience, he standeth afar off, and he is justified rather than the Pharisee. Wherefore? I pray Thee, Lord, explain to us this Thy judgment, explain to us the righteousness of Thy Law. God doth explain the rule of His Law. Would ye hear, wherefore? For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12. Attend, therefore, dearly Beloved. I said that the Publican dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven. Why looked he not to Heaven? Because he looked to himself. He looked to himself, that he might first displease himself, and so please God. But thou boastest thyself, thou upliftest thy neck. To the proud man saith the Lord, Wilt not thou look to thyself? I look to thee. Wouldest thou that I look not to thee? Look thou to thyself. For this reason dared not the Publican lift up his eyes unto Heaven, because he looked upon himself, he punished his own conscience; he was judge unto himself, that He might intercede for him; he punished himself, that He might set him free; he accused himself, that He might defend him. And so did He defend him, in that He declared sentence for the same. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. He looked to himself, saith He, and I would not look to him: I heard him saying, Turn Thy face from my sins. For who is it that said this, but he that said also that, For I acknowledge my transgressions. And in like manner, my Brethren, was the Pharisee also a sinner. For neither because he said, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, nor because he fasted twice in the week, nor because he gave tithes, was he not a sinner. But even if he had

been without any other sin, his very pride was a great sin; and yet, he said all those words. Who in the world is without sin? Who can boast that he hath a clean heart, or who can boast that he is free from sins? He had then sins; but like one perverse, and not knowing whither he had come, he was as it were in the Physician's house to be cured, and shewed his sound limbs, covering his wounds. Let God cover thy wounds; do not thou. For if thou wish to cover them being ashamed, the Physician will not cure. Let the Physician cover, and cure, for He covereth with a plaster. By the covering of the Physician the wound is healed; by the covering of the wounded man the wound is concealed. And from whom dost thou conceal? From Him Who knoweth all things.

13. Consider then, Brethren, what this man said, (ver. 3.) When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. What is this? It seems as it were contradictory, When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring. If through his roaring, how kept he silence? Somewhat he kept silent, somewhat he kept not silent. He kept silent that whereby he might profit, he kept not silent that whereby he would fail; confession he kept silent, presumption he proclaimed. For said he, I kept silence, I confessed not. Then it behoved him to speak, to keep silent his merits, to proclaim his sins: but now perversely he kept silent his sins, his merits he proclaimed. And what befel him? His bones waxed old. Be ye sure that if he had proclaimed his sins, and kept silent his merits, his bones had been made new, that is, his strength had been made new: he would have been strong in the Lord, because he was found in himself weak. But now, because in himself he would be strong, he was made weak, and his bones waxed old. He remained still in oldness, because he would not, by confession, love newness. For what men are made new, ye know, Brethren: because Blessed are they whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. He would not that his transgressions should be forgiven him, he accumulated, he defended them; he boasted his own merits. Because then he kept silence from confession, his bones waxed old. Through my roaring all the day long. What is, Through my roaring all the day long? Through my persevering in defence of my sins. And yet see ye what manner of man he is, how that he acknowledgeth himself. For now will there be understanding, and he shall regard nothing beside himself, and displease

himself because he doth acknowledge himself. Now ye will hear, that ye may be made whole.

14. Ver. 2–4. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me. What is, Thy Hand was heavy upon me? A great matter, Brethren: remember the sentence ruled between those two, the Pharisee and the Publican. What was said of the Pharisee? That he is abased. What was said of the Publican? That he is exalted. Why is the one abased? Because he exalted himself. Why is the other exalted? Because he humbled himself. Therefore that He may abase him that exalteth himself, God maketh heavy His Hand over him. He would not humble himself by confession of his transgression; he is abased by the weight of God's hand. How could he endure that heavy hand of Him abasing? How light was the hand of Him exalting! Both in the one was He strong, and in the other was He strong; strong to abase the one, strong to exalt the other.

15. Ver. 4. Because day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me, I was turned in misery, until a thorn was fixed through me. By the very aggravation of Thy Hand, by very humiliation, I was turned in misery, I was made miserable, a thorn was fixed through me, my conscience was pricked. What happened when the thorn was fixed through him? The sense of pain was given him; he found out his infirmity. And he who kept silent confession of his sin, so that by his exclaiming in defence of his sin his strength waxed old, that is, his bones were turned into oldness, what did he now when the thorn was fixed through him? (Ver. 5.) I acknowledged my sin unto Thee. Now then he acknowledgeth. If he acknowledgeth, He pardoneth. Hear ye what follows: see if he saith not himself, I acknowledge my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. This was what I was saying; cover not thou, and God covereth. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. They who cover their sins, are laid bare; but he laid them bare, that so he might be covered. Mine iniquity have I not hid. What is, have I not hid? Before had I kept silence. What now? I said. Somewhat contrary to that silence. I said. What saidst thou? I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the

iniquity of my heart. I said. What saidst thou? He doth not now confess, he doth but promise that he will confess; and He even now forgiveth. Attend, Brethren, it is a great matter. He said, I will confess; he said not, I have confessed, and Thou hast forgiven: he said, I will confess, and Thou forgavest: because in that very thing that he said, I will confess, he shewed that he had not yet confessed with his mouth, but in his heart he had confessed. This very thing, to say, I will confess, is to confess: therefore also, And thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart. My confession then had not yet come to my mouth, for I had said, I will confess against myself: nevertheless, God heard the voice of my heart. My words were not yet in my mouth, but the Ear of God was already in my heart. Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart; because I said, I will confess.

16. But this sufficed not; he said not only, I will confess my transgression unto the Lord: he said with good cause, I will confess against myself; and this makes a difference. For many confess their transgressions, but against the Lord God Himself: when they are found in sin they say, God willed it. For if a man say either, I did it not; or, This deed which you blame is no sin; he confesseth neither against himself, nor against God. If he say, I surely did it, and it is sin, but God willed it, what have I done? This is to confess against God. Haply you may say, No one saith this; who is there that saith, God willed it? Many say even this; but those who say not this—what say they else when they say, My fate did it, my stars caused it? And thus by going about will they to come at last to God. By going about would they come at last to accuse God, who will not by going straight come to appease God; and they say, My fate did it. What is fate? My stars caused it. What are stars? Surely those which we perceive in the Heavens. And who made them? God. Who ordained them? God. Thou seest then what thou wouldest say, God made me to sin: so is He unrighteous, thou righteous; because if He had not caused thee, thou hadst not sinned. Away with those excuses in sins! Remember that Psalm, Incline not my heart to wicked words, to make excuses in my sins, with men that work iniquity. But there are great men forsooth who defend their sins: there are also great men who tell the constellations, and who reckon the stars and their seasons, and who say when any one either sinneth or liveth well, and when Mars maketh a murderer, or Venus an adulteress; great, learned, chosen men they seem in

this world. But what saith he in the Psalm? Incline not my heart to wicked words, with men that work iniquity: and I will not partake with their chosen. Call they chosen and learned the tellers of constellations; call they wise those who as it were arrange on their fingers the fates of men, and foreshew men's characters from the stars: with a free will hath God created me; if I have sinned, I have sinned myself: so must I confess my transgression not only unto the Lord, but against myself, not against Him. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: the sick man crieth to the Physician, I said. Why, I said? I is said with an emphasis; I, even I; not fate, nor chance, nor the devil: for neither did he compel me, but I consented to him persuading me. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against Thee. So hath this man also determined and purposed; I said, I will confess against myself my transgression unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

17. Ver. 6. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time. At what time? For this. For what? For ungodliness. For what? Even for the pardon of sins. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time. Therefore shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, because Thou hast forgiven sin. For if Thou forgavest not sins, there would not be one godly man to pray unto Thee, For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, in an acceptable time: when the New Testament shall be manifested; when the Grace of Christ shall be manifested, for that is the acceptable time. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, that is, of a female, (for the ancients used those words indifferently,) made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. From whence to redeem them? From the devil, from perdition, from their sins, from him to whom they had sold themselves. To redeem them that were under the law: under the law were they, because the law pressed them; their own condition pressed them, by convincing of guilt, not by saving. It did indeed forbid sin; but because they had not of themselves the power of justifying themselves, they ought to have cried unto Him, as he cried who was led captive under the law of sin, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? All men were under the law, not in the law, while it already pressed sore upon them, convincing them of guilt. For the law

manifested sin, it forced the thorn, it made the heart to be pricked: the law warned every man that he should acknowledge himself guilty, and cry unto God for pardon. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, in an acceptable time. Therefore said I of the time, When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son. Again saith the Apostle, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee. And because this concerning all Christians had been predicted by the Prophet, the Apostle added, Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time.

18. Surely in the floods of waters they shall not come nigh unto Him. Unto Him. Unto whom? Unto God; for he is wont to change the person; as it is written, Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. He saith not, Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, and His blessing is upon His people; nor, O Lord, salvation belongeth unto Thee, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people; but when he had begun, Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, speaking not unto Him, but of Him; then he turned to Him and said, And Thy blessing is upon Thy people. So here also, when thou hearest first, To Thee, then To Him, think not that it is another. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto Him. What is, in the floods of great waters? They who are floating in the floods of great waters come not nigh unto God. What are the floods of great waters? The multiplicity of various doctrines. Attend, Brethren. The great waters are the variety of doctrines. The doctrine of God is one; there are not many waters but one water, whether the water of the Sacrament of Baptism, or of the doctrine of Salvation. Concerning that doctrine, by which we are sprinkled through the Holy Spirit, it is said, Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. To those waters approach not the ungodly, but they that believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly, now justified, approach. Other waters there are many, many doctrines defile the minds of men, as I said but now. One doctrine there is, My fate did it; another, Chance did it for me; Fortune caused it. Men are governed by chance, there is no Providence whereby any thing is directed; this is another doctrine. Another man said, There is against us the race of darkness, which

rebelled against God; the same maketh men to sin. In this flood of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto God. Which is that water, that true water which flows from the inmost vein of the pure fountain of Truth? Which is that water, Brethren, but that which teaches to confess unto the Lord? Which is that water, but that which teaches, It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord? Which is that water, but that which teaches this word, I said, I will confess against myself my transgression unto the Lord, and, I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. This is the water of confession of sin, this is the water of humiliation of heart, this is the water of a life leading unto salvation, abasing itself, presuming nothing of itself, attributing nothing proudly to its own power. This water is not in any of the books of the Gentiles; not in the books of the Epicureans, not of the Stoics, not of the Manichæans, not of the Platonists. Even where the best precepts of morals and discipline are found, yet is not found that humility. The way of that humility flows from another source; it comes from Christ. This way is from Him, Who when He was high, came lowly. For what else taught He by humbling Himself, being made obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross? What else taught He by paying that which He owed not, that He might free us from debt? What else taught He by being baptized, Who did no sin; crucified, Who had no guilt? What else taught He, but this humility? Not unjustly saith He, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In this humility these men come nigh unto God, because the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart. But in the floods of great waters, lifting up themselves against God, and teaching pride and ungodliness, shall they not come nigh unto God.

19. But what? Art thou, who art even justified, still in the midst of those waters? On every side, my Brethren, even when we are confessing our sins, roar around us the waters of that flood. We are not indeed in the flood, but we are surrounded by the flood. They press upon us, but overwhelm us not, they trouble us, but drown us not. What then wilt thou do, seeing thou art in the midst of the flood, whilst thou walkest in this world? For doth not one hear such teachers, doth he not hear such proud men, doth he not from their words suffer in his heart daily persecutions? What then should he say who is now justified and presuming upon God, who is surrounded by that flood? (Ver. 7.) Thou art My Refuge from the pressure which hath surrounded me.

Let others fly for refuge, either to their gods or to their devils, or to their own strength, or to the defence of their sins: for me in that flood is there no refuge but Thou, from the pressure which hath surrounded me.

20. O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. If already thou rejoicest, why wouldest thou be delivered? O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. I hear the voice of joy, O Thou, My Rejoicing; I hear a groan, deliver me. Thou rejoicest and groanest. True, saith he, I both rejoice and groan; I rejoice in hope, I groan still in act. O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. Rejoicing in hope; saith the Apostle. Therefore rightly saith he, O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. Wherefore, deliver me? It follows; patient in tribulation. O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. The Apostle also was already justified, and what saith he? And not only they, but ourselves also which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves. Wherefore, deliver me? Because, we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. See then wherefore he saith, deliver me. Because we still wait, groaning within ourselves, for the redemption of our body. Wherefore then, O Thou, My Rejoicing? There the same Apostle goes on, and says, For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. If thou dost hope, thou dost rejoice; if with patience thou waitest, yet thou groanest: for there is no need of patience, where thou sufferest no evil. That which is called endurance, that which is called patience, that which is called submission, that which is called long-suffering, is not but in evils. When thou art sore pressed, there is anguish. If then we wait with patience, still we say, Deliver me from the pressure which hath compassed me about: but because we are saved by hope, we say at the same time both of these, O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me.

21. The answer of God, (ver. 8.) I will give thee understanding. The Psalm indeed is for understanding. I will give thee understanding, and set thee in the way in which thou shalt go. What is, I will set thee in the way in which thou shalt go? Not that thou mayest stand still therein, but that thou stray not therefrom. I will give thee understanding, that thou mayest know thyself ever, and rejoice ever in hope before God, until thou come at last to that

country where shall be now no more hope, but reality. I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee: I will not take off from thee Mine Eyes; because thou also wilt not take off thine eyes from Me. Now, being justified, now after remission of thy sins, lift up thine eyes unto God. For thine heart was corrupt, while it was on earth. It is not in vain that thou hearest, Lift up thine heart, lest it be corrupted. Therefore do thou also lift up thine eyes even unto God, that He may fix His Eyes upon thee. But why fearest thou, lest while thou hast thine eyes upon God, thou shouldest stumble, shouldest not look before thee, and haply fall into a snare? Fear not, for even there are His Eyes, which He fixeth upon thee. Take no thought, saith He; and the Apostle Peter saith, Cast ye all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. Therefore, I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee. Do thou then raise thine eyes unto Him, and fear not, as I said, lest thou fall into a snare. Hear another Psalm. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord. And, as if one said to him, What dost thou for thy feet, when thou lookest not before thee? For He shall pluck, saith he, my feet out of the net. I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee.

22. To this man promised He understanding, and His protection: now turneth He to the proud, who defend their sins, and sheweth unto us, what is true understanding. (Ver. 9.) Be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding. The horse and mule are of uplifted neck. The horse and mule are not like that ox, which knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding. For what do such suffer? Hold in their jaws with bit and bridle, who come not near unto Thee. Wouldest thou be as the horse or as the mule? wouldest thou not have a rider? Thy mouth and thy jaws shall be held in with bit and bridle; thy mouth shall be held in, even that wherewith thou boastest thy merits, and keepest silent thy sins. Hold in their jaws, who come not near unto Thee, by humbling themselves.

23. Ver. 10. Many are the scourges of the sinner. It is no wonder if after the applying of the bit and bridle, there follow scourges; for the beast desired to be untamed: he is tamed with bridle and scourge; and I wish he may be thoroughly tamed! for there is fear lest by too much resisting he deserve to be left untamed, and to go on in his own unrestrained liberty, so that it be said of him, Their iniquity standeth forth as from their fatness; as of them

whose sins are as yet unpunished. Therefore when he is scourged, let him be amended, let him be tamed; for even so this man also declared himself to be tamed. A horse and a mule had he called himself, when he kept silence, but whereby was he tamed? By scourges. I was turned, saith he, in misery, until a thorn was fixed through. Whether scourges thou sayest, or goads thou sayest, God tameth the beast whereon He rideth; for it is expedient for the beast that it be ridden upon. For not because He is weary by going afoot, doth God ride the beast. And truly is it not full of mystery, that an ass was brought unto the Lord? A people, meek, and gentle, bearing well the Lord, is that ass; and tendeth towards Jerusalem. For the meek will He guide in judgment, as saith another Psalm, and the gentle will He teach His way. What meek? Those that lift not up their neck against their tamer; suffering patiently the scourges and the bridle; afterwards so tamed, that without a scourge they amble, and without bit or bridle keep the way. If thou be without That rider, thou wilt fall, not He. Many are the scourges of the sinners; but he that trusteth in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him about. How is there refuge from pressure? Him whom first pressure compasseth, afterwards compasseth Mercy: because He will give Mercy, Who gave also Law: Law in scourges; Mercy in consolation. But he that trusteth in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him about.

24. What then is the conclusion? (ver. 11.) Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous. O ye who rejoice in yourselves! O ye ungodly, O ye proud, who rejoice in yourselves! now believe ye on Him that justifieth the ungodly, and let your faith be counted for righteousness. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous. And rejoice; understand again, in the Lord. Wherefore? Because ye are now righteous. Whereby righteous? Not by your merits, but by His Grace. Wherefore righteous? Because justified.

25. And glory all ye that are right in heart. What is, Right in heart? Not resisting God. Attend, my Beloved, and understand the right heart. I speak briefly, but yet a thing of all the most to be commended. And God be thanked, that it cometh at the end, that so it may remain fixed in your thoughts. Between a right heart, and an heart not right, is this difference. Whatever man, whatsoever he suffereth against his will, afflictions, sorrows, labours, humiliations, attributeth them not but to the Righteous

Will of God, not charging Him with foolishness, as though He knoweth not what He doth, because He scourgeth such an one, and spareth such another; he indeed is right in heart. But perverse in heart, and froward, and distorted are they, who whatever evils they suffer, say that they suffer them unjustly, charging Him with injustice, through Whose Will they suffer; or, because they dare not charge Him with injustice, take from Him His government. Because God, saith one, can not do injustice, but it is unjust that I suffer, and such an one suffer not; for I grant that I am a sinner, yet surely there are some worse, who rejoice, while I suffer tribulation: because then this is unjust, that even some worse than I should rejoice, while I suffer tribulation, who am either righteous, or less a sinner than they, and it is certain unto me that this is unjust, and it is certain unto me that God doth not injustice; therefore God governeth not the things of men, nor is there any care for us with Him. They then who are not right in heart, that is, who are distorted in heart, have three conclusions; either There is no God; for, The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. And it hath been said, in speaking of those floods, there wanted not such a doctrine among philosophers; there wanted not men who said that there was no God, who governeth all things, and who created all things, but that there were many Gods, living at ease, beyond this world, caring not for it. Either, therefore, There is no God, which saith the ungodly, who is displeased with whatever happens to him against his will, and happens not to another, to whom he preferreth himself: or, God is unjust, Who is pleased at these things, and Who doeth these things; or, God governeth not human things, and there is no care for all men with Him. In these three conclusions, great ungodliness is it, either to deny a God, or to call Him unrighteous, or to take from Him the government of the world. Wherefore this? Because he is distorted in heart. God is right, and therefore a distorted heart acquiesceth not in Him. As it is in another Psalm, How good is God to Israel, even unto such as are of an upright heart. And because even he had once such a thought as this, How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High? therefore he added in that place, But as for me, my feet were almost gone. As a warped beam, though you lay it on an even pavement, taketh not its place, nor is it joined and fastened to the rest, but always moves about and totters, not because that is uneven where thou placedst it, but because that which thou placedst is warped: so thy heart, as long as it is crooked and warped,

cannot coincide with the rightness of God, and can not be so placed therein, as to cleave unto the same, and for that to be, He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit. Therefore said he, Glory, all ye that are right in heart. How glory the right in heart? Hear their glorying; And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, saith the Apostle. For it is no great thing to glory in gladness, to glory in rejoicing; the right in heart glorieth in tribulations also. And hear how he glorieth in tribulation; for it is not in vain, nor without reason, that such an one glorieth: see; Knowing, saith the right heart, that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

26. So then is the right heart, Brethren. Let every man to whomsoever any thing happens say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Lo, this is a right heart. As the Lord pleased, so is it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Who hath taken away? What hath He taken away? From whom hath He taken away? When hath He taken away? Blessed be the Name of the Lord. He said not, The Lord gave, and the devil hath taken away. Attend therefore, Beloved, lest haply you should say, the devil did this for me. Unto thy God alone refer thy scourge; for not even the devil doth any thing against thee; unless He permit Who hath power above, either for punishment, or for discipline: for the punishment of the ungodly, for the discipline of His son. For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Neither must thou hope to be without a scourge, unless haply thou wish to be disinherited. For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. What, every son? Where then wouldest thou hide thyself? Every one; and none will be excepted, none without a scourge. What? Even to all? Would you hear how truly he saith all? Even the Only-Begotten, without sin, was yet not without a scourge. Wherefore even the Only-Begotten, bearing thy infirmity, and foreshewing in Himself thy person, as the head beareth the person of its own body; when now He was approaching His Passion, out of His Manhood which He bore, became sorrowful, that He might make thee glad; became sorrowful, that He might console thee. For truly the Lord was able to be without sorrow, going to His Passion. If the soldier was able, was not the Captain able? How was the soldier able? Hear Paul exulting, as he approached his passion. I am now (saith he) ready to be offered, and the

time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing. See how he exulteth, coming to his passion. He then rejoiceth, who should be crowned; He, who should crown, sorroweth. What therefore did He bear? The infirmity of some, who, when tribulation or death cometh, are sorrowful. But see how He leadeth us to rightness of heart. Behold, thou wouldest live, thou wouldest not that any thing should happen to thee; but God hath willed otherwise: here are two wills, but thy will must be made straight to the will of God, not God's will bent to thine. For thy will is crooked; His is even the rule. The rule must be fixed, that what is crooked may be made straight to the rule. See now the Lord Jesus Christ teacheth this, My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: and, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. See, He sheweth the human will. But see the right heart; Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Do thou then the same; rejoice in those things which happen unto thee; and even if the last day come upon thee, rejoice. Or if the frailty of any human will creep over thee, let it speedily be made straight unto God, that thou mayest be among those of whom it is said, Glory, all ye that are right in heart.

PSALM 33

first exposition

1. Ver. 1. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: rejoice, O ye righteous, not in yourselves, for that is not safe; but in the Lord. For praise is comely to the upright: these praise the Lord, who submit themselves unto the Lord; for else they are distorted and perverse.
2. Ver. 2. Praise the Lord with harp: praise the Lord, presenting unto Him your bodies a living sacrifice. Sing unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings: let your members be servants to the love of God, and of your neighbour, in which are kept both the three and the seven commandments.
3. Ver. 3. Sing unto Him a new song: sing unto Him a song of the grace of faith. Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation: sing skilfully unto Him with rejoicing.
4. Ver. 4. For the Word of the Lord is right: for the Word of the Lord is right, to make you that which of yourselves ye cannot be. And all His works are done in faith: lest any think that by the merit of works he hath arrived at faith, when in faith are done all the works which God Himself loveth.
5. Ver. 5. He loveth Mercy and Judgment: for He loveth Mercy, which now He sheweth first; and Judgment, wherewith He exacteth that which He hath first shewn. The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord: throughout the whole world are sins forgiven unto men by the Mercy of the Lord.
6. Ver. 6. By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm: for not by themselves, but by the Word of the Lord were the righteous made strong. And all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. And all their faith by His Holy Spirit.

7. Ver. 7. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as into a bottle: He gathereth the people of the world together, to confession of mortified sin, lest through pride they flow too freely. He layeth up the deep in storehouses: and keepeth in them His secrets for riches.

8. Ver. 8. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let every sinner fear, that so he may cease to sin. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him: not of the terrors of men, or of any creature, but of Him let them stand in awe.

9. Ver. 9. For He spake, and they were made: for no other one made those things which are to fear; but He spake, and they were made. He commanded, and they were created: He commanded by His Word, and they were created.

10. Ver. 10. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the Heathen to nought; of them that seek not His Kingdom, but kingdoms of their own. He maketh the devices of the people of none effect: of them that covet earthly happiness. And reproveth the counsels of princes: of them that seek to rule over such peoples.

11. Ver. 11. But the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; but the counsel of the Lord, whereby He maketh none blessed but him that submitteth unto Himself, standeth for ever. The thoughts of His Heart to all generations: the thoughts of His Wisdom are not mutable, but endure to all generations.

12. Ver. 12. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: one nation is blessed, belonging to the heavenly city, which hath not chosen save the Lord for their God: And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance: and which not of itself, but by the gift of God, hath been chosen, that He by possessing it may not suffer it to be uncared for and miserable.

13. Ver. 13. The Lord looketh from Heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the souls of the righteous, the Lord looketh mercifully upon all who would rise to newness of life.

14. Ver. 14. From His prepared habitation: from His habitation of assumed Humanity, which He prepared for Himself. He looketh upon all the

inhabitants of the earth: He looketh mercifully upon all who live in the flesh, that He may be over them in ruling them.

15. Ver. 15. He fashioneth their hearts singly: He giveth spiritually to their hearts their proper gifts, so that neither the whole body may be eye, nor the whole hearing; but that one in this manner, another in that manner, may be incorporated with Christ. He understandeth all their works. Before Him are all their works understood.

16. Ver. 16. A king shall not be saved by much strength: he shall not be saved who ruleth his own flesh, if he presume much upon his own strength. Neither shall a giant be saved by much strength: nor shall he be saved whoever warreth against the habit of his own lust, or against the devil and his angels, if he trust much to his own might.

17. Ver. 17. A horse is a deceitful thing for safety: he is deceived, who thinketh either that through men he gaineth salvation received among men, or that by the impetuosity of his own courage he is defended from destruction. In the abundance of his strength shall he not be saved.

18. Ver. 18. Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him: because if thou seek salvation, behold, the love of the Lord is upon them that fear Him. Upon them that hope in His mercy: that hope not in their own strength, but in His mercy.

19. Ver. 19. To deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine. To give them the nourishment of the Word, and of Everlasting Truth, which they lost while presuming on their own strength, and therefore have not even their own strength, from lack of righteousness.

20. Ver. 20. My soul shall be patient for the Lord: that hereafter it may be filled with dainties incorruptible, meanwhile, whilst here it remaineth, my soul shall be patient for the Lord. For He is our Helper and Defender: our Helper He is, while we endeavour after Him; and our Defender, while we resist the adversary.

21. Ver. 21. For our heart shall rejoice in Him: for not in ourselves, wherein without Him there is great need; but in Himself shall our heart rejoice. And we have trusted in His holy Name: and therefore have we trusted that we

shall come to God, because unto us absent hath He sent, through faith, His own Name.

22. Ver. 22. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee: let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us; for hope confoundeth not, because we have hoped in Thee.

second exposition

Discourse the First. On the first part of the Psalm

1. This Psalm admonishes us to rejoice in the Lord. It is entitled, Of David himself. Whoever then belong to the most holy seed of David, let them hearken to their own words, and speak their own words, and let them rejoice in the Lord. But thus it begins, (ver. 1.) Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: let the unrighteous rejoice in the world; with the world ended is ended the rejoicing of the unrighteous. But let the righteous rejoice in the Lord; because while the Lord remaineth, remaineth also the rejoicing of the righteous. But it is meet so to rejoice in the Lord, as to praise Him, Who alone has not any thing which can displease us; and has many things, none so many, which displease the unfaithful. And that is a short precept, He pleaseth God whom God pleaseth. And think not lightly of this, dearly beloved. For ye see how many dispute against God, how many are displeased with His works. For when He would do contrary to the will of men, because He is the Lord, and knoweth what He doth, and regardeth not so much our will as our benefit; they who would have rather their own will to be fulfilled than God's, would bend God to their will, not make right their will unto God. Such men, unfaithful, ungodly, unrighteous—though it grieveth me to say it, yet I will say it, for ye know how truly I say it—are more easily pleased with a pantomime than with God.

2. Therefore when he had said, Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; because to rejoice in Him except by praising Him we cannot, and we praise One Whom we please the more, the more He pleaseth us; For praise, saith he, is comely to the upright. Who are the upright? They who direct their heart according to the will of God; and whom, if human frailty disturb them, Divine Justice consoleth. For although in their mortal heart they may privately wish something, which may suit their own immediate case, or

interest, or their present necessity, yet when they have understood and learned that God willeth otherwise, they prefer the will of The Better, to their own will; the will of The Omnipotent, to the will of the weak; the will of God, to the will of man. For far as God differs from man, so far the will of God from the will of man. Wherefore Christ having put on Man, and proposing a rule to us, teaching us to live, and granting us to live, shewed also man's private will; whereby He figured both His own and ours, because He is our Head, and we, as ye know, belong to Him as real members. Father, saith He, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; this was the human Will, wishing something proper to itself, and as it were private. But because He willed man to be right in heart, that whatever in him was somewhat crooked, He might make straight to Him, Who is ever Right; Nevertheless, saith He, not as I will, but as Thou, Father. But what evil could Christ will? What, in short, could He will other than the Father. Whose Divinity is one, Their Will can not be different. But in the person of Man, transforming His Own into Himself; whom He had transformed into Himself when He said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: whom He transformed into Himself, when to Saul raging, and persecuting the Saints, He cried from Heaven, though none touched Him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest Thou Me? He shewed as it were man's proper will; He shewed thee, and corrected thee. Behold, saith He, thyself in Me; for thou also canst will something proper to thyself, though God will otherwise; this is granted to human frailty, it is granted to human infirmity: to have a proper will, it is difficult that this should not happen to thee: but think straightway Who is above thee; think of Him above thee, thyself below Him; Him the Creator, thyself the creature; Him the Lord, thyself the servant; Him Omnipotent, thyself weak; correcting thyself, submitting to His Will, and saying, Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Wherein art thou severed from God, who now willest that which God willeth? Then shalt thou be upright, and praise shall be comely to thee, for, praise is comely to the upright.

3. But if thou art crooked, thou praisest God when it is well with thee, blasphemest when it is ill: which ill indeed, if it be just, is not ill; but just it is, since it is done by Him, Who can do nothing unjust: and so thou wilt be a foolish boy in the house of thy father, loving thy father if he fondle thee, and hating him when he scourgeth thee: as if he were not, both when

fondling and when scourging, preparing for thee the inheritance. But see how praise is comely to the upright; hear the voice of the upright praising from another Psalm, I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. What is at all times, that is, continually; and what is, I will bless, that is, His praise shall be in my mouth. At all times, and continually, whether in prosperity or in adversity. For if in prosperity and not in adversity, how at all times? how continually? And we have heard many such words from many: when any good fortune befalls them, they exult, they rejoice, they sing to God, they praise God; nor are they to be disapproved, nay, we must rejoice in them, for many praise Him not even then. But they who have now begun to praise God on account of their prosperity, must be taught to acknowledge their Father also when scourging them, and not to murmur against the hand of Him correcting; lest remaining ever perverse they deserve to be disinherited, so that being now made upright, (what is upright? so that nothing which God doth, displease them,) they may be able to praise God even in adversity, and to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as the Lord pleased, so is it come to pass. Blessed be the name of the Lord. To such upright, praise is comely, not to them that will first praise, and afterwards blame.

4. Therefore, ye righteous upright, rejoice in the Lord; for your praise is comely. Let none say, Who am I, that am righteous? or, When am I righteous? Cast not yourselves away, and despair not of yourselves. Ye are men, in the image of God were ye created: He Who made you men, for you also was made Man: that ye, being many sons, might be adopted to an eternal inheritance, the Blood of the Only-Begotten was shed for you. If ye unto yourselves have become vile through earthly frailty, according to your own price weigh yourselves: What ye eat, What ye drink, Whereto ye subscribe Amen, consider as is meet. Do we give you this warning, that ye may be proud, and dare to claim to yourselves some perfection? No: but neither again ought ye to think yourselves to be exiled from all righteousness. For I will not question you of your righteousness; for perhaps none of you would dare to answer, I am righteous: but I question you of your faith. As none of you dares to say, I am righteous, so none dares to say, I am not faithful. I ask not yet how thou livest, but how thou believest. Thou wilt answer, that thou believest in Christ. Hast thou not

heard the Apostle, The just shall live by faith? Thy faith is thy righteousness, because truly if thou dost believe, thou dost beware; if thou dost beware, thou dost endeavour; and God knoweth thy endeavour, and beholdest thy will, and considereth the wrestling with the flesh, and exhorteth thee to fight, and assisteth thee to conquer, and contending watcheth thee, and fainting, lifteth thee up, and conquering, crowneth thee. Therefore, Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: or this I would say, Rejoice in the Lord, O ye faithful, because the just shall live by faith. Praise is comely to the upright. Learn to give thanks unto God, both in prosperity and in tribulation. Learn to have in thy heart what every man hath in his tongue; The will of God be done. The common speech of the people is mostly saving doctrine. Who saith not daily, What God willeth, that let Him do? And so the upright will be among those, who rejoice in the Lord, and to whom praise is comely, whom the Psalm addresseth, in the words following, and saith, (ver. 2.) Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings. For this even now we sang, this expressing with one mouth, we instructed your hearts.

5. Hath not the institution of these Vigils in the name of Christ brought it to pass that harps should be banished out of this place? And, lo, the same are bid to sound. Praise the Lord, saith he, with harp; sing unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings. Let none turn his heart to instruments of the theatre. That which is commanded him, he hath in himself, as it is elsewhere said, Thy vows are upon me, O God; I will render praises unto Thee. They remember, who some while since were present, when what difference there is between the psaltery and harp, as best I could, I explained in my discourse, and tried withal to bring it home to the understanding of all: but how much I effected, they know best who heard. And now in due season I repeat it, that in this diversity of two musical instruments, we may find the diversity of human actions signified by the same, and to be fulfilled in our life. The harp hath that hollow board, like a tabor, covered with tortoiseshell, on which the chords lean, so that when touched they sound. I speak not of the staff wherewith they are touched, but that hollow board I mean, over which they are laid, upon which in some wise they lean, so that from thence trembling at the touch, and from that concavity conceiving sound, they are rendered more harmonious; this board then the harp hath in

the lower, the psaltery in the upper part. This is the distinction between them. Now in this place we are bidden to praise the Lord with harp, and to sing to Him with a psaltery of ten strings. He saith not, with a harp of ten strings, neither in this Psalm, nor, if I mistake not, in any other place. My sons, the readers may read and examine more thoroughly and leisurely for themselves; but as far as I myself remember, I have found in many places a psaltery of ten strings, a harp of ten strings no where occurs, that I have read. Remember that the harp hath that wherefrom it sounds in the lower part, the psaltery in the higher. In our lower life, that is, our earthly, we have prosperity and adversity: wherefore must we praise God in both, that His praise may be continually in our mouth, and that we may bless the Lord at all times. For there is an earthly prosperity, and there is an earthly adversity: in both must God be praised, that so we may harp. What then is earthly prosperity? When we are sound in body; when all things abound whereby we live; when our safety is sure; when the fruits come in largely; when He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. All these things contribute to earthly life. Whoever therefrom praiseth not God, is ungrateful. Because they are earthly things, are they therefore not of God? Or is therefore another to be thought to give them, because they are given also to the evil. For manifold is the mercy of God, patient is it, long-suffering. Thereby sheweth He the more what things He reserveth for the good, when He sheweth what great things He giveth even to the evil. And adversities there are, forsooth from the lower part, from the frailty of the human race, in griefs, in weariness, in pressures, in tribulations, in temptations. In all these let him praise God who harpeth. Let him consider, not that they are from below, but that they cannot be ruled and governed but by that Wisdom, which reacheth from end to end mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things. For He doth not rule heavenly things, and leave alone earthly; or it would not be said unto Him, Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down into hell, Thou art there. Where then is He wanting, Who no where is not? Praise then the Lord on the harp. Whether any earthly thing abound to thee, give thanks to Him Who gave it, or whether ought be wanting to thee, or haply by misfortune be taken from thee, harp without care. For He is not taken from thee, Who gave, though that be taken from thee which He gave. Even so, I say, harp

without care. Assured in thy God, touch the strings in thy heart, and say, as to an harp sounding well in the lower part, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, whatever the Lord pleased that did He. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

6. But now, when thou considerest the superior gifts of God, what Commandments He hath given thee, with what heavenly doctrine He hath imbued thee, what things He hath commanded thee from above, from the fountain of His Truth; turn also to the psaltery, sing unto the Lord with a psaltery of ten strings. For the Commandments of the Law are ten; in the ten Commandments of the Law thou hast the psaltery. The thing is complete. Therein thou hast the love of God in three, and the love of thy neighbour in seven. And truly thou knowest, the Lord Himself having said it, that On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. Saith God unto thee from above, The Lord thy God is one Lord; thou hast one string. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: thou hast another string: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, not carnally, not with their Jewish delights, who abuse rest unto wickedness. For better were it that they should dig the whole day, than the whole day dance. But thou, thinking on rest in thy God, and for that rest doing all things, abstain from servile work. Now, Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin; and would that I could say, of man, and not of sin! These three relate to the love of God: of Whom consider thou the unity, the truth, and the pleasantness, for there is a pleasantness in the Lord, where there is a true Sabbath, a true rest; wherefore it is said, Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. For who giveth such delight, as He Who maketh all things which delight? In these three is the love of God, in the other seven is the love of our neighbour, that thou do not to another, what thou wouldest not suffer. Honour thy father and thy mother: because thou also wouldest be honoured by thy children. Thou shalt not commit adultery: because thou wouldest not that thy wife should commit adultery, behind thy back. Thou shalt not kill: because thou also wouldest not be killed. Thou shalt not steal: because thou also wouldest not suffer robbery. Thou shalt not bear false witness: because thou hatest him that beareth false witness against thee. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; because thou wouldest not thy wife to be coveted by another. Thou

shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbour's: because if any other covet aught that is thine, thou art displeased. Direct thy tongue to thyself also, when thou art displeased at him who injures thee. All these are the commandments of God; by Wisdom Herself were they given; their sound cometh from above. Touch the psaltery, fulfil the Law which the Lord thy God came not to destroy but to fulfil. By love wilt thou fulfil, what by fear thou couldest not. For he who through fear doth not evil, would fain do it if he could: and so though the power is not given, the will remaineth. I do it not, saith he. Wherefore? Because I fear. Not yet lovest thou righteousness; thou art still a servant: be a son. But of a good servant is made a good son: now do it not through fear; thou wilt learn also to do it not through love: for there is a beauty in righteousness: punishment may deter thee, but righteousness hath its own comeliness; it seeketh men's eyes, it inflameth its lovers. For this the Martyrs, treading under foot the world, shed their blood. What loved they when they renounced all things? For were they not lovers? or say we this to you that ye may love not? Who loveth not, is cold, is dead. Love we, but that beauty which seeketh the eyes of the heart. Love we, but that beauty which with praise of righteousness inflameth the mind. Men exclaim, they cry aloud, they say every where, How good! How excellent! What see they? Righteousness they see, in which an old man bowed down is beautiful. For neither if an old man that is righteous walk abroad, is there any thing in his body to be loved, and yet he is loved by all. Even there is he loved where he is not seen: nay there is he loved where he is seen, but with the heart. Let him then delight you, and pray ye to the Lord, that He may delight you. For The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her increase: that through love ye may fulfil, what by fear it is hard to fulfil. Why say I, it is hard? The mind is not yet able: it would rather that there were not any commandment, if to do, it is not led by love, but by fear constrained. Do not steal; fear hell: he would rather that there were no hell, into which he should be cast. When beginneth a man to love righteousness, but when he had rather that there were no stealing, even though there were no hell into which thieves should be cast? This it is, to love righteousness.

7. And what is righteousness herself like? Who painteth her? What beauty hath the Wisdom of God? Through her are all things beautiful, that are

pleasant to the eyes: her to see, her to embrace, our hearts must be cleansed, her lovers we profess ourselves; herself so dresseth us that we may not be displeasing to her. And when men reprove us for those things, whereby we please her whom we love, how is it that we so little regard our reprovers, how is it we so despise them, and altogether care nothing for them? Women's lovers, loose and worthy of condemnation, when their mistresses dress them after their own fancy, if they can but please them, care not for those whom they displease, thinking it sufficient for them that they please their eyes, whom they court: and grave men they mostly displease, nay, grave men they always displease, and by better judgment are blamed. Thou art not well shorn, saith a grave man to a wanton youth, it becometh thee not to go with such-like curls. He knoweth, however, that a certain person is pleased with those curls: he hateth thee that with true judgment blameth, and keepeth in himself that which pleaseth his perverse will. He thinketh thee his enemy, because thou wouldest take away his disgrace. He flieth thy eyes, and altogether careth not by what rule of righteousness he be blamed. If therefore these regard not their reprovers in truth, that they may be handsome in falsehood; ought we, in those things whereby we please the Wisdom of God, ought we to regard unrighteous mockers, having no eyes wherewith they may see What we love? These things considering, all ye upright in heart, Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with a psaltery of ten strings.

8. Ver. 3. Sing unto Him a new song. Put off oldness: ye know the new song. A new man, a New Testament, a new song. A new song belongeth not to men that are old: none learn that but new men, renewed through Grace from oldness, and belonging now to the New Testament, which is the kingdom of Heaven. For that sigheth all our love, and singeth a new song. A new song let it sing, not with the tongue, but with the life. Sing unto Him a new song: sing skilfully unto Him. Every man asketh how he should sing unto God. Sing unto Him, but sing not unskilfully. He would not that His Ears be offended. Sing skilfully, Brother. If, in the audience of any good musician, when it is said to thee, Sing, to please such an one, without some knowledge of the musical art, thou fearest to sing, lest thou shouldest displease a master of the art, because, what an unskilful person findeth not amiss in thee, a master blameth: who can undertake to sing skilfully before

God, so judging of the singer, so examining every part, so exactly hearing? How canst thou shew so nice a skill in singing, as in nothing to displease Ears so perfect? Behold, he giveth as it were the tune of thy song; seek not words as if thou couldest explain whereby God is pleased. Sing with jubilation: for this is to sing skilfully unto God, to sing with jubilation. What is it to sing with jubilation? To be unable to understand, to express in words, what is sung in the heart. For singers, either in the harvest, or in the vineyard, or in any other busy work, after they have begun in the words of their hymns to exult and rejoice, being as it were filled with so great joy, that they cannot express it in words, then turn from actual words, and proceed to sounds of jubilation. The jubilee is a sound signifying that the heart laboureth with that which it cannot utter. And whom beseemeth that jubilation, but the Ineffable God? For He is Ineffable, Whom thou canst not speak; and if thou canst not speak Him, and oughtest not to keep Him silent, what remaineth to thee but jubilation; that the heart may rejoice without words, and the boundless extent of joy may have no limits of syllables? Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation.

9. Ver. 4. For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in faith. In that even wherein He displeaseth the not right, He is right. And all His works done in faith. Let thy works be done in faith, for The just shall live by faith; and Faith worketh by love. Let thy works be done in faith, because by trusting in God thou art rendered faithful. How can the works of God be done in faith, as though God also should live by faith? We find God also called faithful, and that not in our own words: hear an Apostle; God, saith He, is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Thus ye have heard God called faithful, hear it also in another place. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us: If we believe not, yet He abideth Faithful: He cannot deny Himself. We have then a Faithful God also: but let us well distinguish Faithful God from faithful man. Man is faithful when he trusteth in God promising: God is Faithful because He performeth what He promised to man. Let us hold Him a Debtor most Faithful, since we hold Him a Promiser most Merciful. For neither have we lent unto Him any loan, that we should hold Him a debtor; since from Him we have whatever we offer

unto Him, and from Him cometh whatever good there is in us. All the good things, in which we rejoice, are from Him. For who hath known the Mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. We then have given nothing to Him, and yet we hold Him a debtor. Wherefore a debtor? Because He is a Promiser. We say not unto God, Lord, render what Thou hast received; but, Render what Thou hast promised. For the Word of the Lord is right. What is, The Word of the Lord is right? He deceiveth thee not: do not thou deceive Him, rather do not thou deceive thyself; for who can deceive the Omniscient? But iniquity hath lied unto itself. For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in faith.

10. Ver. 5. He loveth Mercy and Judgment. Do thou the same, because He doth. Observe ye both Mercy and Judgment. The time of Mercy is now, the time of Judgment shall be hereafter. Whence is it now the time of Mercy? He calleth those but now averted, He forgiveth sin to them converted: He is patient with sinners, until they be converted: when they are converted, He forgetteth things past, He promiseth things to come: He exhorteth the slothful, consoleth the afflicted, teacheth the studious, assisteth the fighting: He deserteth none labouring and crying unto Himself. He giveth that wherewith sacrifice may be done unto Himself; He bestoweth that wherewith He may be reconciled. Let not the great time of Mercy pass, Brethren, let it not pass away from us. There will come a judgment, and then also there will be repentance, but then without fruit, then they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, (is it not written in the book of Wisdom?) What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All these things are passed away like a shadow. Let us now say, All these things are passing away like a shadow. Let us now say to our profit, They are passing away; lest then we say without avail, They are passed away. This then is the time of Mercy, there will come also the time of Judgment.

11. But think not, Brethren, that these two can in any wise be separated, the one from the other, in God. They do indeed seem somewhat contrary to each other; as if one who is Merciful could not observe Judgment; and one

who is tenacious of Judgment, would forget Mercy. But God is Omnipotent; neither in Mercy loseth He Judgment, nor in Judgment, Mercy. For He hath compassion, He considereth His Own Image, our frailty, our wandering, our blindness, and He calleth; and to those converted unto Him He forgiveth sins, to the unconverted He forgiveth not. Is He Merciful to the unrighteous? Has He therefore lost Judgment, or ought He not to judge between the converted and the unconverted? Seemeth it just to you, that the converted and the unconverted be treated equally; that the same regard be paid to one confessing and one lying, to the humble and the proud? Therefore hath He Judgment, yea even in Mercy. Again, in The Judgment will He have Mercy, namely, upon those unto whom He shall say, I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat. For in a certain Apostolic Epistle it is said, For he shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no Mercy. Blessed (saith He) are the merciful: for they shall obtain Mercy. Therefore in The Judgment shall there be also Mercy, but not without Judgment. For if not every one, but he shall have Mercy, who hath before shewn Mercy; even Mercy itself will be just, because it will not be indiscriminate. Mercy it surely is, that sins should be forgiven, Mercy it is, that life eternal should be bestowed; see then also Judgment, Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you. Surely this, It shall be given unto you, and, ye shall be forgiven, is Mercy; but if Judgment had departed therefrom, He would not say, With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

12. Thou hast heard how God sheweth Mercy and Judgment, do thou also shew Mercy and Judgment. Do these things perhaps belong unto God; do they not belong unto man? If they belonged not unto man, the Lord would not have said to the Pharisees, Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment and Mercy. Therefore unto Thee belong Mercy and Judgment. Think not that Mercy belongeth unto thee, but Judgment belongeth not unto thee. It may be thou hearest a cause between two, of whom one is rich, and the other poor; and it may happen that the poor man hath a bad, the rich a good cause. Now if thou art not instructed in the Kingdom of God, thou seemest to thyself to do well, if, as pitying the poor man, thou hide and conceal his iniquity, and strive to justify him, so that he may seem to have a good cause; and if thou shouldest be blamed because

thou hast judged ill, thou answerest as concerning Mercy, It is true, and I too know it; but he was poor, Mercy was due unto him. How hast thou kept Mercy, and lost Judgment? And how, sayest thou, if I should keep Judgment should I not lose Mercy? Should I pronounce against a poor man, who had not wherewithal to pay, or if he had, could not, after that he had paid, find wherewithal to live? Thy God saith unto thee, Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause. It is an easy thing that we should be warned not to accept the person of the rich; this every man knoweth, and would that every man so did. That is where one is deceived; where one would please God, by accepting the person of the poor in judgment, and saying unto God, I have shewn favour unto the poor. Nay, but thou shouldest hold fast both, even both Mercy and Judgment. First, what sort of mercy hast thou shewed towards him, whose iniquity thou hast favoured? Lo, his purse thou hast spared, his heart thou hast wounded: that poor man hath remained in his iniquity, and is so much the more in iniquity, as he hath seen thee, as if a righteous man, favour his iniquity. From thee hath he departed, unjustly succoured; by God he remaineth justly to be condemned. What sort of mercy hast thou shewn to him, whom thou hast made unrighteous? Lo, thou art found more cruel than merciful. What then, sayest thou, should I do? Thou shouldest judge first according to the cause. Thou shouldest convict the poor, prevail on the rich man. There is one time for judgment, another for supplication. When the rich man saw that thou hadst held justice, hadst not lifted up the head of the wicked because he was poor, but according to the merits of his sin hadst justly punished him; would not he be prevailed on to mercy at thy supplication, who had been made glad by thy judgment? My Brethren, though there remaineth indeed more of the Psalm, yet must we now spare our strength, both of mind and body, by reason of the variety of hearers: for also when we are taking food from the same wheat, many new tastes as it were are made for us, so as to do away loathing: may this suffice you.

DISCOURSE THE SECOND

On the Second Part of the Psalm

1. Both in preaching and hearing the Word of Truth is labour; and this labour, my Brethren, we bear with patience, if we remember the Lord's

sentence, and our condition. For from the very first beginning of our race hath man heard, and that not from man that deceiveth, nor from the devil that seduceth, but from Truth Itself out of the mouth of God, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread. Therefore if our bread is the Word of God, let us sweat in hearing, lest we die in fasting. A few verses of the first part of this Psalm, at the solemnity of the vigil lately past, were handled: let us hear what remaineth.

2. Now thus begins the part which remaineth, which but now we sang, (ver. 5.) The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. (Ver. 6.) By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm. For it is the same thing, By the voice of the Lord were the Heavens established. He had said above, Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation, that is, Sing ineffably: (ver. 4.) For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are in faith. He promiseth nothing which He payeth not: He that is Faithful is made a debtor, be thou a covetous exacter. Then when he had said, All His works are done in faith; he added wherefore: (ver. 5.) He loveth Mercy and Judgment. He then, Who loveth Mercy, pitieth. But He Who pitieth, can He promise and not give, Who could give though He promised not? Therefore because He loveth Mercy, it behoveth Him to afford that which He promiseth: and because He loveth Judgment, it behoveth Him to exact what He gave. Wherefore said the Lord Himself to a certain servant; Wherefore gavest thou not the money into the bank, that at My coming I might have required Mine own with usury? Which therefore we mention, that we may understand what we have but now heard. For the same Lord saith in another place, in the Gospel, I judge no man: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day. Nor let him excuse himself, who will not hear lest haply there be ought which may be required of him. For that very thing is required of him, that he would not receive, when it was given. For it is one thing not to be able to receive, another not to be willing; there is the excuse of necessity, here the guilt of wilfulness. Therefore all His works are done in faith: He loveth Mercy and Judgment. Receive ye Mercy, and fear Judgment; lest He, when He cometh to require of you, so require as to send you empty away. For He requireth an account; the account rendered, He giveth Eternity. Receive ye therefore Mercy. Brethren; let us all receive it. Let none of us slumber in receiving, lest he be wakened untimely to give account. Receive ye Mercy;

so God crieth unto us, as in time of famine it would be said, Receive corn. Which when thou heardest in time of famine, truly by the very spur of necessity goaded thou wouldest run, turning thee this way and that way; thou wouldest ask whence thou couldest receive that of which it was said, Receive ye; and when thou hadst found, how wouldest thou contain thyself? what delay wouldest thou interpose? So even now it is said, Receive ye Mercy, for He loveth Mercy and Judgment. When thou hast received, use it well, that thou mayest give a good account, when His Judgment cometh, Who now sheweth unto thee Mercy beforehand in this famine.

3. I would not then that thou shouldest say unto me, Whence receive I? Whither go I? Remember what Thou hast sung, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. Where is not the Gospel now preached? Where is the Word of the Lord silent? Where doth Salvation not work? It needs but that thou be willing to receive: the barns are full. This very fulness and abundance waited not for thee coming, but unto thee sleeping came of themselves. It was not said, Let the nations arise, and come into one place, but the same were preached unto the nations where they were, that thenceforward the prophecy might be fulfilled which saith, And men shall worship Him, every one from his place.

4. The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. What of the Heavens? Hear what of the Heavens. For they want not Mercy, where is no misery. On earth aboundeth the misery of man, more aboundeth the mercy of the Lord. With the misery of man the earth is full, and with the Mercy of the Lord the earth is full. The Heavens, then, in which is no misery, because they want not mercy, do they not want the Lord? All things want the Lord, both the miserable, and the happy. Without Him is not the miserable man lifted up, without Him is not the happy governed. Therefore, lest haply thou shouldest ask concerning the Heavens, when thou hast heard, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord, hear how the Heavens also want the Lord, (ver. 6.) By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm; for neither of themselves were the Heavens a support unto themselves, nor did they of themselves bestow on themselves their own firmness. By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm, and all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. It was not that They had somewhat from themselves,

and received as it were a supplement from the Lord. For by the Breath of His Mouth, was made not a part, but all the strength of them.

5. See now, my Brethren, the works of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are the same. For it ought not to be negligently passed over, by reason of certain unrighteous discerners, and troublesome confounders. For out of both cometh evil. They confound, by ill discerning, the creature with the Creator; and when the Spirit of God is the Creator, reckon Him among the creatures. Again they discern, and yet confound: may they be so confounded that they may be converted. Hear now how the work of the Son and of the Spirit is one. The Word is certainly the Son of God, and the Breath of His Mouth His Holy Spirit. By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm. But what is it, to be made firm, but to have a sure and firm strength? And all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. It might have been said thus, “By the Breath of His Mouth were the Heavens made firm, and, By the Word of the Lord, all the strength of them.” For what is ‘all the strength of them,’ that is, ‘were made firm?’ This then doth the Son and the Holy Spirit. Is it without the Father? Who then acteth by His Word, and His Spirit, but He Whose is the Word, and Whose is the Spirit. This Trinity then is One God. Him worshippeth he who knoweth how to worship, Him hath he every where who hath converted himself. For He is not sought by them that are averted from Him; but averted, Himself calleth them, that converted He may fill them.

6. Now, my Brethren, excepting those superior Heavens, unknown to us on earth, labouring and seeking after them as we may by human conjectures; excepting then those Heavens, concerning which, how they be one above another, and how many they be, or in what manner they be distinguished, with what inhabitants they be filled, with what order they be ruled, how therein one hymn unfailing chanted in concert by all glorifieth God, it is much for us to find out, yet do we toil to arrive thither. For there is our country, which perhaps through our long travel we have forgotten. For our voice is in that Psalm, Woe is me, that my travel is prolonged. Concerning those Heavens then it is both for me difficult, if not impossible, to discourse, and for you to understand. Whoever in these things in understanding preventeth me, let him enjoy that whither he hath first

arrived, and pray for me that I may follow. Meanwhile, excepting those Heavens, I have whereon now to discourse, as best I may, those Heavens that are the nearest to us, the sacred Apostles of God, the preachers of the Word of Truth; by which Heavens we are watered, that so through the whole world the wheat of the Church may spring up; although with the tares now drinking one common rain, but not to have one common garner.

7. When then it had been said, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord; as if thou hadst asked, Whence is the earth made full of the Mercy of the Lord? First were the Heavens sent to scatter the Mercy of the Lord over the earth, and that too over the whole earth. For see what is elsewhere said concerning the Heavens themselves, The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth His handy-work. What are the Heavens, that is the Firmament, Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no cessation, no silence. But where have they preached, and how far have they preached? There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard, but this relateth to that, that they spake in the tongues of all men in one place. Speaking in the tongues of all men, they fulfilled that which was said, There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. But I ask, that same voice in the tongues of all men, how far hath it reached? what places hath it filled? Hear then what follows, Their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. Of whom but of those Heavens that declare the glory of God? If then their sound hath gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world, what they have preached to us let Him declare Who sent them. He declareth plainly, faithfully He declareth: because even before they came to pass He predicted that they would be, He, all Whose works are in faith. For He rose again from the dead, and after handling of his limbs, being recognised of His disciples, He said, It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name. Whence, and how far? Among all nations, (saith He,) beginning at Jerusalem. But what Mercy do we all expect, my Brethren, more abundant from the Lord, than that our sins be forgiven? Since then that is the great Mercy of the Lord, the remission of sins, this remission of sins also hath the Lord predicted should be preached among all nations. The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. Wherewith is

the earth full? With the Mercy of the Lord? Wherefore? Because every where God forgiveth sins, because He hath sent the Heavens to water the earth.

8. And how dared those same Heavens to go with confidence, of weak men to be made Heavens, except that by the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm. Whence could sheep among wolves have such strength, except that by the Breath of His Mouth were all the strength of them. Behold, saith He, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. O Lord most merciful! Surely Thou dost this, that the earth may be full of Thy Mercy. If then Thou art so Merciful, as to fill the earth with Thy Mercy; see whom Thou sendest, see whither Thou sendest. Whither, I say, Thou sendest, and whom Thou sendest. Sheep into the midst of wolves. If one wolf be sent into the midst of innumerable sheep, who resisteth him? What doth he not overthrow, unless it happen that he is soon satisfied? For he could devour all. Sendest Thou the weak among the savage? I send them, saith He, because they are become Heavens to water the earth. Whence can weak men be Heavens. But all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. Behold the wolves shall take you, and deliver, and give you up to powers for My Name's sake. Now arm ye yourselves. With your own strength? Far be it. Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. For all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth.

9. These things were done. The Apostles were sent; they endured pressures. Do we now bear as great to hear this Word, as they to sow it? No. Will then, Brethren, our labour be unfruitful? No. I see your thronging together, but ye also see my sweat. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him. Behold those things are come to pass. From those sheep sent into the midst of wolves, we celebrate also the Martyrs' memories. This very place, when the body of a blessed Martyr was smitten, was then full of wolves. So many wolves were overcome by one sheep captured, and the place was filled with sheep by one sheep slain. Then raged the sea with great waves of persecutors. Into a dry land and thirsty went the Heaven of God. But now, through those things which they suffered, who broke the enemy's line, is the Name of Christ glorified. Walking over the heads of swelling waters, it hath occupied even

powers themselves. And because those things are come to pass, they also who now see, not yet believing, our conventicles, our celebrations, our solemnities, the praises now openly, now publicly offered to our God; think ye that they grieve not, think ye that they do not rave? But now is fulfilled that which is written of them, The wicked shall see it, and shall be enraged. What then, though he be enraged. Fear not the wolf, O sheep. Fear not now their threats and raving. He is enraged, but what followeth? He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away.

10. Because then the salt sea-water, which hath remained, dares not now to rage against Christians, but grinds to itself a secret murmur, and within the mortal skin roars the confined saltiness; see what follows, (ver. 7.) He gathereth the waters of the sea together as into a bottle. Since then before, the sea having its waves free raged, but now being confined within mortal breasts is bitter, He, who in those Saints was victorious, who then set bounds to the sea, He hath caused that its waves returning into themselves should be abated. He hath gathered as into a bottle the waters of the sea: the mortal skin covereth bitter thought. For fearing for their own skin, men keep within, that which they dare not to utter. For their bitterness is the same: they hate as much, they detest as much. But what then raged openly, now rageth secretly. What else can I say, than that which is spoken, He shall gnash with his teeth and melt away? Let the Church then go on, let it walk forward. The way is made, our highway is paved for us by the Emperor. Let us be fervent in our journeys of good work, for this it is for us to walk on. And if ever arise pressures of temptations, whence we expected them not, the waters of the sea being now gathered together as into a bottle, let us understand that the Lord doth this for discipline, that He may shake out of us too confident a security in temporal things, and direct us to His kingdom with composed desire. Which desire by tribulations buffeting on this side and on that is lengthened out, so that we become tuneful to the Ears of the Lord like ductile trumpets. For this also is said in the Psalms, that we should praise God on ductile trumpets. A ductile trumpet is enlarged by the hammer, so the Christian heart by the blows of pressures is enlarged towards God.

11. Let us remember then, Brethren, now at this time, in which the water of the sea has been gathered as into a bottle, that there is not wanting to God, whence He may bring forth somewhat, wherewith to amend us, when we have need of amendment. For therefore it follows, He layeth up the deep in storehouses. The secrets of God he calleth God's storehouses. He knoweth the hearts of all, what to bring forth at any time, whence to bring it forth, what power to bestow upon the evil over the good, to judge indeed the evil, but to instruct the good. He knoweth how to do these things, Who layeth up the deep in storehouses. Let that then come to pass which followeth, (ver. 8.) Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let not proud rejoicing glory with rash exultation, saying, Now is the water of the sea gathered together as into a bottle; who can do any thing to me? Who will dare to hurt me? Knowest thou not that He hath laid up the deep in storehouses; knowest thou not whence He bringeth forth what is needful to scourge thee, Who is thy Father? He indeed for thy discipline keepeth the treasures of the deep, wherewith He may instruct thee unto the treasures of the Heavens. Therefore return thou unto fear, who wast going but now into security. Let the earth rejoice, but let it also fear. Let it rejoice; Wherefore? Because the earth is full of the mercy of the Lord. Let it fear; Wherefore? Because He hath so gathered into a bottle the waters of the sea, as to lay up the deep in storehouses. In it then come these things to pass, both of which elsewhere are briefly spoken of, Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. Let them not fear another instead of Him. Of Him let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe. Doth a wild beast rage? Fear God. Doth a serpent lie in wait? Fear God. Doth man hate thee? Fear God. Doth the devil fight against thee? Fear God. For the whole creation is under Him Whom thou art commanded to fear. (Ver. 9.) For He spake, and they were made: He commanded, and they were created. This followeth in the Psalm. For when he had said, Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, lest man should betake himself to fearing any thing else, and being averse to the fear of God, should fear some creature instead of Him, and worship that which was made, leaving Him Who made it, he confirmed us in the fear of God, as it were speaking to us, and addressing us. Why wilt Thou fear aught in Heaven, aught in earth, aught in the sea? He spake, and

they were made: commanded, and they were created. When He, Who spake, and they were made; Who commanded, and they were created; when He bids, they move; when He bids, they rest. The malice of men can have the desire of injuring for its own; but the power, if He giveth not, hath it not. For there is no power but of God. It is the definitive sentence of an Apostle. He said not, There is no desire but of God; for there is an evil desire which is not of God: but because that evil desire hurteth none, if He permit not; There is no power, saith he, but of God. Wherefore God as Man standing before a man, said, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above. The one judged, the other taught: when He was being judged, He taught; that He might judge those whom He had taught. Thou couldest have, said He, no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above. What is this? Hath man only no power, except when he hath received it from above? What? Dared even the devil himself to take one sheep from holy Job, without first saying, Put forth Thine Hand now; that is, Give me power? He was willing; but He suffered not: when He permitted, he had the power. Therefore had not he the power, but He who permitted him. Therefore Job himself also, being well instructed, said not, as I have already often observed unto you, The Lord gave, and the devil hath taken away, but, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He; not whatsoever the devil pleased. See then, my Brethren, who with such labour eat wholesome and useful bread, see that ye fear not any one but the Lord. Beside Him, that Thou fear no other, Scripture commandeth thee. Therefore let all the earth fear the Lord, who layeth up the depth in storehouses. Of Him let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe. For He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.

19. But now have evil kings ceased, they are made good: they too have believed; the sign of Christ's Cross now bear they in their forehead, a sign more precious than any jewel of a diadem: they who raged, are destroyed. But who hath done this? Haply thou, that thou mayest extol thyself? (Ver. 10.) The Lord bringeth the counsel of the Heathen to nought; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect; and reproveth the counsels of princes. While they said, Let us away with them from off the earth, the Christian name will no longer be, if we do this: thus be they slain, thus tortured; be

such and such things inflicted on them: these things were said, and amid these, did the Church grow. He maketh the devices of the people of none effect, and reproveth the counsels of princes.

14. Ver. 11. The Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the Thoughts of His Heart to all generations. It is a repetition of the same sentence. What before he called, The Counsel, that he calleth afterwards, The Thoughts of His Heart. And whereas above he saith, standeth for ever, so afterwards he saith, to all generations. Repetition is confirmation. But think not, Brethren, because he said, The Thoughts of His Heart, that God as it were sitteth down and thinketh what He should do, and taketh counsel to do any thing, or not to do any thing. To thee, O Man, belongs such tardiness. His Word runneth very swiftly. When can there be delay of thought, in that Word, Which is One, and embraceth all things? But the Thoughts of God are spoken of, that thou mayest understand; that according to what is in thee, thou mayest dare to lift up thy heart even to words suited to thine infirmity: because the thing itself is too much for thee. The Thoughts of His Heart to all generations. What are the Thoughts of His Heart, and what is the counsel of the Lord which standeth for ever? Against which counsel, Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Since, The Lord maketh the devices of the people of none effect, and reproveth the counsels of princes. How then standeth for ever the Counsel of the Lord, except it be concerning us whom He hath first foreknown and predestined? Who taketh away the Predestination of God? Before the creation of the world He saw us, He made us, He healed us, He sent unto us, He redeemed us: this His counsel standeth for ever, these His Thoughts to all generations. Then raged the Heathen openly swelling and roaring; now let them melt away as it were confined and gathered into a bottle: they had free boldness, let them now have fierce and bitter thoughts. When can they destroy that which He hath thought of, and which standeth for ever?

15. But what is this? Blessed is the nation. Who is there that hearing this, doth not rouse himself? For all love blessedness; and therein are men perverse, that wicked they would be, miserable they would not: and though misery is the inseparable companion of wickedness, they perversely not only would be wicked, and would not be miserable, which is impossible;

but therefore would they be wicked lest they be miserable. What is this that I have said, Therefore would they be wicked, lest they be miserable? Observe this now in all men who do evil, they ever wish to be blessed. One stealeth: dost thou ask, Why? From hunger: from necessity. Therefore lest he should be miserable, he is wicked; and therefore is he the more miserable, because he is wicked. For the sake then of driving away misery, and of acquiring blessedness, do all men whatever either of good or evil they do. Always then they wish to be blessed: whether living ill, or living well, they wish to be blessed, and that happeneth not to all, which all wish to happen to them. For all would be blessed, but there shall not any be except they who will be righteous. And lo, some one, though he doth evil, would be blessed. Whereby? By money, by silver and gold, by estates, by lands, by houses, by slaves, by the pomp of the world, by honour fleeting and perishable. By having something would men be blessed: ask then what thou shouldest have, that thou mayest be blessed. For when thou shalt be blessed, thou wilt surely be better, than when thou wast miserable. But it cannot be that any thing worse than thyself should make thee better. Thou art a man; worse than thou is whatever thou covetest, whereby thou desirest to be blessed. Gold, silver, any other bodies, which thou gapest to acquire, to possess, to enjoy, are inferior to thee. Thou art better, thou art worthier: and surely thou wouldest be better than thou art, since thou wouldest be blessed, because thou art miserable. For it is surely better to be blessed than to be miserable. Thou wouldest be better than thyself; and thou seekest, thou searchest out, wherewith thou mayest become so, things worse than thyself. Whatever thou hast desired on earth, is worse than thou. This every man wisheth for his friend, thus he adjureth him, So mayest thou be better, So may we see thee better, So let us rejoice in thee being better. What one wisheth for his friend, this he would also for himself. Accept then a faithful counsel. Thou wouldest be better than thyself; I know it, we all know it; we all wish it: seek then what is better than thyself, that thereby thou mayest be rendered better than thyself.

16. Consider now the Heavens and the earth: let not beautiful bodies so please thee, that by them thou wish to be blessed. In the soul is what thou seekest. For thou wouldest be blessed: enquire thou what is better than thy soul itself. For since there are two things, that is, soul and body, because of

these two that is the better, which is called the soul, therefore can thy body be made better by the better, because the body is subject to the soul. Thy body then can be made better by thy soul, so that when thy soul shall be righteous, thy body also may hereafter be immortal. For through the illumination of the soul, the body merits incorruption, that through the better there may be a reparation of the worse. If then thy body's good be thy soul, because it is better than thy body; when thou seekest thine own good, seek that which is better than thy soul. But what is thy soul? Beware, lest haply, despising thy soul, and thinking that it is something vile and worthless, thou shouldest seek things more vile, wherewith thy soul may be made blessed. For thy soul is the Image of God; the mind of man containeth it. It received it, and by inclining unto sin disfigured it. The Same came unto it as the reformer, Who was before the former of it. For by the Word were all things made, and by the Word was this Image impressed. The Word Himself came, that we might hear from an Apostle, Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Now then it remaineth that thou seek what is better than thy soul. What shall that be, I pray thee, but thy God? Thou findest no other better than thy soul; for when thy nature shall be perfected, it will be equalled with the Angels. Now is there nothing higher save the Creator. Lift up thyself unto Him, despair not, say not, It is too much for me. Rather it is too much for thee to have, it may be, gold, which thou seekest. Gold, though thou wouldest, haply thou wilt not have; God, when thou wouldest, thou shalt have: for even before thou wouldest, He came unto thee; and when thou wast in will averted, He called thee; and when thou wast converted, He frightened thee, and when frightened thou didst confess, He consoled thee. He, Who hath given thee all things, He, Who hath caused that thou shouldest be, Who to those also who are with thee, even the wicked, giveth the sun, giveth rain, giveth fruits, fountains, life, health, so many consolations; He keepeth for thee something which He giveth not save to thee. But what is that which He keepeth for thee, but Himself. Ask somewhat else, if thou hast found better. God keepeth Himself for thee. Thou covetous, why longest thou after Heaven and earth? Better is He Who made Heaven and earth: Him shalt thou see: Him shalt thou have. Why seekest thou, that such a villa should be thine, and passing by it sayest, Blessed is he whose is that possession? How many say this, who pass by it; and yet when they have so said, and pass by it, though they

can shake the head and sigh, can they also possess it? Every where soundeth covetousness, soundeth iniquity, but Thou shalt not covet any thing which is thy neighbour's. Blessed whose is that villa, whose is that house, whose is that field! Restrain iniquity, hear the truth: Blessed is the nation whose—Whose what? Thou knowest already what I am about to say. Therefore desire that ye may have, then indeed shall ye be blessed. With this alone shall ye be blessed, by a better thing than yourselves ye shall be made better. It is God that is better than thou; even He, I say, Who made thee. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. This desire, this possess, this when thou wilt, thou shalt have: this thou shalt have for nothing.

17. Ver. 12. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. The Lord our God! For of whom is He not God? Not surely of all in the same manner. Ours is He more; ours, who live by Him as by our bread. Let Him be our inheritance, our possession. Do we haply speak rashly in making God our possession, when He is the Lord, when He is the Creator? This is not rashness: it is the affection of desire, it is the sweetness of hope. Let the soul say, all-secure let it say, Thou art my God, Who sayest to my soul, I am thy salvation. Let it so say, secure let it say, it will do no wrong when so it saith; nay it will do wrong if it say not. Wouldest thou have trees, whereby thou mightest be blessed? Hear the Scripture speaking of Wisdom; She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her. See, he hath said that Wisdom is our possession. But lest thou shouldest think that Wisdom, because Scripture hath called it thy possession, to be something inferior to thee, it goes on and adds, And to them that lean upon her, as on the Lord, she is safe. See thy Lord is made unto thee as a staff: securely man leaneth, because He faileth not. Say then securely, This is thy possession; to them that lay hold upon her. Scripture hath said, hath filled up thy doubts with confidence: speak securely, love securely, hope securely. Thine also be those words in the Psalm, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance.

18. Therefore by this shall we be blessed, by possessing God. What then? Shall we possess Him, and will not He possess us? Whence then Esaias, Lord, possess us? Therefore He possesseth us, and is possessed, and all for our sakes. For not as He, that we may be blessed in Him, is possessed by us; not so doth He also, that He may be blessed, possess us. He both possesseth

and is possessed, for nothing else than that we may be blessed. We possess Him, and He possesseth us; because we attend on Him, and He attendeth on us. We attend on Him as our Lord God; He attendeth on us as His own possession. That we attend on Him, none doubteth; that He attendeth on us, who proveth to us? He Who saith, I am the Vine: ye are the branches: My Father is the Husbandman. See in this Psalm also both are declared to us, both are proved to us. He hath already said that we possess Him: Blessed is the nation, whose God is the Lord. Whose is this farm? His. Whose is that? His. Whose is this? Let us so speak of God; let us say whose He is. And as answer is wont to be made to us when we enquire concerning certain farms and estates that are fine and very pleasant; He is a senator, and he is called so and so, whose is that property; and we say, Blessed is that man. So if we should ask, Whose is this God? There is a blessed nation whose He is. For the Lord is their God. And not as that senator possesseth his farm, but is not possessed by his farm, so also the God of this nation. Wherefore, we ought to labour, that we may be His: but either of them possesseth the other. Ye have heard that a nation possesseth Him, Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: hear how He also possesseth it: and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance. Nation blessed in its possession; inheritance blessed in its possessor: And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.

19. Ver. 13. The Lord looketh from heaven, He beholdeth all the sons of men. All in this place so receive as to understand all of that nation who possess that inheritance, or who are that inheritance. For they themselves are God's inheritance. Even all of them hath the Lord looked upon from Heaven: and He hath seen them Who said, When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. He saw him because He had mercy on him. Wherefore oftentimes praying mercy we say to a man, Look upon me. And of him that despiseth thee, what sayest thou? He seeth me not. There is then a seeing of him that hath mercy, a not seeing of him that punisheth. That looking upon sins is the punishment of sins; which sins he would not to be seen, who saith, Hide Thy Face from my sins. What he would to be overlooked, that he would not to be looked upon. Hide, saith he, Thy Face from my sins. When then He hath hidden His Face from thy sins, will He not see thee? And wherefore saith he in another place, Hide not Thy Face from me? Let

Him then hide from thy sins, let Him not hide from thee: let Him see thee, let Him have mercy on thee, let Him succour thee. The Lord looked from Heaven, He regarded all the sons of men: all that belong unto the Son of Man.

20. Ver. 14. From His prepared habitation: from that which He hath prepared for Himself. He looked upon us from the Apostles, He looketh upon us from the preachers of the Truth, He looked upon us from the Angels, whom He sent unto us. All these are His house, all these are His habitation, for all these are the Heavens which declare the Glory of God. He beheld all the sons of men: from His prepared habitation He looked upon all the inhabitants of the earth. These are the same; they are His; it is that blessed nation, whose God is the Lord; it is that people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance: for it is throughout all lands, and not only in one part. He looked upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

21. Ver. 15. He hath fashioned their hearts singly. By the hand of His grace; by the hand of His mercy, He hath fashioned hearts, He formed our hearts, He fashioned them singly, giving to us as it were single hearts, which yet destroy not unity. As all our members are formed singly, have their operations singly, and yet live in the unity of the body; the hand doth what the eye doth not, the ear hath a power which neither the eye nor the hand hath; yet all work together in unity; and the hand, and the eye, and the ear do different things, and yet are not opposed to one another; so also in the Body of Christ, single men, like single members, enjoy each their own gifts, because He Who hath chosen the people for His own inheritance, hath fashioned their hearts singly. Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing. Wherefore? Because He fashioned their hearts singly. But as in our members there are diverse operations, but one health; so in all the members of Christ are diverse gifts, but one grace. He fashioneth their hearts singly.

22. He understandeth all their works. What is understandeth? Seeth in secret and inwardly; thou hast in a certain Psalm, Understand my crying.

For there is no such need as of words, that any thing may come to the Ears of God. Seeing in secret is called understanding. He spoke more expressly than if He should say, He seeth all their works: lest thou shouldest think that those works are then seen, when thou seest the work of a man. A man seeth the act of a man by motion of the body, but God seeth in the heart. Because then He seeth within, it is said, He understandeth all their works. Two men give to the poor, one seeketh his reward in Heaven, the other the praise of men. Thou in two seest one thing, God understandeth two. For He understandeth what is within, and knoweth what is within; their ends He seeth, their base intentions He seeth. He understandeth all their works.

23. Ver. 16. A king shall not be saved by much strength. Unto the Lord must we all, in God are we all. Be God thy hope, be God thy strength, be God thy firmness; thy supplication let Him be, thy praise let Him be, thy end in which thou rest, let Him be; thy succour when thou labourest, let Him be. Hear the truth, A king shall not be saved by much strength: neither shall a giant be saved by much strength. A giant is any proud man, lifting up himself against God, as though he were something in himself and by himself. Such an one is not saved by much strength.

24. But he hath a horse, large, spirited, strong, swift: can he if any evil threaten, deliver him quickly out of danger? Let him not be deceived, let him hear what followeth. (Ver. 17.) A horse is a deceitful thing for safety. Understood ye what was said, A horse is a deceitful thing for safety? Let not thy horse promise thee safety; if he promise thee, he will lie. For if God will, thou wilt be freed; if God will not, thy horse falling, thou wilt fall from a greater height. Therefore think it not said, A horse is a deceitful thing for safety, as though a just man were deceitful for safety, because just men as it were tell lies for safety. For it is not written æquus, which word is derived from equity; but equus, a quadruped. This the Greek version sheweth. And evil beasts, men who seek to themselves occasions of lying, are refuted, when the Scripture saith, The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul, and, Thou shalt destroy all them that speak leasing. What then is this, A horse is a deceitful thing for safety? A horse lieth to thee when it promiseth safety. Doth a horse speak to any one and promise safety? But when thou seest a horse well made, of great strength, and possessed of great speed, all these

things, as it were, promise thee safety from it: but they deceive, if God guard thee not; A horse is a deceitful thing for safety. A horse also take figuratively, for any greatness of this world, any honour unto which thou ascendest proudly: the higher thou goest, not only so much the more lofty, but so much the more safe thou thinkest thyself, but falsely; for thou knowest not how he may cast thee down, dashed the more heavily, the more loftily thou wast carried. A horse is a deceitful thing for safety: in the abundance of his strength shall he not be saved. And whereby shall he be saved? Not by might, not by strength, not by power, not by glory, not by a horse. Whereby then? Whither shall I go? Where shall I find whence I may be saved. Seek not long, seek not far? (Ver. 18.) Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him. Ye see that these are the same whom He beholds from His habitation. Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His Mercy: not in their own merits, not in strength, not in fortitude, not in a horse, but in His Mercy.

25. Ver. 19. To deliver their souls from death. He promiseth eternal life. What in this our travel? doth He desert us? See what follows: And to keep them alive in famine. The time of famine is now, the time of plenty shall be hereafter. He who in the famine of this corruption deserteth us not, when made immortal, how shall He not satisfy us! But while it is the time of famine, we must bear, we must endure, we must persevere even to the end. Now must all be run, because both the way is plain, and we must consider what we carry. The spectators in the amphitheatre are haply still in their madness, and sit in the sun: and we, even if we stand, are yet in the shade; more useful and more beautiful is what we behold. Let us behold The Beautiful, and be beheld by The Beautiful. Let us behold in mind those things which are declared in the sense of the Divine Scriptures, and let us rejoice in such a spectacle. But who is our spectator? Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him; upon them that hope in His Mercy. To deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

26. But for endurance of travel, while there is famine, and while we wait by the way to be refreshed, lest we faint; what is imposed upon us? or what ought we to profess? (Ver. 20.) Our soul shall be patient for the Lord. Securely shall it wait for Him mercifully promising, mercifully and truly

performing: and until He perform, what must we do? Our soul shall be patient for the Lord. But what if in that patience, we shall not endure? Nay, we shall surely endure, For He is our Helper and Defender. He assisteth in battle, He protecteth from the heat, He deserteth thee not, bear thou, endure thou. He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

27. And what when thou hast endured, when thou hast been patient, when thou hast come even to the end, what shall be given thee? for what reward dost thou endure? why dost thou so long suffer such hardships? (Ver. 21.) For our heart shall rejoice in Him, and we have trusted in His Holy Name. Here hope, that there thou mayest rejoice; here hunger and thirst, that there thou mayest feast.

28. He hath exhorted to all things, he hath filled us with the joy of hope, he hath proposed to us what we should love, in what only and by what only we should presume; after this cometh a prayer short and salutary. (Ver. 22.) Let Thy Mercy, O Lord, be upon us. And upon what merit? according as we have hoped in Thee. To some I have been burdensome; I perceive it: for some again I have finished my discourse even too soon, and this also I perceive. Let the weak pardon the stronger, and let the stronger pray for the weaker. Let us all be members in one body, from our Head let us grow. In Him is our hope, and in Him is our strength. Let us not hesitate to exact from our Lord God Mercy; He willeth it to be exacted of Him. For He will not be troubled while it is exacted, or at all straitened, like one from whom thou seekest what he hath not, or of which he hath but little, and feareth to give lest he have too little. Wouldest thou know how God giveth thee Mercy? Do thou give charity: let us see if it come to an end, while thou givest it. What richness then is there in the Most High Himself, if such can be in His Image!

29. Therefore, Brethren, above all things I exhort you to this charity, not only towards yourselves, but also toward those who are without, whether they be still Pagans, not yet believing in Christ, or divided from us, with us confessing The Head, though severed from The Body. Let us lament them, Brethren, as though our brethren. Will they, nill they, our brethren they are. Then will they cease to be our brethren, when they shall cease to say, Our Father. Of some said the Prophet, To them who say unto you, Ye are not our

brethren, say ye, Ye are our brethren. Look around, of whom could he say this? whether of Pagans? No: for we call not them brethren according to the Scriptures, and the ecclesiastical mode of speaking. Of the Jews, who believed not in Christ? Read the Apostle, and see that when he saith, Brethren, without any addition, he willeth to be understood none but Christians. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases. When he spoke of marriage, he called a Christian man or woman, a brother or sister. Again he saith, But why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? And in another place, Ye do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren. They then, who say, ye are not our brethren, call us Pagans. And therefore do they wish to rebaptize us, saying that we have not that which they give. Whence followeth their error, to deny that we are their brethren. But why said the Prophet unto us, Say ye, Ye are our brethren; except because we acknowledge in them that which we repeat not. They then, by not acknowledging our Baptism, deny that we are their Brethren; we, by not repeating theirs, but acknowledging it ours, say unto them, Ye are our brethren. Let them say, Why seek ye us? what would ye with us? Let us answer, Ye are our brethren. Let them say, Depart from us, we have no concern with you. We certainly have concern with you: we confess one Christ: in one body, under one Head, we ought to be. Why then seekest thou me, saith one, if I am lost? A great absurdity! a great madness! Wherefore should I seek thee, unless because thou art lost? If then I am lost, saith he, how am I thy brother? That it may be said to me of thee, For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. Therefore, Brethren, we adjure you by the very bowels of that Love, by Whose milk we are nourished, by Whose bread we are strengthened, even by Christ our Lord, by His Mercy I adjure you, (for it is time that we should shew toward them great charity, abundant mercy in praying God for them, that He would give them again sober sense, that they may repent, and see that they have nothing at all to say contrary to the truth; there remaineth to them nought but only the weakness of animosity, which is so much the more weak, as it thinketh that it hath more strength,) for the weak, for the carnally wise, for the animal, and carnal, yet for our brethren, celebrating the same Sacraments, though not with us, yet the same; responding the same Amen, though not with us, yet the same; for them pour forth the marrow of your charity unto God. For somewhat have we done in council for their good,

which that I should explain to you now, the time sufficeth not. Wherefore I exhort you, that with more alacrity, and in greater numbers, (for our brethren, not now present, will hear from you,) ye come together to-morrow at the Church of the Tricliæ.

PSALM 34

discourse the first

On the Title of the Psalm.

1. This Psalm seems indeed to have nothing obscure or that needs an expounder in its text; but its title makes us attentive, and requires that we should knock. But as it is here written, that Blessed is the man who trusteth in Him. let us all hope that He will open to us knocking. For He would not exhort us to knock, if He would not open to us knocking. For if it ever happens, that he who was purposing to shut the door always, being compelled by weariness, at the stroke of the knocker should rise and open, contrary to his own purpose, lest he should suffer him long knocking; how much more ought we to hope that He will quickly open, Who saith, Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. I knock then with earnestness of heart unto the Lord God, that He may deign to reveal unto us this mystery; do ye also, my Beloved, knock with me with earnestness of hearing, and with humble praying for me. For it is, it must be confessed, a hidden and great mystery.

2. For so is the Title of the Psalm, A Psalm of David, when he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed. We seek in the Scriptures, according to the histories which we have written concerning David, when this was done; as when we find the title of another Psalm, A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. For we read in the Book of Kings, and find when David fled from the face of his son Absalom; and it is most true that it so happened, and because it happened it was written; and although the Title of that Psalm is so written mysteriously, yet was it drawn from an event which happened. So also I believe that what is here written, When he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed, is written in the Books of Kings, where every thing is written which pertaineth to the actions of David: but we find

not this, and yet we do find somewhat, whence this appears to be drawn. For it is written, that when David fled from his persecutor Saul, he betook himself to Achis, the king of Gath, that is, to the king of a certain nation near to the kingdom of the Jews: there he lay hid, that he might avoid the persecution of Saul. But his glory was still recent, whereby he earned envy for his good service, when he slew Goliath, and in one battle gave glory and security of government both to king and people. For Saul, although Goliath challenging, he quaked, yet Goliath being overthrown, began to be an enemy to him by whose hand he had destroyed his enemy, and envied the glory of David, chiefly because the people in their rejoicings, and the women in their dances, sang the glory of David, saying, that Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. Hence being alarmed, because the youth through one battle had begun to have greater glory, and already in the praises of all was preferred to the king, (as the nature is of the plague of envy, and of worldly pride,) he began to envy and to persecute him. Then he, as I have said, betook himself to the king of Gath, who was called Achis. But it was suggested to the same king that he had with him one who had begun to have great glory in the people of the Jews, and it was said to him, Is not this David, to whom the women sang in the dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? But if for this glory Saul had begun to envy him, was it not to be feared by David, lest the king also, with whom he had taken refuge, should wish to oppress a man whom he might have near him as an enemy, if he should keep him safe. And he feared him, and (as it is written) he changed his countenance before them, and affected, and drummed upon the doors of the city, and was carried in his own hands, and fell down at the doors of the gate, and his spittle ran down over his beard. The king with whom he lay hid saw him, and said unto his men, Wherefore have ye brought this mad fellow unto me? shall he come into my house? And so he sent him away, expelling him; and David departed safe thence through that feigning of madness. According then to this feigning of madness seemeth to agree to the real history what is here written, A Psalm of David, when he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed. But it was Achis, not Abimelech; for the name only seemeth not to agree; for the event is related almost in the very same words in the Psalms, in which it is written in the Book of Kings. Therefore ought it the more to move us to enquire of this

mystery, that the name is changed. For neither was that done without reason, however it was done, but because it figured something: nor was this written without a reason, even for the name being changed.

3. Surely, Brethren, ye see the depth of mysteries. If it be not mysterious that Goliath was slain by a stripling, it is not mysterious that he changed his countenance, and affected, and drummed, and fell down before the doors of the city, and the doors of the gate, and the spittle ran down over his beard. How can it be that this should not signify any thing, when the Apostle saith openly, Now all these things happened unto them in a figure, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come? If the manna signify nothing, of which the Apostle saith, They did all eat the same spiritual meat; if it signify nothing that the sea was divided, and the people led through the midst, that they might escape the persecution of Pharaoh, when the Apostle saith: I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea. If it signify nothing that the rock being struck, the water flowed out, when the Apostle saith, That Rock was Christ: if then these things signify nothing, however they happened: if, in short, nothing be signified by the two sons of Abraham, born according to the order of birth among men, and yet these two sons the Apostle calleth the two Covenants, the Old, and the New, saying, Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; if then these things signify nothing, which you see, by the authority of the Apostle, were done as figures of things to come: we ought to think that this also signifieth nothing, which I have just now related to you concerning David out of the Book of Kings. It doth not then signify nothing, either that the name was changed, or that it was said, before Abimelech.

4. Attend with me; for all, that I have now said, belongs as it were to the hand of the knocker; the door is not yet opened. I knocked, when I said these things; ye also knocked, when ye heard these things. Let us still knock by praying, that the Lord may open unto us. We have the interpretation of Hebrew names: there have not been wanting learned men to translate for us names from the Hebrew into the Greek tongue, and from thence into the Latin. Consulting then these names, we find they interpret Abimelech, The

kingdom of my Father, and Achis, How is it? Let us attend to these names; thence beginneth the door to be opened to us knocking. If thou askest, What is Achis? It is answered, How is it? How is it, is the expression of one wondering and understanding not; Abimelech, The kingdom of my Father; David, Strong in hand. David is a figure of Christ, as Goliath is a figure of the devil; and as David overthrew Goliath, it is Christ that destroyeth the devil. But what is Christ, Who destroyeth the devil? Humility destroyeth pride. Therefore when I name Christ, my Brethren, humility is most commended to us. For He made a way for us through humility; because through pride we had departed from God, we could not return unto Him, but through humility; and we had none whom we might set before us to imitate. For all mortal men were swollen with pride; and if there arose any man of humble spirit, as were the Prophets, and Patriarchs, the human race disdained to imitate humble men. Lest then man should disdain to imitate a humble man, God was made humble, that even so the pride of the human race might not disdain to follow the footsteps of God.

5. But there was before, as ye know, the sacrifice of the Jews, after the order of Aaron, with victims of cattle; and that too was a mystery; not yet was the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of the Lord, which the faithful know, and those who have read the Gospel; which sacrifice is now diffused through the whole world. Set then before your eyes two sacrifices, both that after the order of Aaron, and this after the order of Melchizedek. For it is written, The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. Of whom is this said, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek? Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who was Melchizedek? The King of Salem. Salem was before a city, the same which afterwards, as learned men have delivered, was called Jerusalem. Before then the Jews reigned there, there was this Priest Melchizedek, who is called in Genesis the Priest of the Most High God. The same met Abraham, when he delivered Lot from the hand of his pursuers, and overthrew those by whom he was held captive, and delivered his brother: after the deliverance of his brother, Melchizedek met him. And so great a man was Melchizedek, that Abraham was blessed by him. He brought forth bread and wine, and blessed Abraham, and Abraham gave him tithes. See what he brought forth, and whom he blessed. And afterwards was it written, Thou

art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. David said this in the Spirit long after Abraham; but in the time of Abraham lived Melchizedek. Of what other saith he, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek, but of Him, Whose Sacrifice ye know?

6. Therefore was the sacrifice of Aaron taken away, and began the Sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek. Therefore some one, I know not who, changed his countenance. Who is this some one, I know not who? It should not be said, I know not who, for our Lord Jesus Christ is well known. In His own Body and Blood He willed our health to be. But whereby commended He His Body and Blood? By His own humility; for unless He were humble, neither could This be eaten nor That drunk. Consider His Highness; In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Behold the food is from everlasting: but of It eat the Angels, of It eat the Hosts above, of It eat the Heavenly Spirits, and eating they are filled, and yet remaineth That whole Which satisfieth them and maketh them glad. But what man could be capable of that food? How could his heart be made fit enough for that food. Therefore behoved that table to become milk, and so to come even to babes. But how doth food become milk? How is food changed into milk, except it be passed through flesh? For the mother doth this: what the mother eateth, that eateth the infant: but because the infant is less fit to feed on bread, the same bread the mother incarnates, and through humility of her own breast and the juice of milk, of that very bread feeds the infant. How then did the Wisdom of God of that same Bread feed us? The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. See then humility; in that man ate the bread of Angels, as it is written, He gave them of the bread of Heaven. Man did eat Angels' food: that is, That Word by which the Angels live from everlasting, Which is equal to the Father, did man eat: because, Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: by That are the Angels filled. But He made Himself of no reputation, that man might eat Angels' food, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: that so from His Cross might be commended unto us the Body and the Blood of the Lord, for a new sacrifice. Because He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, that is, before the kingdom of His Father.

For the kingdom of His Father was the kingdom of the Jews. How the kingdom of His Father? The kingdom of David, the kingdom of Abraham. For the kingdom of God the Father is rather the Church, than the people of the Jews: but according to the flesh the kingdom of His Father was the people of Israel. For it was said, And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. It is shewn then that according to the flesh the father of the Lord is David: but according to the Divinity, Christ is not the Son but the Lord of David. The Jews indeed knew Christ according to the flesh, according to the Divinity they knew Him not. Therefore He asked them a question, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right Hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son? And they were not able to answer Him: because they knew not in the Lord Christ save what was visible to the eyes, not what was understood in the heart. But if they had had within eyes as they had without, from that which they saw without they had understood the Son of David; from that which they understood within they had understood the Lord of David.

7. Therefore He changed His Countenance before Abimelech. What is, before Abimelech? Before the kingdom of His Father. What is, before the kingdom of His Father? Before the Jews. And He sent him away, and He departed. Whom did He send away? Even the people of the Jews He sent away, and He departed. Thou seekest now Christ among the Jews, and findest Him not. Wherefore did He send away, and depart? Because He changed His countenance. For they cleaving to the sacrifice after the order of Aaron, held not the Sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek; and so lost Christ, and the Gentiles began to have Him, to whom He had not before sent Preachers. For to them, He had sent Preachers: David himself, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the other Prophets had He sent, and a few thereby learned knowledge, but they a very few in comparison of them that perished, for they were many. For we read that there were thousands. For it is written, A remnant shall be saved. But now thou lookest for circumcised Christians, and findest not. But there were of the Circumcision, in the primitive times of the faith, many thousands of

Christians. Thou lookest for them now, and findest not. Rightly thou findest not, for He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, and He quitted him, and He departed. And before Achis He changed His countenance, and He quitted him, and He departed. For therefore were the names changed, that the change of names might excite our attention to the signification of the mystery: lest we should think that nothing is told or related in the Scriptures of the Psalms, save what is found in the Books of Kings to have been done: and should not seek there figures of things to come, but take them as histories of things past. Therefore when the names are changed, what is said to thee? Here is something shut up; knock; abide not in the letter, for the letter killeth: but desire the Spirit, for the Spirit giveth life: the understanding of the Spirit saveth him that believeth.

8. How then He quitted king Achis, hear now, my Brethren. I said that Achis is interpreted, How is it? Recollect the Gospel; when our Lord Jesus Christ spoke concerning His Body, He said, Except a man eat My Flesh, and drink My Blood, he shall have no life in him. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. And His Disciples who followed Him feared, and were shocked at His discourse; and understanding it not, they thought that our Lord Jesus Christ said some hard thing, as if they were to eat His Flesh, and to drink His Blood which they saw; and could not endure it, saying as it were, How is it? For error and ignorance and folly are in the person of king Achis. For when it is said, How is it, something is not understood; where something is not understood, there is the darkness of ignorance. There was then, in them, the kingdom of ignorance, as it were king Achis: that is, the kingdom of error prevailed over them. But He said, Except a man eat My Flesh, and drink My Blood: because He had changed His Countenance, it seemed like raving and madness, that He should give to men His Flesh to be eaten, and His Blood to be drunk. Therefore David was thought, as it were, mad, when Achis himself said, Wherefore have ye brought this mad fellow unto me? Doth not this seem madness, Eat My Flesh and drink My Blood? And He saying, Whoso eateth not My Flesh and drinketh not My Blood, shall have no life in him, seemeth to be mad. But to king Achis He seemeth to be mad, that is, to the foolish and ignorant. Therefore He quitted them, and departed: understanding fled from their heart, lest they should be able to comprehend Him. And what said they? As

it were, How is it? which is interpreted, Achis. For they said, How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat? They thought the Lord a mad fellow, and that He knew not what He spoke, and that He was insane. But He Who knew what He said, in that change of His Countenance, and in that seeming raving and madness, declared mysteries, and ‘affected, and drummed upon the doors of the city.’

9. Now must we enquire what that also may be, He affected, and drummed upon the doors. Not without reason is it said, He fell down at the doors of the gate: not without reason is it said, His spittle ran down upon His beard; these things are not said in vain. With the wages of understanding, a long discourse ought not to be burdensome. Ye know, my Brethren, that those same Jews, before whom He changed His Countenance, and sent them away, and departed, this day rest. If they who lost Christ, whom He sent away, and departed, have a vain rest; we have a fruitful rest, that we may understand Christ, Who sent them away, and came unto us. All things are not done in vain; neither were they in that madness of David, of which it is said, He affected, and drummed upon the gates of the city, and was carried in His own hands, and fell down at the doors of the gate, and His spittle ran down over His beard. He affected: what is, He affected? He had an affection. What is it to have an affection? He had compassion on our infirmities, and therefore would He to take upon Himself the same flesh, that therein He might destroy death. Having then compassion on us, He was said to affect. Therefore doth the Apostle reprove those who are hard and without affection. For reprovng some he saith, Without natural affection, unmerciful; where is affection, there is mercy. Where is mercy? He had mercy on us from above: for if He had refused to empty himself, remaining in that Form in which He was equal with the Father from everlasting, we had always remained in death: but that He might deliver us from everlasting death, to which the sin of pride had brought us, He humbled Himself, being made obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore He affected, because He came even to the death of the Cross. And because whoever is crucified is extended on wood; and that to make a drum, flesh, that is, skin, is extended on wood, therefore it is said, He drummed, that is, He was crucified, He was extended on wood. He affected, that is, He had affection for us, that He might lay down His life for His sheep. He

drummed: How? upon the doors of the city. The door is that which is opened to us, that we may believe in God. We had closed the door against Christ, and had opened it to the devil. Against Life Eternal had we our hearts closed. But He, the Lord our God, because we men had our hearts closed against life eternal, and would not see the Word, Which Angels see, with His Cross opened the hearts of mortal men, that is, He drummed against the doors of the city.

10. And was carried in His Own Hands: how indeed this could be done in case of a man, who, Brethren, can understand? For who is carried in 'his own hands?' In the hands of others can a man be carried, in his own hands is no man carried. How this may be understood of David according to the letter, we find not; but in Christ we find. For Christ was carried in His Own Hands, when commending His Own Body, He said, This is My Body. For That Body He carried in His Own Hands. This is the Humility of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is much commended unto men. According to this He exhorteth us, Brethren, to live; that is, that we should imitate His Humility; that we should slay Goliath, and holding Christ, should conquer pride. For, He fell down at the doors of the gate. What is, fell down? Cast Himself down unto humility. What is, at the doors of the gate? At the beginning of faith, whereby we are saved. For none beginneth but from the beginning of faith, as it is said in the Song of Songs, Thou shalt come, and shalt pass through from the beginning of faith. We shall come face to face; as it is written, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. We shall see Him. When? When these things have passed away. Hear also the Apostle Paul, Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Before then we see face to face the Word, which Angels see, we have yet need of the doors of the gate, at which the Lord fell down, humbling Himself even unto death.

11. What is it that, His spittle ran down over His beard? For in this, He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, or Achis, and He quitted him, and He departed; those that understood not, He quitted. To whom went He? To the Gentiles. Therefore let us understand, what they could not. The spittle of David ran down over his beard; what is, The spittle? As it were,

infantile words; for spittle runneth down with infants. Were not these like infantile words, Eat ye My Flesh, and drink My Blood? But those infantile words covered His strength. For by the beard is understood strength. The spittle therefore running down over His beard, what is it but words of weakness covering His strength? Your Holiness hath now, as I trust, understood the title of this Psalm. If we should wish now to explain the Psalm also, there is fear lest those things which ye have heard should slip out of your hearts. The title of this Psalm have we explained in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ: since to-morrow is the Lord's Day, and we owe unto you a discourse, let us defer unto to-morrow the text of the Psalm, that ye may hear it also with pleasure.

discourse the second

Those of you who were present yesterday, I doubt not, remember our promise; and now it is time, in the Name of the Lord, to pay the debt. He inspired us to promise, He will also give us power to pay, being always debtors of charity. For that it is which is always paid, and yet always due, as saith the Apostle, Owe no man any thing, but to love one another. The title of this Psalm we explained yesterday, and when the exposition detained us long, the text of the same Psalm we deferred to explain. Let us then hear what the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of His holy Prophet, saith in the words of the Psalm, agreeable to the title which yesterday we handled. Those who were not then present perhaps demand of us also this as a debt; but lest haply through other such delays, we defraud those to whom we ought now to pay what we owe, from a brief recital thereof let them understand as much as they can, who to-day are here present, and yesterday were not. But if any thing moveth them, which they may wish to enquire of more diligently, they will find our ears open to them in Christ's Name, at any other time, lest this be hindered.

2. I said that it was written in the Book of Kings, that David, when he fled from Saul, would be hid with a certain king of Gath named Achis; but when his glory had been made known there, lest, through envy, the same king, to whom he had fled, should contrive any thing against him, he feigned madness, and, as if possessed with frenzy, changed his countenance, and as we read, affected, and drummed upon the doors of the city, and was carried

in his own hands, and fell down at the doors of the gate. And king Achis said, Wherefore have ye brought this fellow to me: have I need of madmen? And so sent him away, that it might be fulfilled which here is written, He changed His Countenance, and He sent him away, and He departed. But he quitted king Achis; but here it is written, that He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, and He quitted him, and He departed. But I said that the names were changed that it might be shewn to be a mystery; lest if the same name had been repeated in the title of the Psalm, he should seem not to have prophesied to us something mysterious, but to have related it as a fact. Both names then contain a great mystery. For Achis is interpreted, How is it? Abimelech is interpreted, The kingdom of my father. In that word then which is called, How is it, is signified ignorance, and by it is to be understood, the expression of one wondering and not perceiving: but in that which is called Abimelech, is signified the kingdom of the Jews. For that in the person of Christ may be called, The kingdom of My father, because His father, according to the flesh, was David, and the kingdom of David was in the nation of the Jews. Therefore, before the kingdom of His father, He changed His Countenance, and He sent him away, and He departed; because there was there a sacrifice after the order of Aaron, and afterwards He of His Own Body and Blood appointed a sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek. He changed then His Countenance in the Priesthood, and sent away the kingdom of the Jews, and came to the Gentiles. What then is, He affected? He was full of affection. For what is so full of affection as the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, seeing our infirmity, that He might deliver us from everlasting death, underwent temporal death with such great injury and contumely? And He drummed: because a drum is not made, except when a skin is extended on wood; and David drummed, to signify that Christ should be crucified. But, He drummed upon the doors of the city: what are the doors of the city, but our hearts which we had closed against Christ, Who by the drum of His Cross hath opened the hearts of mortal men? And was carried in His Own Hands: how carried in His Own Hands? Because when He commended His Own Body and Blood, He took into His Hands that which the faithful know; and in a manner carried Himself, when He said, This is My Body. And He fell down at the doors of the gate; that is, He humbled Himself. For this it is, to fall down even at the very beginning of our faith. For the door of the gate is the beginning of

faith; whence beginneth the Church, and arriveth at last even unto sight: that as it believeth those things which it seeth not, it may deserve to enjoy them, when it shall have begun to see face to face. So is the title of the Psalm; briefly we have heard it; let us now hear the very words of Him that affecteth, and drummeth upon the doors of the city.

3. Ver. 1. I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be ever in my mouth. So speaketh Christ, so also let a Christian speak; for a Christian is in the Body of Christ; and therefore was Christ made Man, that that Christian might be enabled to be an Angel, who saith, I will bless the Lord at all times. When shall I bless the Lord? When He blesseth thee? When the goods of this world abound? When thou hast great abundance of corn, oil, and wine, of gold and silver, of servants and cattle; when this mortal health remaineth unwounded and sound; when all that are born to thee grow up, nothing is withdrawn by immature death, happiness wholly reigneth in thy house, and all things overflow around thee; then shalt thou bless the Lord? No; but at all times. Therefore both then, and when according to the time, or according to the scourges of our Lord God, these things are troubled, are taken away, are seldom born to thee, and born pass away. For these things come to pass, and thence followeth penury, need, labour, pain, and temptation. But thou, who hast sung, I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall be ever in my mouth, both when He giveth them, bless; and when He taketh them away, bless. For it is He that giveth, it is He that taketh away: but Himself from him that blesseth Him He taketh not away.

4. But who is it that blesseth the Lord at all times, except the humble in heart. For very humility taught our Lord in His Own Body and Blood: because when He commendeth His Own Body and Blood, He commendeth His Humility, in that which is written in this history, in that seeming madness of David, which we have passed by, And his spittle ran down over his beard. When the Apostle was read, Ye heard the same spittle, but running down over the beard. One saith perhaps, What spittle have we heard? Was it not read but now, where the Apostle saith, The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom? But now it was read, But we preach, saith he, Christ crucified, (for then He drummed,) unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are

called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Because the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men. For spittle signifieth foolishness; spittle signifieth weakness. But if the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men; let not the spittle as it were offend thee, but observe that it runneth down over the beard: for as by the spittle, weakness; so by the beard, strength is signified. He covered then His Strength by the body of His Weakness, and that which without was weak, appeared as it were in spittle; but within His Divine Strength was covered as a beard. Therefore humility is commended unto us. Be humble if thou wouldest bless the Lord at all times, and that His praise should be ever in thy mouth. Because Job not only blessed the Lord, when he had abundance of all things, wherewith we read that he was made both rich and happy, rich in cattle and servants and houses, happy in children and in all good things. Taken away were all these at one time, yet he fulfilled what in this Psalm is written, saying, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so it came to pass, Blessed be the name of the Lord. See here thou hast an example of one blessing the Lord at all times.

5. But wherefore doth man bless the Lord at all times? Because he is humble. What is it to be humble? To take not praise unto himself. Who would himself be praised, is proud: who is not proud, is humble. Wouldest thou not then be proud? That thou mayest be humble, say what is here written; (ver. 2.) In the Lord shall my soul be praised: the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. Those then who will not be praised in the Lord, are not humble, but fierce, rough, lifted up, proud. Gentle beasts would the Lord have; be thou the Lord's beast, that is, be thou humble. He sitteth upon thee, He ruleth thee: fear not lest thou stumble, and fall headlong: that indeed is thy infirmity; but consider Who sitteth upon thee. Thou art an ass's colt, but thou carriest Christ. For even He on an ass's colt came into the city; and that beast was gentle. Was that beast praised? Was it said to that beast, Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord? The ass carried; but it was He that was carried, that by those going before and following was praised. And haply said the beast, In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. That ass never said this, Brethren; but this must the People say, which doth imitate

that beast, if it would carry its Lord. Haply the People is wroth that it is compared to the ass, whereon the Lord sat; and some uplifted and proud will say to me, See he hath made us asses. Let him be the Lord's ass, whoever saith this, lest he be horse or mule which have no understanding; for ye know the Psalm where it is said, Be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding. For horse and mules sometimes lift up their neck, and by their own fierceness throw off their rider. They are tamed with the bit, with bridle, with stripes, until they learn to submit, and to carry their master. But thou, before thy jaws are bruised with the bridle, be humble, and carry thy Lord: wish not praise for thyself, but praised be He, Who sitteth upon thee, and say thou, In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. For when they hear that are not humble, they are not glad, but wroth: and the same are they which say that we have made them asses; but let them which are humble deign to hear, and to be what they hear.

6. Now followeth, (ver. 3.) O magnify the Lord with me. Who is this that exhorteth us, that we should magnify the Lord with him? Whoever, Brethren, is in the body of Christ, ought for this to labour, that the Lord may be magnified with him. For he loveth the Lord, whoever he is. And how doth he love Him? So as not to envy his fellow-lover. For whoever loveth carnally, must needs love with deadly jealousy. If haply for a great sum he hath been able to see naked her whom with deadly love he hath desired, doth he wish that another also should see her? Needs must he be wounded with jealousy and envy, if another also have seen her. And so is chastity preserved, if he alone hath seen who may, and not another; or not even he. Not so is the Wisdom of God. Her we shall see, face to face, and we shall all see, and no one there will be jealous. Unto all She sheweth Herself, and unto all is pure and chaste. They are changed into Her, and She is not changed into them. She is Truth indeed, She is God indeed. Have ye ever heard, Brethren, that our God can be changed? The Truth Supreme above all is He, the Word of God is He, the Wisdom of God is He, by Whom all things were made: He hath His lovers. But what saith His lover? O magnify the Lord with me: I would not alone magnify the Lord, I would not alone love, I would not alone embrace Him. For neither if I embrace Him, will there be no room where another may lay his hands. Such breadth is there in

Wisdom Itself, that all souls may embrace and enjoy Her. And what shall I say, Brethren? Let them blush who so love God as to envy others. Abandoned men love a charioteer, and whoever loveth a charioteer or hunter, wisheth the whole people to love with him, and exhorteth, saying, Love with me this pantomime, love with me this or that shame. He calleth among the people that shame may be loved with him; and doth not a Christian call in the Church, that the Truth of God may be loved with him? Stir up then love in yourselves, Brethren; and call to every one of yours, and say, O magnify the Lord with me. Let there be in you that fervour. Wherefore are these things recited and explained? If ye love God, bring quickly to the love of God all who are joined unto you, and all who are in your house; if the Body of Christ is loved by you, that is, if the unity of the Church, bring them quickly to enjoy, and say, O magnify the Lord with me.

7. And let us exalt His Name together. What is, let us exalt His Name together? That is, in one. For many copies so have it, O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt His Name in one. Whether it be said, together, or in one, it is the same thing. Therefore bring quickly whom ye can, by exhorting, by transporting, by beseeching, by disputing, by rendering a reason, with meekness, with gentleness. Bring them quickly unto love; that if they magnify the Lord, they may magnify Him in one. The party of Donatus seem indeed unto themselves to magnify the Lord: why doth the whole world offend them? Let us, Brethren, say unto them, O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt His Name in one. Wherefore would ye magnify the Lord in separation? He is One; wherefore would ye make two peoples of God? Wherefore would ye rend the Body of Christ? For surely He hung upon the Cross, when He drummed; and when He hung upon the Cross, He gave up the ghost; and they came who had suspended Him, and found that He had given up the ghost, and they brake not His legs: but the legs of the thieves, yet living on the cross, they brake, that by a speedy death through very pain they might be freed from their torment, which thing was wont to be done to persons crucified. So came the persecutor, and found that the Lord had quietly given up the ghost, as He said Himself, I have power to lay down my life. (For whom laid he down His life? For all His people, for His whole body.) So the persecutor came, and brake not the legs of Christ; Donatus came, and rent the Church of Christ. The Body of

Christ upon the Cross is whole, even in the hands of His persecutors: and in the hands of Christians the Church of Christ is not whole. Let us then, Brethren, cry with groans as much as we can, saying, O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name in one. For so the Church crieth unto them; it is the voice of the Church crying unto them who have cut themselves off from her. For whereby were they rent from her? Through pride. But Christ teacheth humility, when He commendeth His Body and Blood: this as I said to your Holiness, is treated and celebrated in the text of this Psalm; wherein is commended the Body and Blood of Christ, when the Humility of Christ is commended, which for our sakes He deigned to take upon Himself.

8. Ver. 4. I sought the Lord, and He heard me. Where heard the Lord? Within. Where giveth He? Within. There thou prayest, there thou art heard, there thou art blessed. Thou hast prayed, thou art heard, thou art blessed; and he knoweth not who standeth by thee: it is all carried on in secret, as the Lord saith in the Gospel, Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father Which is in secret; and thy Father Which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. When therefore thou enterest into thy chamber, thou enterest into thy heart. Blessed are they who rejoice when they enter into their heart, and find therein nought of evil. Let your Holiness attend; as men are unwilling to enter their houses who have bad wives, as they go out to their business, and rejoice; when the hour has come to return to their own house they are sorrowful; for they are about to enter to weariness, to murmurings, to bitterness, to confusions; for a house is not quiet, where between a man and his wife there is no peace; and to him it is better to wander about abroad. If then they are miserable, who when they return to their own walls fear lest they be troubled by some disturbance of their own family, how much more miserable are they, who are unwilling to return to their own conscience, lest they be overturned by the strife of their sins. Therefore that thou mayest be able to return willingly to thy heart, cleanse it, for Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. Take away thence filthy desires, take away the spot of avarice, take away the plague of superstition, take away sacrilege, and evil thoughts; hatreds also, I say not against a friend, but even against an enemy; take away all these; so enter into thy heart, and thou shalt rejoice therein. When then thou hast

begun to rejoice, the very cleanness of thy heart will delight thee, and will make thee to pray: as when thou comest to any place, where is silence, where is quiet, the place is clean; thou sayest, Let us pray here; and the quietness of the place delighteth thee, and thou believest that God will there hear thee. If then the visible cleanness of a place delighteth thee, wherefore doth not the uncleanness of thy heart offend thee? Enter in, cleanse all, lift up thine eyes unto God, and immediately he will hear thee. Cry and say, I sought the Lord, and He heard me; and delivered me out of all my troubles. Wherefore? Because even when thou art enlightened, when thou hast begun here to have a good conscience, there remain troubles; because there remaineth some infirmity, until death be swallowed up in victory, and this mortal have put on immortality: needs must thou in this world be scourged; needs must thou suffer some temptations, some suggestions: God will cleanse all, He will deliver thee from all thy troubles; seek thou Him.

9. I sought the Lord, and He heard me. Who then are not heard, seek not the Lord. Attend, Holy Brethren; he said not, I sought gold from the Lord, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord long life, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord this or that, and He heard me. It is one thing to seek any thing from the Lord, another to seek the Lord Himself. I sought (saith he) the Lord, and He heard me. But thou, when thou prayest, saying, Kill that my enemy, seekest not the Lord, but, as it were, makest thyself a judge over thy enemy, and makest thy God an executioner. How knowest thou that he is not better than thou, whose death thou seekest? In that very thing haply he is, that he seeketh not thine. Therefore seek not from the Lord any thing without, but seek the Lord Himself, and He will hear thee, and while thou yet speakest, He will say, Lo, here I am. What is, Lo, here I am? Lo, I am present: what wouldest thou? what seekest thou of Me? Whatever I should give thee, is more vile than I; Myself have thou, Me enjoy, Me embrace: not yet art thou able wholly; by faith touch Me, and thou shalt cleave unto Me, (this God saith to thee,) and thy other burdens will I remove from off thee, that thou mayest wholly cleave unto Me, when I have changed this thy mortal to immortality, that thou mayest be equal to My Angels, and ever see My Face, and mayest rejoice, and thy joy none shall take from thee; because thou soughtest the Lord, and He heard thee, and out of all thy troubles delivered thee.

10. I have said who was the exhorter, namely, that lover, who would not alone embrace what he loveth, and saith, (ver. 5.) Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. For he saith what he himself proved. For some spiritual person in the Body of Christ, or even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself according to the flesh, the Head exhorting His Own Members, saith; what? Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Or rather some spiritual Christian inviteth us to approach to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But let us approach to Him and be lightened; not as the Jews approached to Him, that they might be darkened; for they approached to Him that they might crucify Him: let us approach to Him that we may receive His Body and Blood. They by Him crucified were darkened; we by eating and drinking The Crucified are lightened. Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Lo, this is said to the Gentiles. Christ was crucified amid the Jews raging and seeing; the Gentiles were absent; lo, they have approached who were in darkness, and they who saw not are lightened. Whereby approach the Gentiles? By following with faith, by longing with the heart, by running with charity. Thy feet are thy charity. Have two feet, be not lame. What are thy two feet? The two commandments of love, of thy God, and of thy Neighbour. With these feet run thou unto God, approach unto Him, for He hath both exhorted thee to run, and hath Himself shed His Own Light, as he hath magnificently and divinely continued. And your faces shall not be ashamed. Approach (saith he) unto Him, and be ye lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed. No face shall be ashamed but of the proud. Wherefore? Because he would be lifted up, and when he hath suffered insult, or ignominy, or mischance in this world, or any affliction, he is ashamed. But fear not thou, approach unto Him, and thou shalt not be ashamed. Whatever thy enemy doth to thee, he seemeth to be superior to thee before men, but before God thou art superior. I have taken, I have bound, I have killed: how superior seem they to themselves who say these things! How superior seemed the Jews unto themselves, when they buffeted the Lord, when they spat in His face, and smote Him on the head with a reed, when they crowned Him with thorns, when they covered Him with a robe of ignominy! How superior were they! And He seemed inferior, because He fell down at the doors of the gate: but He was not ashamed. For He was the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. As then the Light cannot be confounded, so He

suffereth not him that is lightened to be confounded. Therefore approach unto Him, and be ye lightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed.

11. But saith some one, How shall I approach unto Him? With so great evils, so great sins am I burdened; so great crimes cry out from my conscience; how can I dare to approach unto God? How? If thou humble thyself through penance. But I am ashamed, sayest thou, to do penance. Approach then unto Him, and thou shalt be lightened, and thy face shall not be ashamed. For if the fear of being ashamed recalleth thee from penance, but penance maketh thee to approach unto God: seest thou not that thou bearest thy punishment in thy face, for therefore was thy face ashamed, because it approached not unto God, and therefore it approached not, because it will not do penance? As the Prophet testifieth, (ver. 6.) The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him. He teacheth thee how thou mayest be heard. Therefore art thou not heard, because thou art rich. Lest haply thou say, thou criedst and wast not heard, hear wherefore; The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him. As poor cry thou, and the Lord heareth. And how shall I cry as poor? By not, if thou hast aught, presuming therefrom upon thy own strength: by understanding that thou art needy; by understanding that so long art thou poor, as thou hast not Him Who maketh thee rich. But how did the Lord hear him? And saved him out of all his troubles. And how saveth He men out of all their troubles? (Ver. 7.) The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them. So it is written, brethren, not as some bad copies have it, The Lord shall send His Angel round about them that fear Him, and He shall deliver them: but thus, The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them. Whom called He here the Angel of the Lord, who shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them? Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is called in Prophecy, the Angel of the great Counsel, the Messenger of the great Counsel; so the Prophets called Him. Even He then, the Angel of the great Counsel, that is, the Messenger, shall send unto them that fear the Lord, and shall deliver them. Fear not then lest thou be hid: wheresoever thou hast feared the Lord, there doth that Angel know thee, Who shall send to succour thee, and shall deliver thee.

12. Now will He speak openly of the same Sacrament, whereby He was carried in His Own Hands. (Ver. 8.) O taste and see that the Lord is good. Doth not the Psalm now open itself, and shew thee that seeming insanity and constant madness, the same insanity and sober inebriety of that David, who in a figure shewed I know not what, when in the person of king Achis they said to him, How is it? When the Lord said, Except a man eat My Flesh and drink My Blood, he shall have no life in him? And they in whom reigned Achis, that is, error and ignorance, said; what said they? How can this man give us his flesh to eat? If thou art ignorant, Taste and see that the Lord is good: but if thou understandest not, thou art king Achis: David shall change His Countenance and shall depart from thee, and shall quit thee, and shall depart.

13. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. Why needeth this to be explained at length? Whoever trusteth not in the Lord, is miserable. Who is there that trusteth not in the Lord? He that trusteth in himself. Sometimes, which is even worse, (my Brethren, attend,) sometimes men trust not in themselves, but in other men. While Garseus is alive and well, thou canst do me no harm; saith one, and perhaps he speaketh of one already dead. In this very city, saith one, while such an one is alive and well; and he perhaps has died in another place. And how soon do men say this: they say not, I trust in God, that He will not permit thee to hurt me. They say not, I trust in my God, that although He may permit thee to touch somewhat of mine, to touch my soul He will not permit thee. But when they say, While such an one is alive and well, they both refuse to have safety themselves, and weigh down these, through whom they think to have safety.

14. Ver. 9. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. For many therefore will not fear God the Lord, lest they suffer hunger. It is said to them, Defraud not; and they say, Whence can I feed myself? No art can be without imposture; no business can be without fraud. But fraud God punisheth: fear God. But if I should fear God, I shall not have whence to live. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. He promiseth plenty to him that trembleth, and doubteth, lest haply if he should fear God, he should lose things superfluous. The Lord fed thee despising Him, and will He desert thee

fearing Him? Attend, and say not, Such a one is rich, and I am poor. I fear the Lord, he by not fearing how much has he gained, and I by fearing am bare! See what follows; (Ver. 10.) The rich do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. If thou receive it according to the letter, He seemeth to deceive thee, for thou seest that many rich men that are wicked die in their riches, and are not made poor while they live; thou seest them grow old, and come even to the end of life amid great abundance and riches. Thou seest their funeral pomp celebrated with great profusion, the man himself brought rich even to the sepulchre, having expired in beds of ivory, his family weeping around; and thou sayest in thy mind, if haply thou knowest some both sins and crimes done by him: I know what things that man hath done; lo, he hath grown old, he hath died in his bed, his friends follow him to the grave, his funeral is celebrated with all this pomp; I know what he hath done; the Scripture has deceived me, and has spoken falsely, where I hear and sing; The rich do lack and suffer hunger. When was this man in need? when did he suffer hunger? But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Daily I rise up to Church, daily I bend the knee, daily I seek the Lord, and have nothing good: this man sought not the Lord, and he hath died in the midst of all these good things! Thus thinking, the snare of offence choketh him; for he seeketh mortal food on the earth, and seeketh not a true reward in heaven, and so he putteth his head into the devil's noose, his jaws are tied close, and the devil holdeth him fast unto evil doing, that so he may imitate the evil men, whom he seeth to die in such plenty.

15. Therefore understand it not so. And how shall I understand it? Of spiritual goods. But where are they? They are not seen with the eyes, but with the heart. I see not those same goods. He seeth them who loveth. Righteousness I see not. No, for it is not gold, nor is it silver. If it were gold, thou wouldest see it. Because it is faith, thou seest it not. And if thou seest not faith, wherefore lovest thou a faithful servant? Ask thyself, what sort of servant thou lovest. Perhaps thou hast a servant handsome, of good stature, well formed; but a thief, good for nothing, fraudulent: but perhaps thou hast another small of stature, deformed in face, of bad complexion; but faithful, thrifty, sober: attend, I pray thee; which of these two lovest thou? If thou askest the eyes of the flesh, the handsome dishonest one prevaieth with

thee; if the eyes of the heart, then prevaieth the deformed faithful. Thou seest then what it is thou wouldest that another should shew unto thee, namely, faith; do thou shew unto him the same. Wherefore rejoicest thou at him who sheweth faith towards thee, and praisest him for those goods which are not seen but with the eye of the heart? When thou art filled with spiritual riches, canst thou be poor? And was he therefore rich, because he had a bed of ivory; and art thou poor who hast the chamber of thy heart filled with such jewelry of virtues, justice, truth, charity, faith, endurance? Unfold thy riches, if thou hast them, and compare them with the riches of the rich. But such an one has found in the market mules of great value, and has bought them. If thou couldest find faith to be sold, how much wouldest thou give for that, which God willeth that thou shouldest have gratis, and thou art ungrateful? Those rich then lack, they lack, and what is heavier, they lack bread. But do not haply think that they lack gold and silver, although indeed they lack these also. How much had such a man; and yet what could ever satisfy him? So he died lacking, because he wished to gain more than he possessed. They lack even bread. How lack they even bread? If thou understandest bread. For He hath said, I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. And again, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing: but what manner of good, I have already said,

16. Ver. 11. Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Ye think, brethren, that I say this: think that David saith it; think that an Apostle saith it; nay think that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith it; Come, ye children, hearken unto Me. Let us hearken unto Him together; hearken ye unto Him through us. For He would teach us; He the Humble, He that drummeth, He that affecteth, would teach us. And what saith He? Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Let Him then teach, let us give ear, let us give heart. Let us not open the ears of the flesh, and shut those of the heart; but as He Himself said in His Gospel, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Who would not hear Christ teaching through His Prophet?

17. Ver. 12. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days? He asketh a question. Doth not every one among you answer, I? Is there any man among you that loveth not life, that is, that desireth not life, and loveth not to see good days? Do ye not daily thus murmur, and thus speak; How long shall we suffer these things? Daily are they worse and worse: in our fathers' time were days more joyful, were days better. O if thou couldst ask those same, thy fathers, in like manner would they murmur to thee of their own days. Our fathers were happy, miserable are we, evil days have we: such an one ruled over us, we thought that after his death might some refreshing be given to us; worse things have come: O God, shew unto us good days! What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days? Let him not seek here good days. A good thing he seeketh, but not in its right place doth he seek it. As, if thou shouldest seek some righteous man in a country, wherein he lived not, it would be said to thee, A good man thou seekest, a great man thou seekest, seek him still, but not here; in vain thou seekest him here, thou wilt never find him. Good days thou seekest, together let us seek them, seek not here. But our fathers had them. Ye are deceived: all men here have so laboured. Read the Scriptures; therefore God willed them to be written, that we might have consolation. In the time of Elias was there a famine, our fathers suffered it. The heads of dead beasts were sold for gold; they slew their own people, and ate them; and two women agreed together to kill their sons, and eat them; one killed her son, and the two ate him together; the other refused to kill her son, and she who had first slain her son sued her, and this her suit came before the king, they betook themselves even before the king, contending concerning the slaying of their sons. As concerning such food, God avert what we read. Always are there evil days in this world, but always good days in God. Good days had Abraham, but within, in his heart: evil days had he, when through famine he changed his place, and sought food. So all men have sought food. Had Paul good days, who saith, In hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness? But let not the servants be wroth; the Lord Himself had not good days in this world: insults, injuries, the Cross, and all those evils did He suffer.

18. Let not a Christian then murmur, let him see whose steps he followeth: but if he loveth good days, let him hearken unto Him teaching and saying,

Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What wouldest thou? Life and good days. Hear, and do. (Ver. 13.) Keep thy tongue from evil. This do. I will not, saith a miserable man, I will not keep my tongue from evil, and yet I desire life and good days. If a workman of thine should say to thee, I indeed lay waste this vineyard, yet I require of thee my reward; thou broughtest me to the vineyard to lop and prune it, I cut away all the useful wood, I will cut short also the very trunks of the vines, that thou have thereon nothing to gather, and when I have done this, thou shalt repay to me my labour. Wouldest thou not call him mad? Wouldest thou not drive him from thy house or ever he put his hand to the knife? Such are those men, who would both do evil, and swear falsely, and speak blasphemy against God, and murmur, and defraud, and be drunken, and dispute, and commit adultery, and use charms, and consult diviners, and withal see good days. To such it is said, thou canst not doing ill seek a good reward. If thou art unjust, shall God also be unjust? What shall I do, then? What desirest thou? Life I desire, good days I desire. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile, that is, defraud not any, lie not to any.

19. But what is, Depart from evil? It is little that thou injure none, murder none, steal not, commit not adultery, do no wrong, speak no false witness; Depart from evil. When thou hast departed, thou sayest, Now I am safe, I have done all, I shall have life, I shall see good days. Not only saith he, Depart from evil, but also, and do good. It is nothing that thou spoil not: clothe the naked. If thou hast not spoiled, thou hast declined from evil; but thou wilt not do good, except thou receive the stranger into thine house. So then depart from evil, as to do good. Seek peace, and ensue it. He hath not said, Thou shalt have peace here; seek it, and ensue it. Whither shall I ensue it? Whither it hath gone before. For the Lord is our peace, hath risen again, and hath ascended into Heaven. Seek peace, and ensue it; because when thou also hast risen, this mortal shall be changed, and thou shalt embrace peace there where no man shall trouble thee. For there is perfect peace, where thou wilt not hunger. For here it is bread that maketh thy peace: withhold bread, and see what a war there will be within thy bowels. How is it that even the righteous groan here, Brethren? That ye may know that here we seek peace, but shall obtain it only in the end. But in part must we have

it here, that there we may deserve it wholly. What is, in part? Let us be peaceful here, let us love our neighbour as ourselves. So love thy brother as thyself, be at peace with him. But there cannot but exist some strifes, as between brethren and between Saints have existed, as between Barnabas and Paul, but not such as to destroy concord, not such as to interrupt charity. For even thyself thou sometimes resistest, and yet thou hatest not thyself. For every one who repenteth of any thing, striveth with himself. He hath sinned, he returneth, he is angry with himself that he hath done this, that he hath committed that. Therefore he is at strife with himself, but that strife tendeth to concord. See how a certain righteous man striveth with himself, saying, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me? Hope thou in God; for I will yet praise Him. When he saith to his soul, Why dost thou disquiet me? it surely did disquiet him. He wished perhaps himself to suffer for Christ, and his soul became sorrowful. And he who knew and said, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? had not yet peace with himself; but in his heart he clave unto Christ, that his soul might follow Him, and not disquiet himself. Seek then peace, Brethren. The Lord saith, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. Peace in this world I promise not unto you. In this life is not true peace, neither tranquillity. The joy of immortality, the society of Angels, is promised. But whoever hath not sought it while here he hath been, shall not have it, when there he shall arrive.

20. Ver. 15. The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous: fear not then; labour; the eyes of the Lord are upon thee. And His Ears are open unto their prayers. What wouldest thou more? If an householder in a great house should not hearken to a servant murmuring, he would complain, and say, What hardship do we here suffer, and none heareth us. Canst thou say this of God, What hardships I suffer, and none heareth me? If He heard me, haply, sayest thou, He would take away my tribulation: I cry unto Him, and yet have tribulation. Only do thou hold fast His ways, and when thou art in tribulation, He heareth thee. But He is a Physician, and still hast thou something of putrefaction; thou criest out, but still He cutteth, and taketh not away His Hand, until He hath cut as much as pleaseth Him. For that Physician is cruel who heareth a man, and spareth his wound and putrefaction. How do mothers rub their children in the baths for their health.

Do not the little ones cry out in their hands? Are they then cruel because they spare not, nor hearken unto their tears? Are they not full of affection? And yet the children cry out, and are not spared. So our God also is full of charity, but therefore seemeth He not to hear, that He may spare and heal us for everlasting.

21. The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His Ears are open unto their prayers. Haply say the wicked, I securely do evil, because the Eyes of the Lord are not upon me: God attendeth to the righteous, me He seeth not, and whatever I do, I do securely. Immediately added the Holy Spirit, seeing the thoughts of men, and said, The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His Ears are open unto their prayers: (ver. 16.) but the Face of the Lord is against them that do evil; to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

22. Ver. 17. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles. Righteous were the Three Children; out of the furnace cried they unto the Lord, and in His praises their flames cooled. The flame could not approach nor hurt the innocent and righteous Children praising God, and He delivered them out of the fire. Some one saith, Lo, truly righteous were those who were heard, as it is written, The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles: but I have cried, and He delivereth me not; either I am not righteous, or I do not the things which He commandeth me, or haply He seeth me not. Fear not: only do what He commandeth; and if He deliver thee not bodily, He will deliver thee spiritually. For He Who took out of the fire the Three Children, did He take out of the fire the Maccabees? Did not the first sing hymns in the flames, these last in the flames expire? The God of the Three Children, was not He the God also of the Maccabees? The one He delivered, the other He delivered not. Nay, He delivered both: but the Three Children He so delivered, that even the carnal were confounded; but the Maccabees therefore He delivered not so, that those who persecuted them should go into greater torments, while they thought that they had overcome God's Martyrs. He delivered Peter, when the Angel came unto him being in prison, and said, Arise, and go forth, and suddenly his chains were loosed, and he followed the Angel, and He delivered him. Had Peter lost

righteousness when He delivered him not from the cross? Did He not deliver him then? Even then He delivered him. Did his long life make him unrighteous? Haply He heard him more at last than at first, when truly he delivered him out of all his troubles. For when He first delivered him, how many things did he suffer afterwards! For thither He sent him at last, where he could have suffered no evil.

23. Ver. 18. The Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart; and saveth such as be lowly in spirit. God is High: let a Christian be lowly. If he would that the Most High God draw nigh unto him, let him be lowly. A great mystery, Brethren. God is above all: thou raisest thyself, and touchest not Him: thou humblest thyself, and He descendeth unto thee. (Ver. 19.) Many are the troubles of the righteous: doth He say, Therefore let Christians be righteous, therefore let them hear My Word, that they may suffer no tribulation? He promiseth not this; but saith, Many are the troubles of the righteous. Rather, if they be unrighteous they have fewer troubles, if righteous they have many. But after few tribulations, or none, these shall come to tribulation everlasting, whence they shall never be delivered: but the righteous after many tribulations shall come to peace everlasting, where they shall never suffer any evil. Many are the tribulations of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of all.

24. Ver. 20. The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken: this also, Brethren, let us not receive carnally. Bones are the firm supports of the faithful. For as in flesh our bones give firmness, so in the heart of a Christian it is faith that gives firmness. The patience then which is in faith, is as the bones of the inner man: this is that which cannot be broken. The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken. If of our Lord God Jesus Christ he had said this, The Lord keepeth all the bones of His Son; not one of them shall be broken; as is prefigured of Him also in another place, when the lamb was spoken of that should be slain, and it was said of it, Neither shall ye break a bone thereof: then was it fulfilled in the Lord, because when He hung upon the Cross, He expired before they came to the Cross, and found His Body lifeless already, and would not break His legs, that it might be fulfilled which was written. But He gave this promise to other Christians also, The Lord keepeth all their

bones; not one of them shall be broken. Therefore, Brethren, if we see any Saint suffer tribulation, and haply either by a Physician so cut, or by some persecutor so mangled, that his bones be broken; let us not say, This man was not righteous, for this hath the Lord promised to His righteous, of whom He said, The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Wouldest thou see that He spoke of other bones, those which we called the firm supports of faith, that is, patience and endurance in all tribulations? For these are the bones which are not broken. Hear, and see ye in the very Passion of our Lord, what I say. The Lord was in the middle Crucified; near Him were two thieves: the one mocked, the other believed: the one was condemned, the other justified: the one had his punishment both in this world, and that which shall be, but unto the other said the Lord, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise; and yet those who came brake not the bones of the Lord, but of the thieves they brake: as much were broken the bones of the thief who blasphemed, as of the thief who believed. Where then is that which is spoken, The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken? Lo, unto whom He said, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise, could He not keep all his bones? The Lord answereth thee: Yea, I kept them; for the firm support of his faith could not be broken by those blows whereby his legs were broken.

25. Ver. 21. The death of sinners is the worst. Attend, Brethren, for the sake of those things which I said. Truly Great is the Lord, and His Mercy, truly Great is He Who gave to us to eat His Body, wherein He suffered such great things, and His Blood to drink. How regardeth He them that think evil and say, 'Such an one died ill, by beasts was he devoured: he was not a righteous man, therefore he perished ill; for else would he not have perished.' Is he then righteous, who dieth in his own house and in his own bed? This then (sayest thou) it is whereat I wonder; because I know the sins and the crimes of this same man, and yet he died well; in his own house, within his own doors, with no injury of travel, with none even in mature age. Harken, The death of sinners is worst. What seemeth to thee a good death, is worst if thou couldest see within. Thou seest him outwardly lying on his bed, dost thou see him inwardly carried to hell? Harken, Brethren, and learn from the Gospel, what is the 'worst death' of sinners. Were there not two in that age, a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen,

and fared sumptuously every day; another a poor man who lay at his door full of sores, and the dogs came and licked his sores, and he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table? Now it came to pass that the poor man died, (righteous was that poor man,) and was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom. He who saw his body lying at the rich man's door, and no man to bury it, what haply said he? So die he who is my enemy; and whoever persecutes me, so may I see him. His body is accursed with spitting, his wounds stink; and yet in Abraham's bosom he resteth. If we are Christians, let us believe: if we believe not, Brethren, let none feign himself a Christian. Faith bringeth us to the end. As the Lord spake these things, so are they. Doth indeed an astrologer speak unto thee, and it is true, and doth Christ speak, and it is false? But by what sort of death died the rich man? What sort of death must it not be in purple and fine linen, how sumptuous, how pompous! What funeral ceremonies were there! In what spices was that body buried! And yet when he was in hell, being in torments, from the finger of that despised poor man he desired one drop of water to be poured upon his burning tongue, and obtained it not. Learn then what meaneth, The death of sinners is worst; and ask not beds covered with costly garments, and to have the flesh wrapped in many rich things, friends exhibiting a shew of lamentation, a household beating their breasts, a crowd of attendants going before and following when the body is carried out, marble and gilded memorials. For if ye ask those things, they answer you what is false, that of many not light sinners, but altogether wicked, the death is best, who have deserved to be so lamented, so embalmed, so covered, so carried out, so entombed. But ask the Gospel, and it will shew to your faith the soul of the rich man burning in torments, which was nothing profited by all those honours and obsequies, which to his dead body the vanity of the living did afford.

26. But because there are many kinds of sinners, and not to be a sinner is difficult, or perhaps in this life impossible, he added immediately, of what kind of sinners the death is worst. And they that hate the righteous one (saith he) shall perish. What righteous one, but Him that justifieth the ungodly? Whom, but our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is also the propitiation for our sins? Who then hate Him, have the worst death; because they die in their sins, who are not through Him reconciled to our God. (Ver. 22.) For

the Lord redeemeth the souls of His servants. But according to the soul is death to be understood either the worst or best, not according to bodily either dishonour, or honours which men see. And none of them which trust in Him, shall perish; this is the manner of human righteousness, that mortal life, however advanced, because without sin it can not be, in this perisheth not, while it trusteth in Him, in Whom is remission of sins. Amen.

PSALM 35

discourse i

On the first part of the Psalm.

How that this Psalm, by command of my Brethren and fellow-Bishops, hath been laid on me to be handled, be your charity aware. They have willed that we all hear somewhat therefrom. For from Him do we all hear, from Whom we learn together, and in Whose school we are fellow-disciples. The title of it causeth us no delay, for it is both brief, and to be understood not difficult, (especially to those nursed in the Church of God.) For so it is, To David himself. The Psalm then is to David himself: now David is interpreted, Strong in hand, or Desirable. The Psalm then is to the Strong in hand, and Desirable, to Him Who for us hath overcome death, Who unto us hath promised life: for in this is He Strong in hand, that He hath overcome death for us; in this is He Desirable, that He hath promised unto us life eternal. For what stronger than That Hand Which touched the bier, and he that was dead rose up? What stronger than That Hand Which overcame the world, not armed with steel, but pierced with wood? Or what more desirable than He, Whom not having seen, the Martyrs wished even to die, that they might be worthy to come unto Him? Therefore is the Psalm unto Him: to Him let our heart, to Him our tongue sing worthily: if yet Himself shall deign to give somewhat to sing. None to Him singeth worthily, but who hath from Him received what to sing. Nay this which now we sing, was spoken by His Spirit through His Prophet, and in those words wherein we acknowledge both ourselves and Him. Neither do we wrong, because we say both ourselves and Him: since when He was in Heaven, He so cried, Why persecutest thou Me? when Him none touched, and we on earth were in trouble. His Voice then let us hear: now of the Body, now of the Head. For this is a Psalm calling on God, against enemies, amid the tribulations of this world. And surely He is the same Christ, then the Head being in tribulation,

now the Body being in tribulation; yet through tribulations to all His Members giving life eternal, which by promising became He desirable.

2. Ver. 1. Judge Thou, O Lord, (saith he,) them that hurt me, and fight Thou against them that fight against me. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And whereby doth God this for us? (Ver. 2.) Take hold (saith he) of arms and shield, and rise up to my help. A great spectacle is it, to see God armed for thee. And what is His Shield, what are His Arms? Lord, in another place saith the man who here also speaketh, as with the shield of Thy good-will hast Thou compassed us. But His Arms, wherewith He may not only us defend, but also strike His enemies, if we have well profited, shall we ourselves be. For as we from Him have this, that we be armed, so is He armed from us. But He is armed from those, whom He hath made, we are armed with those things which we have received from Him Who made us. These our arms the Apostle in a certain place calleth, The shield of Faith, the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. He hath armed us with such arms as ye have heard, arms admirable, and unconquered, insuperable and shining; spiritual truly and invisible, because we have to fight also against invisible enemies. If thou seest thine enemy, let thine arms be seen. We are armed with faith in those things which we see not, and we overthrow enemies whom we see not. Nevertheless, dearly Beloved, think not that these arms are so that what is a shield is always a shield, or what is a helmet is always a helmet, or what is a breast-plate always a breast-plate. For in these arms corporal it is so, although even those which are made of steel may be changed, so that out of a sword may be made an axe: but the same Apostle we find to have said in one place, The breast-plate of faith, and in another to have said, The shield of faith. Therefore the same faith can be both a breast-plate and a shield, a shield it is, because it receives and repels the darts of the enemies, a breast-plate because it suffers not thy inward parts to be pierced through. These are our arms; but what are God's? We read in a certain place, Deliver my soul from the ungodly, Thy Weapon from the enemies of Thy Hand. What first he said, from the ungodly, that in the following verse is from the enemies of Thy Hand: and what above he called my soul, that in the following verse he called, Thy Weapon, that is, Thy Sword, His soul then he called the Weapon of God: Deliver (saith he) my soul from the ungodly, that is, deliver Thy

Weapon from the enemies of Thy Hand. For Thou takest hold of my soul, and warrest upon my enemies. And what is our soul, however splendid, however far reaching, however sharpened, however anointed, however with the light and gleam of Wisdom glistening? What is our soul, or what can it do, unless God hold it and fight with it. For the best made weapon, unless it have a warrior, is useless. But I have said of our own arms, that nothing ought be taken as so fixed, that what is one thing, the same cannot be another: so also we find in God's arms. Lo, here he called the soul of the righteous the weapon of God: again he saith that the soul of the righteous is the seat of God, the soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. Therefore whatever He will, He maketh of our soul. Since it is in His hand, let Him use it as He will.

3. Let Him then rise up, for so is He called on, let Him take hold of His Arms, let Him rise up for our help. Whence He should rise up, is said unto Him also in another place in these very words, Rise up: why sleepest Thou, O Lord? And when He is said to sleep, we sleep; and when He is said to rise up, we are awakened. For the Lord also slept in the ship; and therefore was the ship tossed, because Jesus slept. For if Jesus had watched therein, the ship had not been tossed. Thy ship is thy heart; Jesus in the ship, faith in the heart. If thou rememberest thy faith, thy heart is not tossed; if thou forgettest thy faith, Christ sleepeth; beware of shipwreck. Nevertheless do what remaineth, that if He sleep, He may be awakened; say unto Him, Lord, rise up, we perish; that He may rebuke the winds, and there be a calm in thy heart. For all temptations will retire, or surely will prevail nothing, when Christ, that is, thy faith, shall watch in thy heart. What then is, Rise up? Make Thyself known, apparent, felt. Rise up, therefore, for my help.

4. Ver. 3. Pour forth the weapon, and stop the way against them that persecute me. Who are they that persecute thee? Haply thy neighbour, or he whom thou hast offended, or to whom thou hast done wrong, or who would take away what is thine, or against whom thou preachest the truth, or whose sin thou rebukest, or whom living ill by thy well living thou offendest. There are indeed even these enemies to us, and they persecute us: but other enemies we are taught to know, those against whom we fight invisibly, of whom the Apostle warneth us, saying, We wrestle not against flesh and

blood, that is, against men; not against those whom ye see, but against those whom ye see not; against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the world, of this darkness. Now when he said the rulers of the world, as he spake of the devil and his angels, there was need to take care lest men should misunderstand, and think that the world is ruled by the devil and his demons. But because the world is said of this fabric which we see, and the world is said of sinners, and of those who love the world, of whom it was said, The world knew Him not, and of whom also, The whole world lieth in wickedness; therefore the Apostle explained of what world they were rulers, he said, of this darkness. The rulers of this world, I say, are the rulers of this darkness. Again, he maketh us to understand what he said, of this darkness. Of what darkness are the devil and his angels rulers? Of all the unbelievers, of all the wicked, of whom it is said, The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended It not. Lastly, out of the number of the same as many believe, what saith the same Apostle? Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Wouldest thou not be ruled by the devil? Come to the light. And how shalt thou come to the Light, unless He pour forth the weapon, and deliver thee from thy enemies, and from them that persecute thee? How poureth He forth the weapon? for we have already heard what His weapon is; even the soul of the righteous. Let the righteous abound, so is the weapon poured forth, and the way is stopped against the enemies. For from the very pouring forth of the weapon the Apostle warning us to live righteously, in the sequel saith, That he that is of the contrary part, may have no evil thing to say of you. The way is stopped against him, because what to say against the saints he cannot find.

5. And whence shall these be righteous? Or what say the enemies who persecute us? Those invisible enemies, what say they? Say they nothing? Most of all is it suggested to the human heart, by the enemies who invisibly fight against it, that God is not our helper; that so seeking other helps, we may be found weak, and be taken by those same enemies. This then is suggested. Against those voices ought we most of all to watch, which are shewn in another Psalm. Many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in his God. Against these voices what is here said? Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation. When thou

hast said unto my soul, I am thy Salvation, then will it live righteously, so that I seek no helper beside Thee.

6. And what follows? (Ver. 4.) Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul: for to this end they seek after it, to destroy it. For I would that they would seek it for good! for in another Psalm he blameth this in men, that there was none who would seek after his soul: Refuge failed me: there was none that would seek after my soul. Who is this that saith, There was none that would seek after my soul? Is it haply He, of Whom so long before it was predicted, They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they numbered all My Bones, they stared and looked upon Me, they have parted My Garments among them, and cast lots for My Vesture? Now all these things were done before their eyes, and there was none who would seek after His Soul. Let us then call upon Him, Brethren, that He may say unto our soul, I am thy Salvation; and may open its ears, that it may hear Him, saying, I am thy Salvation. For He saith it, but some are deaf, wherefore they hear rather those enemies that persecute them, being in tribulation. If aught is wanting, if the soul is in trouble, in need of temporal goods, it seeks aid for the most part from devils, it chooses to consult the possessed of devils, it seeks the diviners: its persecutors, the invisible enemies, have approached it, have entered into it, have fought against it, have taken it captive, have conquered it by saying, There is no salvation for him in his God. He was deaf to the voice, saying, I am thy Salvation. Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation, that they may be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul, to which Thou sayest, I am thy Salvation. Let me hear Him saying unto me, I am thy Salvation: other salvation will I not seek after except the Lord my God. By some creature is salvation suggested to me; it is from Him: and if I lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help, yet cometh not my help from the hills, but from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. In very temporal troubles God helpeth through man; He Himself is thy Salvation. Through His Angel God helpeth, He Himself is thy Salvation. All things to Him are subject, and for this temporal life He indeed helpeth one from this side, another from that: eternal life He giveth not but from Himself. Behold, when thou art in trouble, that is not before thee which thou seekest, but He is near thee Whom thou seekest. And seek thou Him, Who never can be wanting. Let

those things be withdrawn, which He gave; is He therefore withdrawn, Who gave? Let those things be restored which He gave; is that true riches, when these things are restored, and not He Who withdrew them to prove thee, and restored them to console thee? For He consoleth us when these things are not wanting to us. He consoleth us in the way, but only if we understand the way. For the whole of this life, and all things which thou usest in this life, ought to be to thee as an inn to a traveller, not as a house to dwell in. Remember though thou hast performed somewhat, that somewhat remaineth, that thou hast stayed for refection, not for defection.

7. There are who say, God the Good, the Great, the Most High, the Invisible, the Eternal, the Incorruptible, will indeed give unto us eternal life, and that incorruption which He hath promised in the resurrection; but these worldly and temporal things belong to devils, and to those rulers of the darkness of this world. By thus saying, when they are entangled in the love of these things, they abandon God, as though these things belonged not unto Him, and seek by wicked sacrifices, by I know not what remedies, and by I know not what unlawful persuasion of men, to provide for themselves that which is temporal, as money, wife and children, and whatever either comforts human life passing by, or hinders it going its way. Divine Providence watching against this opinion, that God might shew all these things to belong to Him, and to be in His Power, not only things eternal which He promiseth hereafter, but also things temporal which on earth He giveth to whom He will, and when He will, in good time, knowing to whom He should give, to whom not give, as a physician his medicines, knowing better the sick man's disease than the sick man himself; God then, that He might shew this, divided the times of the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament are promises of things earthly; but in the New, of a kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. Most of the Commandments, both of worshipping God, and of living well, are the same both in this and in that; but because the promise here seems of one kind, there of another; the command of Him that ordereth, and the obedience of him that serveth, is the same, but the wages, as it were, are not the same. For unto them it was said, Ye shall receive the land of promise; in it ye shall reign; your enemies ye shall conquer; ye shall not be subdued by them; all things shall abound to you in this land; in it ye shall beget children. These earthly things were promised,

but yet in a figure. Suppose that some so received them as they were promised; and truly many so received them. For the land was given to the children of Israel, riches were given, children were given even to their barren and old women, who prayed unto God, and in Him alone presumed, and other helper sought not even for those things. They heard the voice of God in their heart, I am thy Salvation. If for things eternal, why not for things temporal. This did God shew in the case of that holy man Job; because even the devil himself had no power to take away these things, except when he had received it from that Most High Power. He would envy the holy man: could he also hurt him? He could accuse him, could he also condemn him? Could he take aught from him, could he hurt even a nail, could he a single hair, until he had said unto God, Put forth Thine Hand? What is, Put forth Thine Hand? Give me the power. He received it, he tempted him; he was tempted. Yet the tempted conquered, the tempter was conquered. For God, Who had permitted the devil to take those things, had not deserted His servant within, and to overcome the devil himself, of the soul of His servant had made to Himself a weapon. Whereunto tendeth this? I speak concerning man. Conquered was he in Paradise: a conqueror on the dunghill. There was he conquered by the devil through the woman, here he conquered the devil and the woman. Thou speakest, saith he, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? How well had he heard, I am thy Salvation.

8. Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul. Look to men. Pray (saith He) for your enemies. But here it is a prophecy: and those things which are said under the figure of wishing are to be explained in the sense of prophesying. Let this be done, or that be done, is nothing more than, this or that will be done. So then understand the prophecy: Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my life. What is, Let them be confounded and put to shame? They shall be confounded and put to shame. For even so was it done. Many have been confounded to their health: many, put to shame, have passed over from the persecution of Christ to the society of His members with devoted piety; and this would not have been, had they not been confounded and put to shame. Therefore he wished well to them. But because there are two kinds of those who are conquered; for in two ways are they conquered, either to this end they are conquered

that they may be converted unto Christ, or to this, that they be condemned by Christ; here also are explained the same two kinds, obscurely indeed, but wanting only an understanding hearer. Of those who are converted, hear what is said. Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back. Let them not go before, but follow; let them not give counsel, but take it. For Peter would go before the Lord, when the Lord spake of His future Passion: he would to Him as it were give counsel for His health. The sick man to the Saviour give counsel for His health! And what said he to the Lord, affirming that His future Passion? Be it far from Thee, Lord. Be gracious to Thyself. This shall not be to Thee. He would go before that the Lord might follow; and what said He? Get thee behind Me, satan. By going before thou art satan, by following thou wilt be a disciple. The same then is said to these also, Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that think evil against me. For when they have begun to follow after, now they will not think evil against me, but desire my good.

9. What of others? For all are not so conquered as to be converted and believe: many continue in obstinacy, many preserve in heart the spirit of going before, and if they exert it not, yet they labour with it, and finding opportunity bring it forth. Of such, what followeth? (Ver. 5.) Let them be as dust before the wind. Not so are the ungodly, not so; but as the dust which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth. The wind is temptation; the dust are the ungodly. When temptation cometh the dust is raised, it neither standeth nor resisteth. Let them be as dust before the wind, and let the Angel of the Lord trouble them. (Ver. 6.) Let their way be darkness and slipping. A horrible way! Darkness alone who feareth not? A slippery way alone who avoids not? In a dark and slippery way how shalt thou go? where set foot? These two ills are the great punishments of men: darkness, ignorance; a slippery way, luxury. Let their way be darkness and slipping; and let the Angel of the Lord persecute them; that they be not able to stand. For any one in a dark and slippery way, when he seeth that if he move his foot he will fall, and there is no light before his feet, haply resolveth to wait until light come; but here is the Angel of the Lord persecuting them. These things he predicted would come upon them, not as though he wished them to happen. Although the Prophet in the Spirit of God so speaketh these things, even as God doth the same, with sure judgment, with a judgment

good, righteous, holy, tranquil; not moved with wrath, not with bitter jealousy, not with desire of wreaking enmities, but of punishing wickedness with righteousness; nevertheless, it is a prophecy.

10. But wherefore these so great evils? By what desert? Hear by what desert. (Ver. 7.) For without cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap. For Him that is our Head, observe, the Jews did this: they hid the corruption of their trap. For whom hid they their trap? For Him, Who saw the hearts of those that hid. But yet was He among them like one ignorant, as though He were deceived, whereas they were in that deceived, that they thought Him to be deceived. For therefore was He as though deceived, living among them, because we among such as they were so to live, as to be without doubt deceived. He saw His betrayer, and chose him the more to a necessary work. By his evil He wrought a great good: and yet among the twelve was he chosen, lest even the small number of twelve should be without one evil. This was an example of patience to us, because it was necessary that we should live among the evil: it was necessary that we should endure the evil, either knowing them or knowing them not: an example of patience He gave thee lest thou shouldest fail, when thou hast begun to live among the evil. And because that School of Christ in the twelve failed not, how much more ought we to be firm, when in the great Church is fulfilled what was predicted of the mixture of the evil. For neither did the same School see rendered to the Seed of Abraham what had been promised, and that very threshing floor, whence the grain that shall fill the garner must proceed. Wherefore then, when the threshing is, is not the chaff justly endured therein, until it be purged by the last winnowing? For this will surely come upon the evil, which ye have heard.

11. But yet what is to be done? Without a cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap. What meaneth, Without a cause? I have done them no evil, I have hurt them not at all. Vainly have they reviled my soul. What is, Vainly? Speaking falsely, proving nothing. (Ver. 8.) Let a trap come upon them which they know not of. A magnificent retribution, nothing more just! They have hidden a trap that I might know not: let a trap come upon them which they know not of. For I know of their trap. But what trap is coming upon them? That which they know not of. Let us hear, lest haply he speak

of that. Let a trap come upon them, which they know not of. Perhaps that is one which they hid for him, that another which shall come upon themselves. Not so: but what? The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his own sins. Thereby are they deceived, whereby they would deceive. Thence shall come mischief to them, whence they endeavoured mischief. For it follows, And let the net which they have hidden catch themselves. As if any one should prepare a cup of poison for another, and forgetting should drink it up himself: or as if one should dig a pit, that his enemy might fall thereinto in the darkness; and himself forgetting what he had dug, should first walk that way, and fall into it. Verily, Brethren, thus believe, thus be assured; thus, if there be in you any more excellent reason or prudence, thus observe and know; there is no wicked man who hurts not himself first. For so think of wickedness as of fire. Thou wouldest burn something: that which thou appliest is first burned; if it be not burned, it burneth not. Thou hast a torch; this torch thou appliest to something to burn it: is not the torch itself which thou appliest first burned, that it may be able to burn any thing? Wickedness then proceedeth from thee, and whom doth it first waste but thyself? Doth it hurt the bough to which it is put forth; and where it hath root doth it not hurt? And I verily say, that thy wickedness should not hurt another, it is possible; that it should not hurt thee, it is not possible. For what hurt was done to holy Job, of whom I have spoken above? As it is said in another Psalm, Like a sharp razor thou hast wrought deceit. What is done with a sharp razor? Hairs, things superfluous, are cut off. What then dost thou to him whom thou wouldest hurt? If a worthless man, whom thou wouldest hurt, consent with thee to do ill, not thy wickedness will be hurtful to him, but his own; but if he be inwardly free from wickedness, and can present a clean heart to the voice that saith, I am thy salvation, outwardly thou fightest against him, the inner man thou takest not. Yet thy wickedness proceeds from thy inner man: thee first it maketh empty. Thou art corrupt within, whence that worm proceeded; within it hath left nothing sound. And let the net which they have hidden catch themselves, and let them fall into their own trap. Not that which haply thou thoughtest of just before when thou heardest, Let a trap come upon them, which they know not of, that is, as though it were some other one, secret and inevitable. In what then fall they? In the same iniquity which they have hidden for me. Was not this

done to the Jews? The Lord conquered their iniquity, they by their own iniquity were conquered. He rose for us: they died in themselves.

12. This then for the wicked that would hurt me: what for me? (Ver. 9.) But my soul shall rejoice in the Lord; as in Him from Whom it hath heard, I am thy salvation; as not seeking other riches from without; as not seeking to abound in pleasures and good things of earth; but loving freely the true Spouse, not from Him wishing to receive aught that may delight, but Him alone proposing to itself, by Whom it may be delighted. For what better than God will be given unto me? God loveth me: God loveth thee. See He hath proposed to thee, Ask what thou wilt. If the emperor should say to thee, Ask what thou wilt, what commands, what dignities, wouldest thou burst forth with! What great things wouldest thou propose to thyself, both to receive and to bestow. When God saith unto thee, Ask what thou wilt, what wilt thou ask? Empty thy mind, exert thy avarice, stretch forward as far as possible, and enlarge thy desire: it is not any one, but Almighty God that said, Ask what thou wilt. If of possessions thou art a lover, thou wilt desire the whole earth, that all who are born may be thy husbandmen, or thy slaves. And what when thou hast possessed the whole earth? Thou wilt ask the sea, in which yet thou canst not live. In this greediness the fishes will have the better of thee. But perhaps thou wilt possess the islands. Pass over these also; ask the air, although thou canst not fly; stretch thy desire even unto the heavens, call thine own the sun, the moon, and the stars, because He Who made all said, Ask what thou wilt: yet nothing wilt thou find more precious, nothing wilt thou find better, than Himself Who made all things. Him seek, Who made all things, and in Him and from Him shalt thou have all things which He made. All things are precious, because all are beautiful; but what more beautiful than He. Strong are they; but what stronger than He. And nothing would He give thee rather than Himself. If aught better thou hast found, ask it. If thou ask aught else, thou wilt do wrong to Him, and harm to thyself, by preferring to Him that which He made, when He would give to thee Himself Who made. In this love said a certain soul unto Him, Art not Thou my portion, O Lord? that is, Thou art my portion. Let those who will choose for themselves what they shall possess, let them make for themselves portions of other things: Thou art my portion, Thee have I chosen for me. And again, The Lord is the portion of my inheritance.

Let Him possess thee, that thou mayest possess Him: thou shalt be His property, thou shalt be His house. He possesseth that He may profit, He is possessed that He may profit. Is it that thou mayest profit Him at all? I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, for my goods thou wantest not.

But my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in His salvation. The salvation of God is Christ: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.

13. Ver. 10. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Who can speak any thing worthily of these words? I think them only to be pronounced, not to be expounded. Why seekest thou this or that? What is like unto thy Lord? Him hast thou before thee. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? The unrighteous have declared unto me delights, but not after Thy law, O Lord! Persecutors have been who have said, Worship Saturn, worship Mercury. I worship not idols: (saith he.) Lord, who is like unto Thee? They have eyes, and see not; ears have they, but they hear not. Lord, who is like unto Thee, Who hast made the eye to see, the ear to hear? But I (saith he) worship not idols, for them a workman made. Worship a tree or mountain; did a workman make them also? Here too, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Earthly things are shewn unto me; Thou art Creator of the earth. And from these haply they turn to the higher creation, and say to me, Worship the Moon, worship this Sun, who with his light, as a great lamp in the Heavens, maketh the day. Here also I plainly say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? The Moon and the Stars Thou hast made, the Sun to rule the day hast Thou kindled, the Heavens hast Thou framed together. There are many invisible things better. But haply here also it is said to me, Worship Angels, adore Angels. And here also will I say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Even the Angels Thou hast created. The Angels are nothing, but by seeing Thee. It is better with them to possess Thee, than by worshipping them to fall from Thee.

14. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? O Body of Christ, Holy Church, let all thy bones say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? And if the flesh under persecution hath fallen away, let the bones say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? For of the righteous it is said, The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Of how many righteous have the bones under persecution been broken? Finally, The just shall live by faith, and

Christ justifieth the ungodly. But how justifieth He any except believing and confessing? For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Therefore also that thief, although from His theft led to the judge, and from the judge to the cross, yet on the very cross was justified: with his heart he believed, with his mouth he confessed. For neither to a man unrighteous and not already justified, would the Lord have said, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise, and yet his bones were broken. For when they came to take down the bodies, by reason of the approaching Sabbath, the Lord was found already dead, and His Bones were not broken. But of those that yet lived, that they might be taken down, the legs were broken, that so from this pain having died, they might be buried. Were then of the one thief, who persisted in his ungodliness on the cross, the bones broken, and not also of the other who with his heart believed, and with his mouth made confession unto salvation? Where then is that which was said, The Lord keepeth all his bones; not one of them shall be broken; except that in the Body of the Lord the name of bones is given to all the righteous, the firm in heart, the strong, to no persecutions, no temptations, yielding, so as to consent unto evil? And whence should they be able to yield to no temptations, except when the persecutors say, Behold this god, behold what a god! let him come to thee, let him charm thee: behold, here is in the mount some great priest: haply therefore thou art poor because this god helpeth thee not; entreat him and he will help thee: haply therefore thou art sick, because thou entreatest him not; entreat him and thou shalt be well: haply therefore thou hast no children, entreat him and thou shalt have. But if in the Lord's Body he be one of the bones, he repelleth all these words, and saith, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Give, if Thou wilt give, even in this life, what I ask; but if Thou wilt not, be Thou my Life, Whom I seek always. Shall I depart hence unto Thee with a clear face, if I worship another, and offend Thee? To-morrow perhaps I shall die: with what face shall I see Thee? Great is His Mercy; and therefore hath He admonished us to live well, and hath hidden from us the last day of our life, lest we should promise ourselves aught from the future. To-day I work and live: to-morrow I work not. What if to-morrow find thee not? Say then, among the bones of Christ, Lord, who is like unto Thee? All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee?

15. Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him; yea, the poor and needy from him that spoileth him. Thus far has the Psalm been read to-day; thus far is it to be handled; lest that come to disgust, which hath been said, while we wish to say other things. Let this then suffice for to-day, Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him. Who that deliverest, but He Who is Strong in hand? Even that David shall deliver the poor from him that is too strong for him. For the devil was too strong for thee, and held thee, because he conquered thee, when thou consentedst unto him. But what hath the Strong in hand done? No man entereth into a strong man's house, to spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man. By His own Power, most Holy, most Magnificent, hath He bound the devil by pouring forth the weapon to stop the way against him, that He may deliver the poor and needy, to whom there was no helper. For who is thy helper but the Lord to whom thou sayest, O Lord, My Strength, and My Redeemer. If thou wilt presume of thy own strength, thereby wilt thou fall, whereof thou hast presumed: if of another's, he would lord it over thee, not succour thee. He then alone is to be sought, Who hath redeemed them, and made them free, and hath given His Blood to purchase them, and of His servants hath made them His Brethren.

DISCOURSE II

On the remaining part of the Psalm.

To the rest of the Psalm let us apply our minds, and to the Lord our God let us pray, both for soundness of understanding, and for the quiet of well-doing. As far as yesterday was discoursed, I trust that ye remember, dearly Beloved: from the same place to-day let us take our beginning. Now we understand here the words of Christ, the words, namely, both of the Head and of the Body of Christ. When thou hearest Christ, do not separate the Bridegroom from the Bride, but understand that great Sacrament, And they two shall be one flesh. If two in one flesh, why not also in one voice? For neither the Head alone suffered here temptations, and the Body suffereth not; nor indeed was there any cause of suffering to the Head, but that He might give an example to the Body. For the Lord suffered of free will, we of necessity; He out of commiseration, we out of our condition. Moreover, His voluntary Passion is our necessary consolation; so that when we haply

suffer like things, we may look upon our Head, that being warned by His example we may say unto ourselves, If He did so, what must we? and, Even as He was, so let us also be. For however much raged the enemy, to the death of the Body could he only approach; which Body yet could he not destroy in the Lord, because on the third day It rose again. What in Him was done on the third day, that in ours shall be at the end of the world. The hope of our resurrection is put off, is it therefore put away? Here then, most dearly Beloved, let us acknowledge the Words of Christ, and let us distinguish them from the words of the ungodly. For they are the voices of the Body, suffering persecutions and troubles and temptations in this world, but since many suffer here, also for their sins, and for their crimes, with great vigilance must we discern the cause, not the punishment. For a criminal can have like punishment with a Martyr, but yet a cause unlike. Three were there on the Cross, one the Saviour, another to be saved, another to be damned: of all the punishment was equal, but the cause unequal.

2. Let then our Head say, (ver. 11.) False witnesses did rise up, they laid to My charge things that I knew not. But let us say to our Head, Lord, what knewest Thou not? Didst Thou indeed know not any thing? Didst Thou not know the hearts of them that charged Thee? Didst Thou not foresee their deceits? Didst Thou not give Thyself into their hands knowingly? Hadst Thou not come that Thou mightest suffer by them? What then knewest Thou not? He knew not sin, and thereby He knew not sin, not by not judging, but by not committing. There are phrases of this kind also in daily use, as when thou sayest of any one, He knoweth not to stand, that is, he doth not stand; and, He knoweth not to do good, because he doth not good; and, He knoweth not to do ill, because he doth not ill. That which is alien from operation, is alien from conscience; that which is alien from conscience, seems alien also from science. So God is said to know not, as art knoweth not faults, and yet by art faults are discovered and discerned. This then to our interrogatories out of the very truth of His own Gospel doth our Head answer; when we have said, Lord, what knewest Thou not? Wherewith couldest Thou be charged which Thou knewest not? He answereth, Ungodliness I knew not, with ungodliness I was charged. Thou hast in the Gospel, if thou believe not that I knew not ungodliness, that even the ungodly themselves I know not, unto whom at the end I shall say, I

know you not; depart from Me, ye that work ungodliness. Did He not know those whom He condemned? or can any condemn justly, but a good cognizant? And yet a good cognizant lied not in saying, I know you not: that is, ye are not joined to My Body, ye cleave not to My Rules, ye are vicious, but I am that very Art which haveth no vice, and in which a man learneth not save not to do vice. False witnesses did rise up; they laid to My charge things that I knew not. What knew not Christ so much, as to blaspheme? Thereof was He called in question by His persecutors, and because He spake truth, He was judged to have spoken blasphemy. But by whom? By them of whom it followeth, (Ver. 12.) They rewarded Me evil for good, and barrenness to My Soul. I gave unto them fruitfulness, they rewarded Me barrenness; I gave life, they death; I honour, they dishonour; I medicine, they wounds; and in all these which they rewarded Me, was truly barrenness. This barrenness in the tree He cursed, when seeking fruit He found none. Leaves there were, and fruit there was not: words there were, and deeds there were not. See of words abundance, and of deeds barrenness. Thou that preachest a man should not steal, stealest: thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, committest adultery. Such were they who charged Christ with things that He knew not.

3. Ver. 13. But I, when they troubled me, clothed myself with sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer shall return into mine own bosom. We are taught indeed, Brethren, that we belong to the Body of Christ, that we are members of Christ; and we are admonished in all our tribulations to consider not how we may answer our enemies, but how by praying we may propitiate God, and chiefly to pray that we be not overcome by temptation; then, that even those who persecute us may be converted to soundness and righteousness. There is no greater, no better employment in tribulation, than to retire from the noise which is without, and to go into the inner closet of the heart; there to call upon God, where none seeth thee groaning, and Him succouring; that chamber-door to close against every invading trouble; to humble thyself in confession of sin, to magnify and praise God, both chastising and consoling: this must by every means be held firm. But of the Body must we say this; that is, of ourselves: of our Lord Jesus Christ, what such as this do we find? The Gospel being looked through and most diligently searched, we find not that the Lord in

any passion or tribulation clothed Himself with sackcloth. That He fasted indeed we read, after He was baptized: sackcloth there we hear of none, read of none; but that He fasted, the Jews not yet persecuting, but the devil tempting Him. At that time I say that the Lord fasted not, when they charged Him with things which He knew not, and when they rewarded Him evil for good, by railing, by persecuting, by holding fast, by scourging, by wounding, by slaying: but yet in all these, Brethren, if for some little space with pious curiosity we lift the veil, and search with the intent eye of the heart the inner part of this Scripture, we find that even this the Lord did. Sackcloth, haply He calleth His mortal flesh. Wherefore Sackcloth? For the likeness of sinful flesh. For the Apostle saith, God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that through sin He might condemn sin in the flesh: that is, He clothed His Own Son with sackcloth, that through sackcloth He might condemn the goats. Not that there was sin, I say not in the Word of God, but not even in that Holy Soul and Mind of a Man, which the Word and Wisdom of God had so joined to Himself as to be One Person. Nay, nor even in His very Body was any sin, but the likeness of sinful flesh there was in the Lord; because death is not but by sin, and surely that Body was mortal. For had It not been mortal, It had not died; had It not died, It had not risen again; had It not risen again, It had not shewed us an example of eternal life. So then death, which is caused by sin, is called sin, as we say the Greek tongue, the Latin tongue, meaning not the very member of flesh, but that which is done by the member of flesh. For the tongue in our members is one among others, as the eyes, nose, ears, and the rest: but the Greek tongue is Greek words, not that the tongue is words, but that words are by the tongue. Thou sayest of one, I know his face, speaking of a member of his body; and thou sayest also, I know his hand though he is absent, not the hand of his body, but the writing which was made by the hand of his body. So then the sin of the Lord, is that which was caused by sin; because He assumed flesh, of the same lump which had deserved death by sin. For to speak more briefly, Mary who was of Adam died for sin, Adam died for sin, and the Flesh of the Lord which was of Mary died to put away sin. With this sackcloth the Lord clothed Himself, and therefore was He not known, because He lay hid under sackcloth. When they, saith He, troubled Me, I clothed Myself with sackcloth: that is, they raged, I lay hid. For had He not willed to lie hid, neither could He have died, since in one

moment of time one drop only of His Power, if indeed it is to be called a drop, He put forth, when they wished to seize Him, and at His one question, Whom seek ye? they all went back and fell to the ground. Such power could He not have humbled in passion, if He had not lain hid under sackcloth.

4. I clothed Myself with sackcloth, and humbled My Soul with fasting. Again, if we have understood the sackcloth, how understand we the fasting? Wished Christ to eat, when He sought fruit on the tree, and if He had found, would He have eaten? Wished Christ to drink, when He said to the woman of Samaria, Give Me to drink? when He said on the Cross, I thirst? For what hungered, for what thirsted Christ, but our good works? Because in them that crucified and persecuted Him He had found no good works, He fasted; for they rewarded barrenness to His soul. For what a fast was His, Who found barely one thief, whom on the Cross He might taste! For the Apostles had fled, and had hidden themselves in the multitude. And even Peter, who even to the death of his Lord had promised to persevere, had now thrice denied Him, had now wept, and still lay hid in the multitude, still feared lest He should be known. Lastly, having seen Him dead, all of them despaired of their own safety; and despairing He found them, after His resurrection, and when He spake with them, found them grieving and mourning, no longer hoping any thing. For so also did certain of them who spake with Him. When He said, What talk ye between yourselves? (for they were talking of Him;) Art Thou only, they said, a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known what things our priests and rulers have done concerning Jesus of Nazareth, Who was a man mighty in word and deed; how they have crucified and slain Him? But we trusted that it should have been He that should have redeemed Israel. In great fasting had the Lord remained, had He not refreshed them that He might feed on them. For He refreshed them, He comforted them, He confirmed them, and into His Own Body converted them. In this manner then was our Lord also in fasting.

5. And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom. In the bosom of this verse is plainly a great depth, and may the Lord grant that it be fathomable by us. For in the 'bosom' a secret is understood. And we ourselves, Brethren, are here well admonished to pray within our own bosom, where God seeth, where God heareth, where no human eye penetrateth, where

none seeth but He Who succoureth; where Susanna prayed, and her voice though it was not heard by men, yet by God was heard. Of this indeed we are well admonished, but of our Lord ought we to understand something more, because He Himself also prayed. And, indeed, His sackcloth we find not in the Gospel according to the letter, nor His fasting at the time of His Passion according to the letter; and these therefore I have explained to be spoken by an allegory or similitude, as I could. But His prayer even from the Cross have we heard, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me! But there also were we. For when did the Father forsake Him, from Whom He never departed? We read also that in the mount Jesus prayed alone, we read that He passed the night in prayer, even at the time of His Passion. What then? And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom. I know not what better to understand concerning the Lord: take meanwhile what now occurs; perhaps something better will occur hereafter, either to me or to some better: My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom: this I understand to be said, because in His Own Bosom He had the Father. For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. In Himself He had Him to Whom He prayed. He was not far from Him, for Himself had said, I am in the Father, and the Father in Me. But because prayer rather belongeth to very Man, (for according as Christ is the Word, He prayeth not, but heareth prayer; and seeketh not to be succoured for Himself, but with the Father succoureth all:) what is, My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom, but in Me My Manhood invoketh in Me My Godhead.

6. Ver. 14. As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him: as one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself. Now looketh He back to His Own Body: let us now look to this. When we rejoice in prayer, when our mind is calmed, not by the world's prosperity, but by the light of Truth: (who perceiveth this light, knoweth what I say, and he seeth and acknowledgeth what is said, As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him:) even then our soul pleaseth God, not placed afar off, for, In Him, saith one, we live and move and have our being, but as a Brother, as a Neighbour, as a Friend. But if it be not such that it can so rejoice, so shine, so approach, so cleave unto Him, and seeth itself far off thence, then let it do what followeth, As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled Myself. As our Brother, so I pleased Him, said He, drawing near; As one mourning

and sorrowful, so I humbled myself, said He, removed and set afar off. For what mourneth any one, but that which he desireth, and hath not? And sometimes in one man happen both, that at one time he should draw near, at another be far off; draw near by the light of Truth, be far off by the cloud of the flesh. For neither, Brethren, unto God, Who is every where, and is contained in no place, do we through place draw near, or from Him through place remove. To draw near unto Him, is to become like unto Him; to remove from Him, to become unlike unto Him. Dost not thou, when thou seest two things nearly alike, say, This comes near to that? and when things unlike are shewn to thee, though in one place, and though they be held often in one hand, say, This kind is far off from that? Thou holdest both, joinest both, and sayest, This thing is far from that, not forsooth in place, but in unlikeness. If then thou wouldest draw near to Him, be like unto Him: if thou wilt not be like, thou wilt be far off. But when thou art like, rejoice; when unlike, groan; that groaning may excite desire, nay that desire may excite groaning, and that through groaning thou mayest draw near, who hadst begun to be afar off. Did not Peter draw near, when He said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God? And yet the same man became afar off by saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee. Lastly, what said He, his Neighbour, as it were, to him drawing near? Blessed art thou, Simon, Barjona. To him afar off, as it were, and unlike, what said He? Get thee behind Me, Satan. To him drawing near, Flesh and blood, saith He, hath not revealed it unto Thee, but My Father, which is in Heaven. His Light is shed over Thee, in His Light Thou shinest. But when having become afar off, he spake against the Lord's Passion, which should be for our Salvation, Thou savourest not, said He, the things that be of God, but those that be of men. One rightly placing together both of these saith in a certain Psalm, I said in my ecstasy, I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. In my ecstasy, would he not have said, had he not drawn near; for ecstasy is the transporting of the mind. He poured over himself his own soul, and drew near unto God; and through some cloud and weight of the flesh being again cast down to earth, and recollecting where he had been, and seeing where he was, he said, I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. This then, As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him, may He grant to be done in us; but when that is not, let even this be done, As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself.

7. Ver. 15. And against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together, against Me only: they rejoicing, I sorrowful. But we heard just now in the Gospel, Blessed are they that mourn. If they are blessed that mourn, miserable are they that laugh. Against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: scourges were gathered together against Me, and they knew not. Because they laid to My charge things that I knew not, they also knew not Whom they charged.

8. Ver. 16. They tempted Me, and mocked Me with mocking. That is, they derided Me, they insulted Me; this of the Head, this of the Body. Consider, Brethren, the glory of the Church which now is; remember its past dishonours, remember how once were Christians every where put to flight, and wherever found, mocked, beaten, slain, exposed to beasts, burned, men rejoicing against them. As it was to the Head, so it is also to the Body. For as it was to the Lord on the Cross, so has it been to His Body in all that persecution which was made but now: nor even now cease the persecutions of the same. Wherever men find a Christian, they are wont to insult, to persecute, to deride him, to call him dull, senseless, of no spirit, of no knowledge. Do they what they will, Christ is in Heaven: do they what they will, He hath honoured His punishment, already hath He fixed His Cross in the foreheads of all; the ungodly is permitted to insult, to rage he is not permitted; but yet from that which the tongue uttereth, is understood what he beareth in his heart: They gnashed upon Me with their teeth.

9. Ver. 17. Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions. For to us the time is slow; and in our person is this said, When wilt Thou look on? that is, when shall we see vengeance upon those who insult us? When shall the Judge, overcome by weariness, hear the widow? But our Judge, not from weariness, but from love, delayeth our salvation; from reason, not from need; not that He could not even now succour us, but that the number of us all may be filled up even to the end. And yet out of our desire, what do we say? Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions: that is, My Church from raging powers.

10. Lastly, wouldest thou know what is that Darling? Read the words following: (ver. 18.) I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, in the great

Congregation; in a weighty people will I praise Thee. Truly saith He, I will confess unto Thee in the great Congregation; in a weighty people will I praise Thee: for confession is made in all the multitude, but not in all is God praised: the whole multitude heareth our confession, but not in all the multitude is the praise of God. For in all the whole multitude, that is, in the Church which is spread abroad in the whole world, is chaff, and wheat: the chaff flieth, the wheat remaineth; therefore, in a weighty people will I praise Thee. In a weighty people, which the wind of temptation carries not away, in such is God praised. For in the chaff He is ever blasphemed. When our chaff is considered, what is meant? See how Christians live, see what Christians do; and it is fulfilled, which is written, Through you is My Name blasphemed among the Gentiles. Wickedly, grudgingly beholdest thou the threshing-floor, who art all on the chaff; not easily appeareth the grain to thee; seek and thou shalt find a weighty people in which thou mayest praise God. Wouldest thou find? Be thou such; for if thou be not such, it is hard but that all should appear to thee such as thou art: Comparing (saith the Apostle) themselves among themselves, they understand not. In a weighty people will I praise Thee.

11. Ver. 19. Let not them that are Mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over Me: for they rejoice over Me because of My chaff. Who hate Me without a cause; that is, whom I never hurt; winking with their eyes: that is, pretending hypocrites, (Ver. 20.) For they spake indeed peace to Me. What is, winking with their eyes? Declaring by their looks, what they carry not in their heart. And who are these winking with their eyes? (ver. 20.) For they spake indeed peace to Me; and with wrath devised craftily. (Ver. 21.) Yea they opened their mouth wide against Me. First winking with their eyes, those lions sought to ravish and devour; first fawning they spake peace, and then with wrath devised craftily. What peace spake they? Master, we know that Thou acceptest not man's person, and teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? They spake indeed peace unto Me. What then? Didst not Thou know them, and deceived they Thee, winking with their eyes? Truly He knew them; therefore said He, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Afterward, they opened their mouth wide against Me, crying, Crucify Him, Crucify Him! and said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it. This, when they insulted Him, Aha, Aha, Prophecy unto

us, Thou Christ. As their peace was pretended, when they tempted Him concerning the money, so now insulting was their praise. They said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it: that is, Thy deeds, Thy miracles. This Man is the Christ. If He be the Christ, let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. He saved others, Himself He cannot save. Our eyes have seen it. This is all whereof He boasted Himself, when, He called Himself the Son of God. But the Lord was hanging patient upon the Cross: His power had He not lost, but He shewed His patience. For what great thing was it for Him to come down from the Cross, Who could afterward rise again from the sepulchre? But He seems to have yielded to His insulters; and this behoved, that having risen again He should shew Himself to His own, and not to them, and this is a great mystery; for His resurrection signified the New Life, but the New Life is known to His friends, not to His enemies.

12. Ver. 22. This Thou hast seen, O Lord; keep not silence. What is, keep not silence? Judge Thou. For of judgment is it said in a certain place, I have kept silence; shall I keep silence for ever? And of the delaying of judgment it is said to the sinner, These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself. How keepeth He silence, Who speaketh by the Prophets, Who speaketh with His own mouth in the Gospel, Who speaketh by the Evangelists, Who speaketh by us, when we speak the truth? What then? He keepeth silence from judgment, not from precept, not from doctrine. But this His judgment the Prophet in a manner invoketh, and predicteth: Thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence; that is, Thou wilt not keep silence, needs must that Thou wilt judge. O Lord, be not far from Me. Until Thy judgment come, be not far from Me, as Thou hast promised, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

13. Ver. 23. Arise, Lord, and attend to My judgment. To what judgment? That Thou art in tribulation; that Thou art tormented with labours and pains? Do not even many wicked men suffer the same? To what judgment? Therefore art Thou righteous, because Thou sufferest these things? No: but what? To My judgment. What followeth? Attend to My judgment; even to My cause, My God, and My Lord. Not to My punishment, but to My cause:

not to that which the robber hath in common with Me, but to that whereof is said, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For this cause is distinguished. For punishment is equal to good and bad. Therefore Martyrs, not the punishment, but the cause maketh, for if punishment made Martyrs, all the mines would be full of Martyrs, every chain would drag Martyrs, all that are executed with the sword would be crowned. Therefore, let the cause be distinguished; let none say, because I suffer, I am righteous. Because He Who first suffered, suffered for righteousness' sake, therefore He added a great exception, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For many having a good cause do persecution, and many having a bad cause suffer persecution. For if persecution could not be done rightly, it had not been said in a certain Psalm, Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him did I persecute. Then, Brethren, doth not a good and righteous father persecute a prodigal son? His vices he persecuteth, not himself: not that which he begat, but that which the other added. The surgeon truly, who is called in to give health, is not he mostly armed with a knife? but against the wound, not against the man: he cuts that he may cure: and yet when he cuts the sick man, he is pained, cries out, resists, and if haply by fever he hath lost his senses, even strikes the surgeon: nor yet does not he desist from seeking the health of the sick man; what he knoweth right he doth, him cursing and reviling he regardeth not. Are not all lethargies roused, lest from heavy sleep they may sink down to death? And this they suffer from their own sons whom they have begotten most dear to them, and the son is not dear unless he hath been troublesome to his sleeping Father. The lethargic are roused, the frenzied are bound, but yet both are loved. Let none then say, I suffer persecution: let him not sift the punishment, but prove the cause: lest if he prove not the cause, he be numbered with the ungodly. Therefore how watchfully, how excellently hath This Man recommended Himself, O Lord, attend to My judgment, not to My punishments; even to My cause, My God, and My Lord.

14. Ver. 24. Judge me, O Lord, according to My righteousness; that is, attend to My cause. Not according to My punishment, but according to My righteousness, O Lord, My God, that is, according to this judge Thou Me.

15. And let them not rejoice over Me; that is, Mine enemies. (Ver. 25.) Let them not say in their heart, Aha, aha, so would we have it; that is, We have done what we could, we have slain him, we have taken him away. Let them not say: shew them that they have done nothing. Let them not say, We have swallowed him up. Whence say those Martyrs, If the Lord had not been on our side, then they had swallowed us up quick. What is, had swallowed us up? Had passed into their own body. For that thou swallowest up, which thou passest into thy own body. The world would swallow thee up; swallow thou the world, pass it into thy own body: kill and eat. As it was said to Peter, Kill and eat; do thou kill in them what they are, make them what Thou art. But if they on the other hand persuade thee to ungodliness, thou art swallowed up by them. Not when they persecute thee art thou swallowed up by them, but when they persuade thee to be what they are. Let them not say, We have swallowed him up. Do thou swallow up the body of Pagans. Why the body of Pagans? It would swallow thee up. Do thou to it, what it would to thee. Therefore perhaps that calf, being ground to powder, was cast into the water and given to the children of Israel to drink, that so the body of ungodliness might be swallowed up by Israel. (Ver. 26.) Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour; so that we may swallow up them ashamed and brought to confusion. Who speak evil against me: let them be ashamed, let them be brought to confusion.

16. What sayest thou now, the Head with the Members? (Ver. 27.) Let them shout for joy and be glad that favour My righteous cause: who cleave to My Body. Yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, Which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant. (Ver. 28.) And My Tongue shall speak of Thy righteousness, and of Thy praise all the day long. And whose tongue endureth to speak the praise of God all the day long? See now I have made a discourse something longer; ye are wearied. Who endureth to praise God all the day long? I will suggest a remedy, whereby thou mayest praise God all the day long if thou wilt. Whatever thou dost, do well, and thou hast praised God. When thou singest an hymn, thou praisest God, but what doth thy tongue, unless thy heart also praise Him? Hast thou ceased from singing hymns, and departed, that thou mayest refresh thyself? Be not drunken, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou go away to sleep? Rise not to do evil, and

thou hast praised God. Dost thou transact business? Do no wrong, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou till thy field? Raise not strife, and thou hast praised God. In the innocency of thy works prepare thyself to praise God all the day long.

PSALM 36

Attend, dearly Beloved, a little to the text and the mysteries of this Psalm; and let us run through it, since in many places it is plain: but when the necessity of its obscurity compels us to dwell upon it, ye will endure it for the sake of the advantage of learning. (Ver. 1.) The ungodly hath said in himself that he will sin: there is no fear of God before his eyes. Not of one man, but of a race of ungodly men he speaketh, who fight against their own selves, by not understanding, that so they may live well; not because they cannot, but because they will not. For it is one thing, when one endeavours to understand some thing, and through infirmity of the flesh cannot; as saith the Scripture in a certain place, For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things; but another when the human heart acts mischievously against itself, so that what it could understand, if it had but good will thereto, it understandeth not, not because it is difficult, but because the will is contrary. But so it is when men love their own sins, and hate God's Commandments. For the Word of God is thy adversary, if thou be a friend to thy ungodliness; but if thou art an adversary to thy ungodliness, the Word of God is thy friend, as well as the adversary of thy ungodliness. If then thou hatest thy ungodliness, thou joinest thyself to the Word of God, and ye will be two against it, thou, and the Word of God, to destroy it. For thou indeed by thyself, of thy own strength, canst do nothing; but He helpeth thee Who hath sent to thee His Word, and so ungodliness is overcome. If thou hatest it, God also hath remitted it, and thou shalt be free: but if thou love it, it is contrary to thee to understand aught that is said against it. Suppose a man to ask how the Son can be equal to the Father: he hath believed it, he seeketh to understand it, as yet he cannot; for it is a great matter, and requireth greater powers that it may be comprehended; and it is the beginning of faith, which keepeth the soul until it be strengthened. With milk it is nourished, that it may arrive at the fitness and firmness for

stronger meat; that it may be able to understand this, In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God. Before it can do this, it is nourished in faith; and it endeavours to understand, that it may understand as much as God shall grant. Doth it with endeavours understand this also? What thou wouldest not to be done to thee, do not thou to another. That because thou wouldest not suffer iniquity, thou shouldest not do iniquity; because thou wouldest not suffer treachery and deceit, thou shouldest not contrive deceit against another? No, but this when thou wouldest not understand, it is attributed to thy will. Therefore, The ungodly hath said in himself, that he will sin; he hath purposed to sin.

2. But doth he who purposeth to sin, say this in public, and not rather in himself? Why in himself? Because no man seeth him. What then, because man seeth not in the heart, wherein he saith to himself that he will sin, doth not God see therein? God doth see therein. But what followeth? There is no fear of God before his eyes. There is fear of men before his eyes, for he dareth not in public to declare his iniquity, lest he be either reproved or condemned by men. But he departeth from the sight of men; whither? To himself: he betaketh himself within, and no man seeth him; where he meditateth treachery, and deceit, and sin, there no man seeth him. Even there he might not meditate with himself, if he thought that God seeth him: but since there is no fear of God before his eyes, when he hath departed from the sight of men to his own heart, whom should he fear there? Is not God present there? Yea, but there is no fear of God before his eyes.

3. Therefore he meditateth deceits, and then followeth,—(Doth it haply escape him that God seeth there? The very thing is declared which I was beginning to speak of: it doth escape him, but of his own will, because he wrought against himself, not willing to understand.) (Ver. 2.) For he hath wrought deceitfully in His sight. In whose sight? In His, Whose fear was not before the eyes of him that did work deceitfully. To find out his iniquity, and hate it. He wrought so as not to find it. For there are men who as it were endeavour to seek out their iniquity, and fear to find it; because if they should find it, it is said to them, Depart from it: this thou didst before thou knewest; thou didst iniquity being in ignorance; God giveth pardon: now thou hast discovered it, forsake it, that to thy ignorance pardon may easily

be given; and that with a clear face thou mayest say to God, Remember not the sins of my youth, and of my ignorance. Thus he seeketh it, thus he feareth lest he find it; for he seeketh it deceitfully. When saith a man, I knew not that it was sin? When he hath seen that it is sin, and ceaseth to do the sin, which he did only because he was ignorant: such an one in truth would know his sin, to find it out, and hate it. But now many ‘work deceitfully to find out their iniquity:’ they work not from their heart to find it out and hate it. But because in the very search after iniquity, there is deceit, in the finding it there will be defence of it. For when one hath found his iniquity, lo now it is manifest to him that it is iniquity. Do it not, thou sayest. And he who wrought deceitfully to find it out, now he hath found, hateth it not; for what saith he? How many do this! Who is there that doth it not? And will God destroy them all? Or at least he saith this: if God would not these things to be done, would men live who commit the same? Seest thou that thou didst work deceitfully to find out thy iniquity? For if not deceitfully but sincerely thou hadst wrought, thou wouldest now have found it out, and hated it; now thou hast found it out, and thou defendest it; therefore thou didst work deceitfully, when thou soughtest it.

4. Ver. 3. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he would not understand, that he might do good. Ye see that he attributeth that to the will: for there are men who would understand and cannot, and there are men who would not understand, and therefore understand not. He would not understand, that he might do good.

5. Ver. 4. He hath meditated iniquity on his bed. What said He, On his bed? The ungodly hath said in himself, that he will sin: what above he said, in himself, that here he said, On his bed. Our bed is our heart: there we suffer the tossing of an evil conscience; and there we rest when our conscience is good. Whoso loveth the bed of his heart, let him do some good therein. There is our bed, where the Lord Jesus Christ commands us to pray. Enter into thy chamber, and shut thy door. What is, Shut thy door? Expect not from God such things as are without, but such as are within; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. Who is he that shutteth not the door? He who asketh much from God such things, and in such wise directeth all his prayers, that he may receive the goods that are of this

world. Thy door is open, the multitude seeth when thou prayest. What is it to shut thy door? To ask that of God, which God alone knoweth how He giveth. What is that for which thou prayest, when thou hast shut the door? What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man. And haply it hath not entered into thy very bed, that is, into thy heart. But God knoweth what He will give: but when shall it be? When the Lord shall be revealed, when the Judge shall appear. For what is plainer than that which He shall say to them that are set at His Right Hand? Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. This shall they hear who are on the left hand, and shall groan with fruitless repentance, because so living they would not repent with fruit. Why shall they groan? Because there is for them no place of recovery. But they also shall hear somewhat themselves: Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. That is an evil hearing. For the righteous at their good hearing shall rejoice; for so it is written, The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance; he shall not be afraid from any evil hearing. From what evil hearing? That which they shall hear: Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. God therefore, Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, searcheth out our secret groaning, that in His sight we may be pleasing, and not as it were of our own righteousness boast ourselves before men. For whoso by his own righteousness would please men, not to that end that they who see him may praise God, but with this intention that he may himself be praised, he shutteth not his door against noise; for the door is open to that noise, and God heareth not as He would hear. Our bed, then, our heart, let us strive to cleanse, that it may be well with us there. Ye know, my Beloved, how many things many suffer in public, in the forum, in strifes, in contentions, in troublesome business: how a man, wearied with business abroad, runneth to his house that he may rest there, and striveth quickly to finish his business abroad, and to betake himself, for rest, to his own house. For therefore hath every one a home of his own, that he may rest therein. But if there also he suffer trouble, where can he rest? What then? It is good to have rest in his own house. But if abroad he suffer enemies, within perhaps a bad wife, he goeth forth into public: when he would rest from those troubles which are abroad, he entereth into his house: but when he neither resteth here, nor resteth abroad, where shall there be

rest? At least in the closet of the heart, when thou betakest thyself to thine inmost conscience. If there thou hast haply found a wife that causeth thee no bitterness, even the Wisdom of God; with her join thyself; rest within in thy chamber; let not the smoke of an evil conscience drive thee thence. But it was to meditate deceits, that he, of whom the Scripture speaketh these things, betook himself thither where men see not; and such things did he there meditate to himself, that not even in his heart could he rest. He hath meditated iniquity on his bed.

6. He hath set himself in every way that is not good. What is, he hath set himself? He hath sinned perseveringly. Whence also of a certain pious and good man it is said, He hath not stood in the way of sinners. As this hath not stood, so that hath set himself. But wickedness hath he not hated. There is the end, there the fruit: if a man can not but have wickedness, let him at least hate it. For when thou hatest it, it scarcely occurs to thee to do any wickedness. For sin is in our mortal body, but what saith the Apostle? Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. When beginneth it not to be therein? When that shall be fulfilled in us which he saith, When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Before this come to pass, there is a delighting in sin in the body, but greater is the delighting and the pleasure in the Word of Wisdom, in the Commandment of God. Overcome sin and the lust thereof. Sin and iniquity do thou hate, that thou mayest join thyself to God, Who hateth it as well as thou. Now being joined in mind unto the Law of God, in mind thou servest the Law of God. And if in the flesh thou therefore servest the law of sin, because there are in thee certain carnal delightings, then will there be none when thou shalt no longer fight. It is one thing, not to fight, and to be in true and lasting peace; another to fight and overcome; another to fight and to be overcome; another not to fight at all, but to be carried away. For there are men who do not fight at all, such as is he of whom He speaketh, when he saith, Wickedness hath he not hated; for how fighteth he against that which he hath not hated? He is carried off by wickedness, and doth not fight. But there are who begin to fight, but because they presume on their own strength, (that God may shew them that it is He that overcometh, if man joineth himself to God,) both when they fight they are overcome, and when they begin after a sort to lay hold on

righteousness, they become proud, and are confounded. These fight, but are overcome. But who is he that fighteth, and is not overcome? He who saith, I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind. See he fighteth, but not on his own strength presumeth he, therefore he shall be conqueror. For what followeth, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He presumeth on Him who commanded him to fight; and overcometh his enemy, assisted by Him that commanded. But as for this man, wickedness hath he not hated.

7. Ver. 5. Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth even unto the clouds. I know not what Mercy of Him he meaneth, which is in the heavens. For the Mercy of the Lord is also in the earth. Thou hast it written, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. Of what Mercy then speaketh He, when He saith, Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens? The gifts of God are partly temporal and earthly, partly eternal and heavenly. Whoso for this worshippeth God, that he may receive those temporal and earthly goods, which are open to all, is still as it were like the brutes: he enjoyeth indeed the Mercy of God, but not that which is excepted, which shall not be given, save only to the righteous, to the holy, to the good. What are the gifts which abound to all? He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Who hath not this Mercy of God, first that he hath being, that he is distinguished from the brutes, that he is a rational animal, so as to understand God; secondly, that he enjoys this light, this air, rain, fruits, diversity of seasons, and all the earthly comforts, health of body, the affection of friends, the safety of his family? All these are good, and they are God's gifts. Think not, Brethren, that any can give these, but God alone. Whoever then expecteth not these things but from the Lord, is very different from those who expect them even from devils, or from diviners, or from astrologers. For these are in two ways miserable, both because they desire only earthly goods, and because they ask not from Him Who giveth all goods. But they who desire these goods, and in these goods would be happy, and seek them only from God, in this indeed are better, that they seek them from God, but yet they are endangered. Saith one, How are they endangered? Because sometimes they consider human affairs, and see that all these earthly goods, which they desire, the ungodly and

unrighteous have abundantly; and think that they have lost the reward of worshipping God, because the same which the wicked have they also have, though they worship God, Whom the others worship not; or because sometimes they who worship have not at all, and they have who blaspheme: therefore they are still in danger.

8. But this man rightly understood what mercy he should pray for from God. Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens; and Thy Truth reacheth even to the clouds. That is, the Mercy which Thou givest to Thy Saints, is Heavenly, not earthly; is Eternal, not temporal. And how couldest Thou declare it unto men? Because, Thy Truth reacheth even unto the clouds. For who could know the Heavenly Mercy of God, unless God should declare it unto men? How did He declare it? By sending His truth even unto the clouds. What are the clouds? The Preachers of the Word of God. By whom in a certain place God was wroth with a certain vineyard. For I suppose, My Beloved, ye have understood, as well as heard the Prophet Isaiah, where He saith of a certain Vineyard, I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And lest any should think that He spake of a visible vineyard, he so concluded. The Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant. Therefore He reproved the Vineyard, which He looked should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And what said He? I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. And verily it came to pass. For the Apostles were sent to be Preachers. We find in the Acts of the Apostles that the Apostle Paul wished to preach to the Jews, and he found in them no grapes but wild grapes. For they began for his good to render evil, and to persecute him, and he, fulfilling what is written, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it, said, Unto you were we sent, but since ye reject the Word of God, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Therefore was this fulfilled, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. Truth reached even to the clouds: therefore unto us could be declared the Mercy of God, which is in Heaven and not in earth. And truly, Brethren, the clouds are the Preachers of the Word of Truth. When God threateneth through His Preachers, He thunders through the clouds. When God worketh miracles through His Preachers, He lightneth through the clouds, He terrifieth through the clouds, and watereth by the rain. Those Preachers then, by whom is preached the

Gospel of God, are the clouds of God. Let us then hope for Mercy, but for that which is in the Heavens.

9. Ver. 6. Thy Righteousness is like the mountains of God: Thy Judgments are a great deep. Who are the mountains of God. Those who are called clouds, the same are also the mountains of God. The great Preachers are the mountains of God. And as when the sun riseth, he first clothes the mountains with light, and thence the light descends to the lowest parts of the earth: so our Lord Jesus Christ, when He came, first irradiated the height of the Apostles, first enlightened the mountains, and so His Light descended to the valley of the world. And therefore saith He in a certain Psalm, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help. But think not that the mountains themselves will give thee help: for they receive what they may give, give not of their own. And if thou remain in the mountains, thy hope will not be strong: but in Him, Who enlighteneth the mountains, ought to be thy hope and presumption. Thy help indeed will come to thee through the mountains, because the Scriptures are administered to thee through the mountains, through the great Preachers of the Truth: but fix not thy hope in them. Hear what He saith next following: I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help. What then? Do the mountains give thee help? No; hear what follows, My help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth. Through the mountains cometh help, but not from the mountains. From whom then? From the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth. There have been other mountains, by whom whosoever would guide his ship has made shipwreck. For there have risen up leaders of heresies, who have been mountains. Arius was a mountain, Donatus was a mountain, Maximianus even now was like a mountain. Many looking to those mountains and desiring land, when they would be freed from the waves, were driven on the rocks, and made shipwreck on the land. By such mountains was not he seduced, who said, In the Lord put I my trust. How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain. I would not my hope should be in Arius, I would not in Donatus. My help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth. Learn ye how far ye may presume upon God, and how much ye may attribute to men, for Cursed is the man that trusteth in man. Most meekly and humbly, the holy Apostle Paul, being truly jealous of the Church, but for the

Bridegroom, not for himself, and fearing those who would say, I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, chose rather his own person to tread upon and despise, that he might glorify Christ. Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? He repels them from himself; but that he may send them to Christ. Even the friend of the Bridegroom would not to be loved by the Bride for the Bridegroom. For the Apostles are the friends of the Bridegroom. For the same Bridegroom, the humble John also, who was thought the Christ, was jealous. Wherefore he said, I am not the Christ: but there cometh One mightier than I after me, the latchet of Whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. And so humbling himself, he truly shewed that he was not the Bridegroom, but the Bridegroom's friend; and therefore he said, He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice. And if the friend of the Bridegroom is a mountain, yet hath not the mountain light from itself: but he heareth and rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice. We, saith he, have all received of His fulness. Of whose fulness? Of His, Who was the True Light Which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. For Him then the Apostle also was jealous of the Church, saying, Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. That is, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help. Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. But lest thy hope be again fixed on the mountains and not on God, hear this, I have planted, Apollos watered; and God gave the increase; and this, So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Now then thou hast said, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help: but because neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth; say, My help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth; and, Thy Righteousness is like the mountains of God: that is, the mountains are filled with Thy Righteousness.

10. Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. The abyss he calleth the depth of sin, whither every one cometh by despising God; as in a certain place it is said, God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do the things which are not convenient. Attend, my Beloved. This is a great matter; a

great matter is before us. What meaneth this, God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do the things that are not convenient? If then God has given them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do those things which are not convenient, is it therefore they do such wickednesses? Suppose one should propose this question; if God maketh them to do the things which are not convenient, what have they done? The secret is that which thou heardest, God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts. Therefore it was lust which they would not overcome, to which they were delivered by the Judgment of God. But that they should be held worthy to be delivered, see what of them he said before, Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Whereby? By their pride; for, Professing themselves wise, they became fools. And thereupon followeth, God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts. Because then they were proud and ungrateful, they were held worthy to be delivered up to the lusts of their own hearts, and became a great abyss, so that they not only sinned, but also worked craftily, lest they should understand their iniquity, and hate it. That is the depth of wickedness, to be unwilling to find it out and to hate it. But how one cometh to that depth, see; Thy Judgments are the great abyss. As the mountains are by the Righteousness of God, who through His Grace become great: so also through His Judgments come they unto the depth, who sink lowest. By this then let the mountains delight thee, by this turn away from the abyss, and turn thyself unto that, of which it is said, My help cometh from the Lord. But whereby? I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains. What meaneth this? I will speak plainly. In the Church of God thou findest an abyss, thou findest also mountains; thou findest there but few good, because the mountains are few, the abyss broad; that is, thou findest many living ill after the wrath of God, because they have so worked that they are delivered up to the lusts of their own heart; so now they defend their sins and confess them not; but say, Why? What have I done? Such an one did this, and such an one did that. Now will they even defend what the Divine Word reproves. This is the abyss. Therefore in a certain place saith the Scripture, (hear this abyss,) The sinner when he cometh unto the depth of sin despiseth. See, Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. But yet not art thou a mountain; not yet art thou in the abyss; fly from the abyss, tend

towards the mountains; but yet remain not on the mountains. For thy help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth.

11. O Lord, Thou shalt save man and beast, (ver. 7.) as Thy Mercy is multiplied, O God. Because he said, Thy Mercy is in the Heavens, that it may be known to be also on earth, he said, O Lord, Thou savest man and beast, as Thy Mercy is multiplied, O God. Great is Thy Mercy, and manifold is Thy Mercy, O God; and that shewest Thou both to man and beast. For from whom is the saving of men? From God. Is not the saving of beasts also from God? For He Who made man, made also beasts; He Who made both, saveth both; but the saving of beasts is temporal. But there are who as a great thing ask this of God, which He hath given to beasts. Thy Mercy, O God, is multiplied, so that not only unto men, but unto beasts also is given the same saving which is given to men, a carnal and temporal saving.

12. Have not men then somewhat reserved with God, which beasts deserve not, and whereunto beasts arrive not? They have evidently. And where is that which they have. The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. Attend, my Beloved, to this most pleasant sentence: Thou savest man and beast. First, he spake of man and beast, then of the children of men; as though men were one, the children of men other. Sometimes in Scripture children of men is said generally of all men, sometimes in some proper manner, with some proper signification, so that not all men are understood; chiefly when there is a distinction. For not without reason is it here put; O Lord, Thou savest man and beast: but the children of men; as though setting aside the first, he keepeth separate the children of men. Separate from whom? Not only from beasts, but also from men, who seek from God the saving of beasts, and desire this as a great thing. Who then are the children of men? Those who put their trust under the shadow of His wings. For those men together with beasts rejoice in possession, but the children of men rejoice in hope: those follow after present goods with beasts, these hope for future goods with Angels. Why then are those with a distinction called men, and these called the children of men? For in a certain place also saith the Scripture, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man, that Thou visitest him? What is man, that Thou

art mindful of him? Thou art mindful of him, as of one absent; but the Son of Man Thou visitest as present. What is, Thou art mindful of man? O Lord, Thou savest man and beast. For even to the evil Thou givest saving, and to them who desire not the kingdom of Heaven. For He regardeth them, and deserteth them not after their manner, as they their cattle: He deserteth them not, but as of the absent, is mindful of them. But He Whom he visiteth is the Son of Man; and of Him it is said, The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. And if ye would discern these two kinds of men, first consider the two men, Adam and Christ. Hear the Apostle, For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. We are born of Adam, that we may die: we rise again through Christ, that we may live for ever. When we bear the image of the earthly man, we are men: when we bear the image of the Heavenly Man, we are children of men; for Christ was called the Son of Man. For Adam was a man, but not a son of man: therefore to Adam belong those who desire carnal goods and that temporal saving. We exhort them to become the children of men, to put their trust under the shadow of His wings, and to desire that Mercy which is in the Heavens, and which was declared by the clouds. But if as yet they cannot, in the mean while even temporal goods let them not desire, but from God alone. So even let them serve after the Old Testament, that at the New they may arrive.

13. For that people also desired earthly goods; the kingdom of Jerusalem, the subjection of their enemies, abundance of fruits, their own health, their childrens' health. Such things they desired, and such things they received; under the Law were they kept. They desired from God goods which He gives even to beasts, because not yet had the Son of Man come to them, that they might be the children of men: yet they had already 'clouds' declaring the Son of Man. Unto them came Prophets, and declared Christ; and there were of them some who understood, and had hope of the future, to receive the Mercy which is in the Heavens. There were also of them some who desired but carnal things, and earthly and temporal felicity. The same men's feet slipped away to make and to worship idols. For when He warned them, and scourged them in those things in which they delighted, and took them away, they suffered famine, wars, pestilences, diseases, and so they turned themselves to idols. Those goods which as a great thing they ought to have

desired of God, they desired from idols, and abandoned God. For they observed that those goods, which they sought, abounded to the ungodly and wicked, and they thought that they worshipped God in vain, because He gave them not their hire on earth. O man, thou art God's workman; hereafter is the time of receiving thy hire: why askest thou now thy hire, before thou hast wrought? If thy workman come up to thy house, wilt thou give him his hire, before that he has finished his work? Thou wilt think him perverse, if he say; First, let me receive my hire, and then I will work. Thou wilt be angry. But why wilt thou be angry? Because he trusted not a deceitful man. How will not God be angry, when thou trustest not Truth Itself? What He promised thee, He will give thee: He deceiveth not, because He is Truth, Who promised. But fearest thou, lest haply He have nothing to give? He is Omnipotent: fear not, lest He be not, to give thee; He is Immortal: fear not, lest He be succeeded. He is everlasting: be secure. If thou wouldest thy workman to rely on thee the whole day, trust thou also in God, thy whole life; for thy life is a moment of time with God. And thou shalt be, what? But the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.

14. Ver. 8. They shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House. He promiseth us some great thing. He would speak it, and He speaketh it not. Can He not, or do not we receive it? I dare, my Brethren, to say, even of holy tongues and hearts, by which Truth is declared to us, that it can neither be spoken, which they declared, nor even thought of For it is a great thing, and ineffable; and even they saw through a glass darkly, as saith the Apostle, For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Lo, they who saw through a glass darkly, thus burst forth. What then shall we be, when we shall see face to face? That with which they travailed in heart, and could not with their tongue bring forth, that men might receive it. For what necessity was there that he should say, They shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House? He sought a word whereby to express from human things what he would say; and because he saw that men drowning themselves in drunkenness receive indeed wine without measure, but lose their senses, he saw what to say; for when shall have been received that ineffable joy, then shall be lost in a manner the human soul, it shall become Divine, and be drunken with the fulness of God's House. Wherefore also in

another Psalm it is said, Thy cup inebriating, how excellent is it! With this cup were the Martyrs drunken when going to their passion, they knew not their own. What so drunken as not to know a wife weeping, not children, not parents? They knew them not, they thought not that they were before their eyes. Wonder not: they were drunken. Wherewith were they drunken? Lo, they had received a cup wherewith they were drunken. Wherefore he also gives thanks to God, saying, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord, Therefore, Brethren, let us be ‘children of men,’ and let us trust under the shadow of His wings, and be drunken with the fulness of His House. As I could, I have spoken; and as far as I can, I see; and how far I see, I cannot speak. They shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House; and of the torrent of Thy Pleasure shalt Thou give them to drink. A torrent we call water coming with a flood. There will be a flood of God’s Mercy to overflow and inebriate those, who now put their trust under the shadow of His wings. What is that Pleasure? As it were a torrent inebriating the thirsty. Let him then who thirsts now, lay up hope: whoso thirsts now, let him have hope; when inebriated, he shall have possession: before he have possession, let him thirst in hope. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

15. With what fountain then wilt thou be overflowed, and whence runneth such a torrent of His Pleasure? (Ver. 9.) For with Thee, saith he, is the fountain of Life. What is the fountain of Life, but Christ? He came to thee in the flesh, that He might bedew thy thirsty lips: He will satisfy thee trusting, Who bedewed thee thirsting. For with Thee is the fountain of Life; in Thy Light shall we see light. Here a fountain is one thing, light another: there not so. For that which is the Fountain, the same is also Light: and whatever thou wilt thou callest It, for It is not what thou callest It: for thou canst not find a fit name: for It remaineth not in one name. If thou shouldest say, that It is Light only, it would be said to thee, Then without cause am I told to hunger and thirst, for who is there that eateth light? It is said to me plainly, directly, Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. If It is Light, my eyes must I prepare. Prepare also lips; for That Which is Light is also a Fountain: a Fountain, because It satisfieth the thirsty: Light, because It enlighteneth the blind. Here sometimes, light is in one place, a fountain in

another. For sometimes fountains run even in darkness; and sometimes in the desert thou sufferest the sun, findest no fountain: here then can these two be separated: there thou shalt not be wearied, for there is a Fountain; there thou shalt not be darkened, for there is Light.

16. Ver. 10. Shew forth Thy Mercy unto them that know Thee; Thy Righteousness to them that are of a right heart. As I have said, Those are of a right heart, who follow in this life the Will of God. The Will of God is sometimes that thou shouldest be whole, sometimes that thou shouldest be sick. If when thou art whole God's Will be sweet, and when thou art sick God's Will be bitter; thou art not of a right heart. Wherefore? Because thou wilt not make right thy will according to God's Will, but wilt bend God's Will to thine. That is right, but thou art crooked: thy will must be made right to That, not That made crooked to thee; and thou wilt have a right heart. It is well with thee in this world; be God blessed, Who comforteth thee: it goeth hardly with thee in this world; be God blessed, because He chasteneth and proveth thee; and so wilt thou be of a right heart, saying, I will bless the Lord at all times: His Praise shall be ever in my mouth.

17. Ver. 11. Let not the foot of pride come against me. But now he said, The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings: they shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House. When one hath begun to be plentifully overflowed with that Fountain, let him take heed lest he grow proud. For the same was not wanting to Adam, the first man: but the foot of pride came against him, and the hand of the sinner removed him, that is, the proud hand of the devil. As he who seduced him, said of himself, I will sit in the sides of the north; so he persuaded him, by saying, Taste, and ye shall be as Gods. By pride then have we so fallen as to arrive at this mortality. And because pride had wounded us, humility maketh us whole. God came humbly, that from such great wound of pride He might heal man. He came, for, The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. He was taken by the Jews; He was reviled of them. Ye heard when the Gospel was read, what they said, and to Whom they said, Thou hast a devil: and He said not, Ye have a devil, for ye are still in your sins, and the devil possesseth your hearts. He said not this, which if He had said, He had said truly: but it was not meet that He should say it, lest He should seem not to preach Truth, but

to retort evil speaking. He let go what He heard as though He heard it not. For a Physician was He, and to cure the madman had He come. As a Physician careth not what he may hear from the madman; but how the madman may recover and become sane; nor even if he receive a blow from the madman, careth he; but while he to him giveth new wounds, he cureth his old fever: so also the Lord came to the sick man, to the madman came He, that whatever He might hear, whatever He might suffer, He should despise; by this very thing teaching us humility, that being taught by humility, we might be healed from pride: from which he here prayeth to be delivered, saying, Let not the foot of pride come against me; neither let the hand of the sinner remove me. For if the foot of pride come, the hand of the sinner removeth. What is the hand of the sinner? The working of him that adviseth ill. Hast thou become proud? Quickly he corrupteth thee who adviseth ill. Humbly fix thyself in God, and care not much what is said to thee. Hence is that which is elsewhere spoken, From my secret sins cleanse Thou me; and from others' sins also keep Thy servant. What is, From my secret sins? Let not the foot of pride come against me. What is, From other men's sins also keep Thy servant? Let not the hand of the wicked remove me. Keep that which is within, and thou shalt not fear from without.

18. But wherefore so greatly fearest thou this? Because it is said, (ver. 12.) Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity; so that they have come into that abyss, of which it is said, Thy judgments are like the great abyss: so that they have come even to that deep wherein sinners who despise have fallen. Have fallen. Whereby did they first fall? By the foot of pride. Hear the foot of pride. When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. Therefore came against them the foot of pride, whereby they came into the depth. God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do those things which are not convenient. The root of sin, and the head of sin feared he who said, Let not the foot of pride come against me. Wherefore said he, the foot? Because by walking proudly man deserted God, and departed from Him. His foot, called he his affection. Let not the foot of pride come against me: let not the hand of the wicked remove me: that is, let not the works of the wicked remove me from Thee, that I should wish to imitate them. But wherefore said he this against pride, Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity? Because those who now are ungodly, have fallen by pride. Therefore when

the Lord would caution His Church, He said, It shall watch thy head, and thou shalt watch his heel. The serpent watcheth when the foot of pride may come against thee, when thou mayest fall, that he may cast thee down. But watch thou his head: the beginning of all sin is pride. Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity: they are driven out, and are not able to stand. He first, who in the Truth stood not, then, through him, they whom God sent out of Paradise. Whence he, the humble, who said that he was not worthy to unloose His shoe's latchet, is not driven out, but standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice; not because of his own, lest the foot of pride come against him, and he be driven out, and be not able to stand.

And now if with all my pains I have been tedious to any of you, I have finished the Psalm, the tediousness has passed away, and I will congratulate you that the whole Psalm is expounded. In the very middle of it, fearing lest I should burden you, I was about to let you go: but I thought that our attention would be broken off, and that we should not so return to the half remaining, as if we should now run through the whole; and I was willing rather to be burdensome to you, than, leaving the subject unfinished, to keep the rest. For there is due to you also to-morrow's sermon: pray ye for me, that I may be able to render it; and do ye bring hungry mouths and devout hearts.

PSALM 37

sermon the first

On the First Part of the Psalm.

With terror do they hear of the coming of the last day, who will not be secure by living well: and who fain would live ill, long. But it was for useful purposes that God willed that day to remain unknown; that the heart may be ever ready to expect that of which it knows it is to come, but knows not when it is to come. Seeing, however, that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent to us to be our “Master,” He said, that of that day not even the Son of Man knew, because it was not part of His office as our Master that through Him it should become known to us. For indeed the Father knoweth nothing that the Son knoweth not; since That is the Very Knowledge of the Father Itself, Which is His Wisdom; now His Son, His Word, is His “Wisdom.” But because it was not for our good to know that, which however was known to Him, Who came indeed to teach us, though not to teach us that which it was not good for us to know, He not only, as a Master, taught us something, but also as a Master, left something untaught. For, as a Master, He knew how both to teach us what was good for us, and not to teach us what was injurious. Now thus, according to a certain form of speech, the Son is said not to know what He does not teach: that is, (according to a certain form of speech, as I said,) in the same way that we are daily in the habit of speaking, He is said not to know, what He causes us not to know. For we call a day “joyful,” because it makes us joyful; and a day sad, because it makes us sad; and we call the frost sluggish, because it makes us sluggish. In the same way that it is said, on the contrary, by the Lord, Now I know. It was said to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God. This God knew even before that proof of him. For that trial of him was made for this reason, that we might know what God already knew, that what before the proof of it was known to Him might be written for our instruction. And

perhaps even Abraham himself did not yet know what was the strength of his faith: for it is by being, as it were, put to the question by trial, that each one becomes acquainted with himself: just as Peter, at all events, was ignorant of what was the real strength of his faith, when he said to the Lord, I will be with Thee unto death. But the Lord, Who knew him well, having (so to speak) felt the pulse of his heart, foretold where he would fail, foreshewing to him his infirmity. Then it was that Peter, who before his trial had thought presumptuously of himself, in his trial learned to know himself. And so therefore we not unreasonably suppose our Father Abraham also to have discovered the strength of his faith, when, being commanded to sacrifice his only son, he neither hesitated nor shrunk from offering him up to Him Who had given him, because, as he knew not whence He was going to give him that son, when not as yet born, so he believed that, when sacrificed, He could replace him. Therefore God said, Now I know; which we understand, Now have I made thee to know; according to the expressions which we have quoted, of a sluggish frost, because it makes sluggish, and a joyful day, because it makes joyful. Thence is that saying, The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love Him. For surely you will be attributing to the Lord our God, the Supreme, the Very God, great ignorance, (which however you will perceive to be sacrilegious,) if you were to understand, The Lord your God proveth you, as if He, being before in ignorance, were gaining knowledge from the trial of us. But what is meant by, “He proveth you that He may know?” “He proveth you that He may cause you to know.” Receive therefore a principle of interpretation from the contrary of the present subject: and, just as when you hear God say, I know, you understand by it, “have caused you to know;” so also when you hear it said of the Son of Man, (i.e. of Christ,) that He knoweth not that day, understand it to be meant, that He causes us not to know it. Now what is meant by “causes us not to know it?” Conceals it, so that what is not profitable for us to have told be not communicated. This is what I said of a good Master knowing what to communicate, what to keep back: as we read that some things He postponed. Whence we learn, that not every thing is to be communicated, which they to whom it is communicated, cannot bear. For in another place He says, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. The Apostle also says, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ; I have fed you with

milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able, neither yet now are ye able. What is the purport of this discourse? That since we know that the last day will come, but, while for our profit we know that it is to come, are, for our profit also, ignorant of the time when it is to come, we may keep our heart in readiness for it, by living well: and may not only not fear that day's coming, but may even desire it. Seeing that day, as it increases the misery of the unbelieving, so it ends that of the faithful. Which now of these two thou wilt choose to do, is now indeed, before it comes, in thine own power; when it shall have come, will not be so. Choose therefore, whilst there is time; for that which God mercifully conceals, He mercifully postpones also.

2. Now that in every sort of life that hath any kind of professed object, not all are found good, not all are reprobates, appears from this, that of certain classes of persons, which we have just now heard set forth in the Gospel by comparisons, it is thus concluded: One shall be taken; and one shall be left. The good shall be taken; the bad shall be left. Two men are seen in the field. The profession is the same, but their hearts not the same. The profession is visible to men; the heart is known to God. Whatsoever therefore the field signifies, one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Not as if half of it was to be taken, and half left: but it speaks of two classes of persons. And if one of those comprises many persons, the other but few, yet, one shall be taken, and one shall be left: that is, the one class shall be taken, and the other shall be left. So shall it be in the bed, so in the mill. Perhaps you are anxious to know what these things mean. You see that they are wrapped up and enveloped, as it were, in comparisons. Now it may seem to me to be one thing; to another, something else. But neither do I by what I say forbid any other person to receive a better explanation; nor let him object to my receiving both, if both are reconcileable with the faith. For to me it seems that those who bear rule over the Church are labouring in the field, as the Apostle saith, Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building. For he calls himself both a master builder, when he says, As a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation; and also a husbandman, when he says, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. In the mill then He spake of two women, not two men; I suppose, because this comparison relates to the laity: because the rulers govern, the laity are governed. And I think that by that mill is meant the world, because it revolves on the wheel

of the times, (so to speak,) and because it crushes those who love it. There are then some who do not withdraw from secular business: but yet in this too some do well, others ill. Some, make to themselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness; by whom they may be received into everlasting habitations; to whom it is said, I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat. Some neglect those things, to whom it is said, I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat. Therefore, because of those who are engaged in the business and the labours of this world, there are some that love to do good to the needy, some that neglect it, as of two women in the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left. Now the bed I believe to be put for rest: because there are those who will neither submit to worldly business, as there are men living in wedlock, having houses, households, children; nor do any thing in the Church like those who, being set over others, labour therein as in the field, but as if too feeble to perform these duties, betake themselves to retirement, and love to be in quiet, not venturing on great undertakings, as being mindful of their infirmity, and in a certain way entreating God on the “bed” of their infirmity. And that profession too hath good men, hath also hypocrites; wherefore of these also one shall be taken, the other left; for to whatsoever profession you turn, prepare yourself to bear with hypocrites: otherwise, if you do not prepare yourself, you will find that which you did not expect, and will fall away, or be offended at it. He therefore would prepare thee against all contingencies, Who speaks to thee now that it is the time, both for Him to speak, and not yet the time to judge, and for them to hear, and not yet to repent in vain. For now repentance is not in vain, then it will be in vain. For it is not that men will not repent them then of having lived ill, but that God’s righteousness may by no means restore to them, what they by their own unrighteousness have forfeited. For it is a righteous thing with God, to shew mercy now, and then to execute justice. Therefore it is that it is declared now. Is it not declared? Let every one contradict me, let every one murmur dissent, if this Scripture is not read and is not sung all over the world, if it ceases even to be circulated for sale through the whole community.

3. But, in truth, this it is that disturbs you who are a Christian; that you see men of bad lives prospering, and surrounded with abundance of things like these; you see them sound in health, distinguished with proud honours; you

see their family unvisited by misfortune; the happiness of their relatives, the obsequious attendance of their dependants, their most commanding influence, their life uninterrupted by any sad event; you see their characters most profligate, their external resources most affluent; and your heart says that there is no Divine judgment; that all things are carried to and fro by accidents, and blown about in disorderly and irregular motions. For if God, thou sayest, regarded human affairs, would his iniquity flourish, and my innocence suffer? Every sickness of the soul hath in Scripture its proper remedy. Let him then whose sickness is of that kind that he says in his heart things like these, let him drink this Psalm by way of potion. What is the matter? What aileth thee? Let us once more consider what you were saying. What was I saying? you say. What, but what you yourself see? The wicked flourish, the good suffer. How can it be that God seeth these things? Take and drink this; He, concerning Whom thou utterest those murmurs, hath Himself mingled that potion for thee. Only do not thou reject that most wholesome cup. Apply to it the lips of the heart by lending thine ears; and drink what thou hearest.

Ver. 1. Be not envious because of evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity. (Ver. 2.) For they shall soon wither like the grass, and shall fade like the herbs of the meadow. That which to thee seemeth long, is “soon” in the sight of God. Conform thou thyself to God; and it will be “soon” to thee. That which he here calls grass, that we understand by the herbs of the meadow. They are some worthless things, occupying the surface only of the ground, they have no depth of root. In the winter then they are green; but when the summer sun shall begin to scorch, they will wither away. For now it is the season of winter. Thy glory doth not as yet appear. But if thy love hath but a deep root, like that of many trees during winter, the frost passes away, the summer (that is, the Day of Judgment) will come; then will the greenness of the grass wither away. Then will the glory of the trees appear. For ye (saith the Apostle) are dead, even as trees seem to be in winter, as it were dead, as it were withered. What is our hope then, if we are dead? The root is within; where our root is, there is our life also, for there our love is fixed. And your life is hid with Christ in God. When shall he wither, who is thus rooted? But when will our spring be? When our summer? When will the honour of foliage clothe us around, and

the fulness of fruit make us rich? When shall this come to pass? Hear what follows; When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And what then shall we do now? Be not envious because of the evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon wither like the grass, and fade like the herb of the meadow.

4. What shouldest thou do then? (Ver. 3.) Trust in the Lord. For they too trust, but not in the Lord. Their hope is perishable. Their hope is short-lived, frail, fleeting, transitory, baseless. Trust thou in the Lord. “Behold,” thou sayest, “I do trust; what am I to do?”

And do good. Do not do that evil which thou beholdest in those men, who are prosperous in wickedness. Do good, and dwell in the land. Lest haply thou shouldest be doing good without “dwelling in the land.” For it is the Church that is the Lord’s land. It is her whom He, the Father, the tiller of it, waters, and cultivates. For there are many that, as it were, do good works, but yet, in that they do not dwell in the land, they do not belong to the husbandman. Therefore do thou thy good, not outside of the land, but do thou dwell in the land. And what shall I have?

And thou shalt be fed in its riches. What are the riches of that land? Her riches are her Lord! Her riches are her God! He it is to Whom it is said, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup. In a late discourse we suggested to you, dearly beloved, that God is our possession, and that we are at the same time God’s possession. Hear how that He is Himself the riches of that land.

Ver. 4. Delight thyself in the Lord. As if thou hadst put the question, and hadst said, “Shew me the riches of that land, in which thou biddest me dwell, he says, Delight thyself in the Lord.

5. And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Understand in their proper signification, the desires of thine heart. Distinguish the desires of thine heart from the desires of thy flesh; distinguish as much as thou canst. It is not without a meaning that it is said in a certain Psalm, God is (the strength) of mine heart. For there it says in what follows: And God is my portion for ever. For instance: One labours under bodily blindness. He asks

that he may receive his sight. Let him ask it; for God does that too, and gives those blessings also. But these things are asked for even by the wicked. This is a desire of the flesh. One is sick, and prays to be made sound. From the point of death he is restored to health. That too is a desire of the flesh, as are all of such a kind. What is “the desire of the heart?” As the desire of the flesh is to wish to have one’s eyesight restored, to enable him, that is, to see that light, which can be seen by such eyes; so the desire of the heart relates to a different sort of light. For, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Delight thou thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

6. “Behold,” (you say,) “I do long after it, I do ask for it, I do desire it. Shall I then accomplish it?” No. Who shall then? (Ver. 5.) Reveal thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. Mention to Him what thou sufferest, mention to Him what thou dost desire. For what is it that thou sufferest? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. What is it then that thou dost desire? Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And because it is He Himself that “will bring it to pass,” when thou shalt have revealed thy ways unto Him; hear what follows; The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. What is it then that He is to bring to pass, since it is said, Reveal thy way unto Him, and He will bring it to pass? What will He bring to pass?

Ver. 6. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light. For now, thy righteousness is hid. Now it is a thing of faith; not yet of sight. You believe something that you may do it. You do not yet see that in which you believe. But when thou shalt begin to see that, which thou didst believe before, thy righteousness will be brought forth to the light, because it is thy faith that was thy righteousness. For the just lives by faith.

7. And He shall bring forth thy judgment as the noon-day. That is to say, “as the clear light.” It was too little to say, as the light. For we call it “light” already, even when it but dawns: we call it light even while the sun is rising. But never is the light brighter than at mid-day. Therefore He will not only bring forth thy righteousness as the light, but thy judgment shall be as the noon-day. For now dost thou make thy “judgment” to follow Christ. This is thy purpose: this is thy choice: this is thy judgment. No one hath shewn thee

what He hath promised: thou holdest fast One Who as yet doth but promise; but thou waitest for Him Who shall shew thee the fulfilment. In the judgment therefore of thy faith thou hast chosen to follow what thou dost not see: the justice of thy judgment is as yet a matter of uncertainty. It is as yet censured and ridiculed by the infidels. "What hast thou believed? What is it that Christ hath promised thee? That thou shalt be immortal, and that He will give thee eternal life? Where is this to be? When will He give it thee? When can it possibly be?" Yet is it thy judgment rather to follow Christ, promising what thou dost not see, than the wicked, censuring thy belief of what thou dost not yet see. And this is thy judgment; but what is the wisdom of that judgment doth not yet appear. In this world it is, as it were, night. Then, when shall He bring forth thy judgment as the noon-day? When Christ, Who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. When the Day of Judgment shall have come, and when Christ shall have come and gathered together all nations to be judged, what shall then be? Where shall the wicked hide his falsehood, when I shall see my faith? Well, what is our portion now? Distress, tribulations, and trials: and Blessed is he that endureth to the end: for He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. Let him not yield to those that mock him; let him not make his choice to flourish here; so that from a tree he should become grass.

8. 'What should I do then?' Hear what thou shouldest do. (Ver. 7.) Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him. Be this thy life, to obey His commandments. For this is to submit thee to Him; and to entreat Him until He give thee what He hath promised. Let good works "continue;" let prayer "continue." For men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Wherein dost thou shew that thou art submitted to Him? In doing what He hath commanded. But haply thou dost not receive thy wages as yet, because as yet thou art not able. For He is already able to give them; but thou art not already able to receive them. Exercise thou thyself in works. Labour in the vineyard; at the close of the day crave thy wages. Faithful is He who brought thee into the vineyard. Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him.

9. "See! I do so; I do submit to the Lord, and I do entreat. But what do you think? That neighbour of mine is a wicked man, living a bad life, and

prosperous! His thefts, adulteries, robberies, are known to me. Lifted up above every one, proud, and raised on high by wickedness, he deigns not to notice me. Under these circumstances, how shall I hold out with patience?" This is a sickness; drink, by way of remedy.

"Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way." He prospereth, but it is in his way: thou sufferest, but it is in God's way! His portion is prosperity on his way, misery on arriving at its end: yours, toil on the road, happiness in its termination. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; and the way of the ungodly shall perish. Thou walkest those ways which the Lord knoweth, and if thou dost suffer toil in them, they do not deceive thee. The way of the ungodly is but a transitory happiness; at the end of the way the happiness is at an end also. Why? Because that way is the broad road; its termination leads to the pit of hell. Now, thy way is narrow; and few there be that enter in through it: but into how ample a field it comes at the last, thou oughtest to consider. Fret not thyself at him who prospereth in his way; because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Ver. 8. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Wherefore art thou wroth? Wherefore is it that, through that passion and indignation, thou dost blaspheme, or almost blaspheme? Against the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass, cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Knowest thou not whither that wrath tempts thee on? Thou art on the point of saying unto God, that He is unjust. It tends to that. "Look! why is that man prosperous, and this man in adversity?" Consider what thought it begets: stifle the wicked notion. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: so that now returning to thy senses, thou mayest say, Mine eye is disturbed because of wrath. What eye is that, but the eye of faith? To the eye of thy faith I appeal. Thou didst believe in Christ: why didst thou believe? What did He promise thee? If it was the happiness of this world that Christ promised thee, then murmur against Christ; yes! murmur against Him, when thou seest the wicked flourishing. What of happiness did He promise? What, save in the Resurrection of the Dead? But what in this life? That which was His portion. His portion, I say! Dost thou, servant and disciple, disdain what thy Lord, what thy Master bore? Dost thou not hear from Him, The servant is not greater than his Lord, and the disciple is not above his Master. He

endured for thee pain, scourgings, reproaches, the Cross, and death, and which of these was due to the Just One, which not due to thee, a sinner? Therefore keep thou thine eye right, let it not be disturbed because of wrath. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Be not emulous in any wise to do evil; by, as it were, copying him who, by doing evil, flourishes for a time. Be not emulous in any wise to do evil.

Ver. 9. For evil-doers shall be cut off. “But I see their prosperity.” Believe Him, Who saith, they shall be cut off; Him Who seeth better than thou, since His eye anger cannot cloud. For evil-doers shall be cut off. But those that wait upon the Lord,—not upon any one that can deceive them; but verily on Him Who is the Truth itself,—But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land. What land, but that Jerusalem, with the love of which whosoever is inflamed, shall come to peace at the last.

10. “But how long is the sinner to flourish? How long shall I have to endure?” Thou art impatient; that which seems long to thee, will soon come to pass. It is infirmity makes that seem long, which is really short, as is found in the case of the longings of sick men. Nothing seems so long, as the mixing of the potion for him when athirst. For all that his attendants are making all speed, lest haply the patient be angry; “When will it be done? (he cries,) When will it be drest? When will it be served?” Those who are waiting upon you are making haste, but your infirmity fancies that long, which is being done with expedition. Behold ye, therefore, our Physician complying with the infirmity of the patient, saying, “How long shall I have to endure? How long will it be?”

Ver. 10. Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Is it certainly among sinners, and because of the sinner, that thou murmurest? A little while, and he shall not be. Lest haply because I said, They that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land, thou shouldest think that waiting to be of very long duration. Wait a little while, thou shalt receive without end what thou waitest for. A little while, a moderate space. Review the years from Adam’s time up to this day; run through the Scriptures. It is almost yesterday that he fell from Paradise! So many ages have been measured out, and unrolled. Where now are the past ages? Even so, however, shall the few which remain, pass away also. Hadst thou been living throughout all that time,

since Adam was banished from Paradise up to this present day, thou wouldest certainly see that the life, which had thus flown away, had not been of long duration. But how long is the duration of each individual's life? Add any number of years you please: prolong old age to its longest duration: what is it? Is it not but a morning breeze? Be it so, however, that the Day of Judgment is far off, when the reward of the righteous and of the unrighteous is to come: your last day at all events cannot be far off. Make thyself ready against this! For such as thou shall have departed from this life, shalt thou be restored to the other. At the close of that short life, you will not yet be, where the Saints shall be, to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. You will not yet be there? Who does not know that? But you may already be there, where that beggar, once covered with sores, was seen at a distance, at rest, by that proud and unfruitful rich man in the midst of his torments. Surely laid in that rest thou waitest in security for the Day of Judgment, when thou art to receive again a body, to be changed so as to be made equal to an Angel. How long then is that, for which we are impatient, and are saying, 'When will it come? Will it tarry long?' This our sons will say hereafter, and our sons' sons will say too; and, though each one of these in succession will say this same thing, that little while, that is yet to be, passes away, as all that is already past hath past away already! O thou sick one! Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and thou shalt not find him.

He shews what he meant by, he shall not be—not that he shall cease to exist altogether, but that he shall not exist for any good end. For if he shall cease to exist altogether, he will not even be tortured. Then is security given to the sinner, so that he will say, 'I will do what I will so long as I live; afterward I shall be no more.' Will he be no more in existence, that he may suffer pain, that he may be tormented? What then will become of, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? 'But perhaps they will not be consigned to that fire, and will be annihilated.' Then it would not be said, Go ye into everlasting fire; for if they were not to be in existence, it would not be everlasting to them. And indeed what is in store for them there, whether absolute annihilation, or pain and torment, the Lord hath not kept back from us, saying, There shall be weeping and gnashing of

teeth. Now in what way shall they weep, and gnash the teeth, if they shall cease to exist altogether? In what way is it here said, A little while, and the sinner shall not be, except in the way in which he expounded his meaning in the following verse? Yea, thou shalt seek his place, and thou shalt not find it. What is meant by his place? His use. "Why? hath the sinner any use?" He hath. God uses him here to prove the righteous, even as He made use of the devil to prove Job; even as He made use of Judas to betray Christ. In this life, therefore, there is something that can be done with the sinner. Here, therefore, is the place for him, just as the place for the chaff is in the furnace of the goldsmith. The chaff burns, that the gold may be cleared of its dross; even so the ungodly rages, that the righteous man may be proved. But when the time of our probation shall have been completed, when there shall no longer be those requiring to be proved, there will no longer be those, by whom they must be proved. I pray you, because we said, 'there will not be persons to be proved,' does it follow the persons themselves shall 'not be?' But because henceforth there will be no need of sinners, as instruments for the probation of the righteous, therefore verily thou shalt seek his place, and thou shalt not find it. Seek the sinner's place now, and thou shalt find it. God hath made of the sinner a scourge. He hath even given him honour, nay, He hath given him power also. For sometimes He does this: He gives power to the sinner; then the world is scourged, then the godly are corrected. To that sinner, that which is due shall be repaid; and yet he has been made an instrument for the improvement of the godly; an occasion for the falling away of the ungodly. Thou shalt seek his place; and thou shalt not find it.

12. Ver. 11. But the meek shall inherit the land. That land is the one of which we have often spoken, the holy Jerusalem, which is to be released from these her pilgrimages, and to live for ever with God, and on God. Therefore, They shall inherit the land. What shall be their delight? And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Let the ungodly man delight himself here in the multitude of his gold, in the multitude of his silver, in the multitude of his slaves, in the multitude, lastly, of his baths, his roses, his intoxicating wines, his most sumptuous and luxurious banquets. Is this the power thou enviest? Is this the glory that delights thee? Would not his fate be worthy to be deplored, even if he were to be so for ever? What

shall be thy delights? And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Peace shall be thy gold. Peace shall be thy silver. Peace shall be thy lands. Peace shall be thy life, thy God Peace. Peace shall be to thee whatsoever thou dost desire. For here that which is gold, cannot be silver to thee; that which is wine, cannot be bread unto thee; and what is light to thee, cannot be drink to thee also. Thy God shall be all to thee! Thou shalt eat Him; so that thou shalt hunger no more. Thou shalt drink of Him, so that thou shalt never thirst. Thou shalt be enlightened by Him, so that thou shalt be no more blind. Thou shalt be stayed by Him, so that thou shalt not fall. He shall possess thee whole, entire, Himself whole, entire. Thou shalt not be straitened for room in dwelling with Him, with Whom thou dost possess all. Thou shalt possess the whole of Him. He too shall possess the whole of thee; for Thou and He shall be one; of which one He who possesses you shall possess the whole. This is the remainder in store for the man of peace. That verse we have been singing, which, however, is far in this Psalm from these verses now treated of. But because we have been singing it, we ought to end with it. Only do thou be of good courage; keep innocency. It is a precious possession. Thou hast a mind to steal something; I suppose, that thou mayest make gain. Consider what it is thou art laying hands on, and what it is from which thou art taking away! Thou wishest to gain on one side: thou art losing on the other. Thou art acquiring money, thou art losing innocency. Rather let thine heart rouse itself from its slumber. Thou who didst wish to acquire money, and art thereby losing innocence, be willing rather to lose the money. Keep innocency, and take heed to direction. For God will direct thee, that thou shouldest will whatsoever God will. For if thou willest not what God wills, thy way will be crooked, and thy perversity will not suffer thee to be “made straight” in the “direct” way. Keep innocence, then; and take heed to direction; and think not that when there is an end of this life, there is an end of man: for there is a remainder in store for the man of peace.

discourse the second

On the second part of the Psalm.

We have both received a command to speak of the Psalm to you, dearly beloved; and it was our bounden duty to obey it also. For it hath pleased

God to delay our departure on account of the violence of the rains; and we have received a command, that our tongue should not be unemployed here in your service; seeing that the thought of your welfare ever employs our hearts, even as ours does yours. We had however already suggested to you what God means in that Psalm: what He would teach us; of what He would remind us, what He would forewarn us against, and what He would have us to bear with patience, and what to hope. For there are two classes of men, the just and the unjust, mingled together in this life, and in this world. Each hath a disposition of heart peculiar to itself. That of the just is struggling upward by humbling itself; that of the unjust is sinking downward by exalting itself. For the one lowers itself that it may rise; the other exalts itself that it may fall. Hence it happens, that one class has to endure, the other to be endured; that the object of the just is to save the unjust themselves to eternal life; the object of the unjust is to return evil for good, and if it be possible to deprive even of temporal life those who wish them life everlasting. For the unjust endureth with pain the just, and the just the unjust, they are a burden the one to the other. No one doubts that those two sorts of characters are a burden to one another, but that on different views. For it is for this reason that the just man is a burden to the unjust, that both in his desires he wishes, and in his actions he endeavours, that he should not be unjust, but should become just: but the unjust man's hatred for the just is of this kind, that he would not have him exist at all; not that he would have him be righteous. For the more righteous he is, so much the more is he a burden to the unrighteousness of the other. And he takes pains moreover to make him, if it were possible, unrighteous, but if he cannot, to get him taken out of the way, and remove him from the place where he is an eyesore and a grievance to himself. But even if he should make him unrighteous, he will not be any the less a burden to him. For not only is the just man a burden to the unjust, but even two unjust persons can with difficulty endure each other: and when they seem to have a regard for each other, it is not friendship they interchange with one another, but accompliceship. But it is when they are conspiring for the destruction of the just that they are in accord together, not because they love each other, but because they have a common hatred for the man who ought to be the object of love. It is towards this class of persons that the Lord our God enjoins upon us patience, and that affection of charity of which we have received the knowledge in the

Gospel; where the Lord enjoins us, saying, Love your enemies, and do good to them which hate you. Even as the Apostle also says, Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good. Contend with evil, but be it in the cause of goodness. For that is the proper sort of contention, or rather that is a salutary contest, that there should be a good man against a wicked man, not two wicked men opposed to each other.

2. Turn back then to the Psalm. The first part of it hath been already handled. Then follow these words: (ver. 12.) The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth: (Ver. 13.) But the Lord shall laugh at him. At whom? Surely at the sinner, gnashing upon the other with his teeth. But wherefore shall the Lord laugh at him? For He foreseeth that his day is coming. He seems indeed full of wrath, while, ignorant of the morrow that is in store for him, he is threatening the just. But the Lord beholds and foresees his day. ‘What day?’ That in which He will render to every man according to his works. For he is treasuring up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God. But it is the Lord that foresees it; thou dost not foresee it. It hath been revealed to thee by Him Who foresees it. Thou didst not know of the ‘day of the unrighteous,’ in which he is to suffer punishment. But He Who knows it hath revealed it to thee. It is a main part of knowledge to join thyself to Him Who hath knowledge. He hath the eyes of knowledge: have thou the eyes of a believing mind. That which God sees, be thou willing to believe. For the day of the unjust, which God foresees, will come. What day is that? The day for all vengeance! For it is necessary that vengeance should be taken upon the ungodly, that vengeance be taken upon the unjust, whether he turn or whether he turn not. For if he shall turn from his ways, that very thing, that his injustice is come to an end, is the infliction of vengeance. Did not the Lord laugh to foresee the days of two unjust persons, both that of Judas the traitor, and that of Saul the persecutor? He foresaw the one’s day for punishment, the other’s for conversion to righteousness. Vengeance was inflicted upon both. The first was consigned to hell fire: this last was struck to the earth by a voice from heaven. Therefore, for the unjust man, whom thou hast to endure, do thou, with God, foresee his day, by the eyes of thy faith: and when thou seest him raging furiously against thee, say to thyself, ‘This man will either be

reclaimed and be with me; or, still persisting in his course, will not be with me.

3. What? Does the unrighteous man's injustice hurt thee, and not hurt him? How can it be, that the iniquity, which goes forth by his wrath and his indignation to harm thee, should not lay waste his very self within him, before it comes forth to attack thee? Thy body is oppressed by adversity; his soul is corrupted by iniquity. For whatsoever he puts forth against thee, returns back upon his head. For his persecution clears thee, while it makes him guilty. To which then doth it the greater injury? See, in his rage he has stripped thee of thy property. Who is visited with the severer loss, he who loses money, or he who loses faith? That loss those who have the inward eye well know how to deplore. For there are many for whom gold has charms, faith has not; forsooth, because they have eyes wherewith to see gold, no eyes wherewith to see faith. For had they those eyes, and could they behold it, surely they would love faith more than gold! And yet when men break faith with them, they cry out, they call for indignation at it, and say, "O faith? Where is faith?" Thou lovest it so far as to require it of others. Love it so as to shew it forth thyself. Therefore, because all who persecute the righteous, are afflicted with a severer loss, and stricken with a more fatal ruin, when their soul within them is laid waste, the Psalm goes on and shews this as follows.

Ver. 14. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright heart. (Ver. 15.) Their weapon shall enter into their own heart. It is an easy thing for his weapon, that is, his sword, to reach thy body, even as the sword of the persecutors reached the body of the Martyrs, but when the body had been smitten, the heart remained unhurt; but his heart who drew out the sword against the body of the just did not clearly remain unhurt. This is attested by this very Psalm. It saith, Their weapon, that is, Their sword shall, not go into their body, but, their weapon shall go into their own heart. They would fain have slain him in the body. Let them die the death of the soul. For those, whose bodies they sought to kill, the Lord hath freed from anxiety, saying, Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Now what a thing is it to rage with the sword, and not to be able to kill more than the

body only of thine enemy, and to be able to kill thine own soul! They are out of their senses; it is against themselves that they are raving. They are mad, they do not see themselves; just as if one were to thrust his sword through his own flesh, that he might rend another person's coat! Thou wert thinking of that which thou hast reached, and not thinking of what thou hast had to pass through to it; thou hast made a rent in his coat, and in thine own flesh. It is clear, therefore, that the hurt and injury which the unjust do themselves, is greater than the injury which they seem to themselves to do to those whom they hate. Therefore, their weapon shall go into their own heart. It is the Lord's sentence, and it is unalterable.

And their bows shall be broken. What is meant by, and their bows shall be broken? Their plots shall be frustrated. For above He had said, The wicked have drawn out the sword and bent their bows. By the drawing out of the sword he would have understood open hostility; but by the bending of the bow, secret conspiracies. See! His sword destroys himself, and his laying of snares is frustrated. What is meant by frustrated? That it does no mischief to the righteous. How then, for instance, (you ask,) did it do no mischief to the man, whom it thus stripped of his goods, whom it reduced to straitened circumstances by taking away his possessions? He has still cause to sing, (ver. 16.) A little that a righteous man hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly.

4. But the wicked are powerful: they engage in many undertakings, they have at their command the means to effect their purposes, and activity in executing them; their command is followed by obedience. But shall it be always so?

Ver. 17. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken. Now by their arms is meant their power. What will he do in hell? Will it be what the rich man had to do, he who was wont to fare sumptuously in the upper world, and in hell was tormented? Therefore their arms shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous. How does He uphold them? What saith He unto them? Even what is said in another Psalm, Wait on the Lord, be of good courage; and let thine heart be strengthened. Wait, I say, on the Lord. What is meant by this, "Wait on the Lord?" Thou sufferest but for a time; thou shalt rest for ever: thy trouble is short; thy happiness is to be everlasting. It

is but for a little while thou art to sorrow; thy joy shall have no end. But in the midst of trouble does thy “foot” begin to “slip?” The example even of Christ’s sufferings is set before thee. Consider what He endured for thee, in Whom no cause was found why He should endure it? How great so ever be thy sufferings, thou wilt not come to those insults, those scourgings, to that robe of shame, to that crown of thorns, and last of all to that Cross, which He endured; because that is now removed from the number of human punishments. For though under the ancients criminals were crucified, in the present day no one is crucified. It was honoured, and it came to an end. It came to an end as a punishment; it is continued in glory. It hath removed from the place of execution to the foreheads of Emperors. He Who hath invested His very sufferings with such honour, what doth He reserve for His faithful servants? By these facts then, by these words, by these appeals, the Lord upholdeth the righteous. Whatsoever befalls the righteous, let him impute it to the will of God, not to the power of the enemy. He may be inflamed with rage: strike thee he cannot, unless it be His Will! And if it be His Will that the other should smite thee, He knows well how to take up His servant. For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth; but He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth? Wherefore then should the unrighteous man think it a great thing, that God hath employed him as a scourge? Him He is employing for a service: me He is correcting to prepare me for an inheritance. Nor ought we to consider how much He permits the unjust to do; but how much He hath in store for the just.

5. But we are bound to wish even for those by whom we are scourged, that they may be converted, and may themselves be scourged. For it was so that He chastened His faithful servants, Who had once made Saul to be His scourge; and afterwards converted Saul himself. And when the Lord said to holy Ananias, by whom Saul was baptized, that that Saul was to be taken charge of by him, because he was a chosen vessel, Ananias, fearing and shuddering at hearing the mention of Saul the persecutor, answered, saying, “Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how great persecution he hath raised against thy saints in Jerusalem; and now he comes, having received commission, that wheresoever he shall find any that call upon Thy name, he should arrest them, and bind them, and bring them to Jerusalem.” And the Lord said in answer, “Be it so; I will shew him what things he must suffer

for My name's sake." I will recompense it to him; He saith; I will revenge myself upon him, "and he shall suffer for My name, who now rages against My name. I am correcting, or have already corrected, others by his agency: I will correct him too by the agency of others." So did it come to pass; and we know "how great things he endured," being far more than the evils which he had done: like a covetous exactor of his due, he received what he had given back again with usury.

6. But observe whether that was fulfilled in his case which the Psalm now speaks of. The Lord strengtheneth the righteous.—Not only so, (saith that same Paul, whilst suffering many evils,) but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Justly is it said by him, now righteous, now "strengthened." As therefore those who persecuted him did no harm to him, when now "strengthened," so neither did he himself do any harm to those whom he persecuted. But the Lord, he saith, strengtheneth the righteous. Hear now other expressions of the now strengthened and stablished righteous man. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or persecution? How fast attached must he have been, who was not separated by such things as these! But it is the Lord strengtheneth the righteous. There had come down certain prophets from Jerusalem, and being filled with the Holy Ghost had prophesied to the same Paul, that he was "to suffer many things in Jerusalem;" so that one of them, Agabus by name, having loosened his girdle, bound himself with it, as is wont to be done, in order to shew as a Prophet by this sign the things that were to be, saying, Even as ye see me bound, so must this man be bound in Jerusalem; whereon the brethren began to deter Saul, now become Paul, as warned by the prophecy, not to expose himself to dangers so great, and by advice and by entreaty to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem. But he, who was now of the number of those concerning whom it is said, The Lord strengtheneth the righteous, says, Wherefore would ye break my heart. I hold not my life dear unto me. For he had already said to those, whom he had begotten in the Gospel, I would myself be gladly spent for your souls' sake. For I am ready

(he cries) not only to be bound, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Therefore, the Lord does strengthen the righteous. In what way does He strengthen them? (Ver. 18.) The Lord knoweth the ways of the spotless ones. When they suffer ills, they are believed to be walking ill ways by those who are ignorant, by those who have not knowledge to discern the ways of the spotless ones. He Who knoweth those ways, knoweth by what way to lead His own, them that are gentle, in the right way. Whence in another Psalm he said, The meek shall He guide in judgment; them that are gentle will He teach His way. How, think you, was that beggar, who lay covered with sores before the rich man's door, spurned by the passers by! How did they, probably, close their nostrils and spit at him! The Lord, however, knew how to reserve Paradise for him. How did they, on the other hand, desire for themselves the life of him, who was clad in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day! But the Lord, Who foresaw that man's day coming, knew the torments, the torments without end, that were in store for him. Therefore, The Lord knoweth the ways of the upright.

8. Ver. 18. And their inheritance shall be for ever. This we hold by faith. Doth the Lord too know it by faith? The Lord knoweth those things with as clear a manifestation, as we cannot speak of even when we shall be made equal to the Angels. For the things that shall be manifest to us, shall not be equally manifest to us as they are now to Him, Who is incapable of change. Yet even of us ourselves what is said? Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear, what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. There is therefore surely some blissful vision reserved for us; and if it can be now in some measure conceived, darkly and through a glass, yet cannot we in any way express in language the ravishing beauty of that bliss, which God reserves for them that fear Him, which He consummates in those that hope in Him. It is for that destination that our hearts are being disciplined in all the troubles and trials of this life. Wonder not that it is in trouble that thou art disciplined for it. It is for something glorious that thou art being disciplined. Whence comes that speech of the now strengthened righteous man. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to

the glory which shall be revealed in us. What is that promised glory to be, but to be made equal to the Angels and to see God? How great a benefit doth he bestow on the blind man, who makes his eyes sound so as to be able to see the light of this life. When restored to soundness, he finds nothing worthy enough to reward his restorer. For let him give him as much as he pleases, what will he give him equal to what the other has bestowed on him? Let him give very largely, he will give him gold, perhaps even a great deal of gold: the other has given him light! That he may know that what he gives is nothing, let him look in the dark at what he gives. What reward then shall we give unto that Physician, Who restores soundness to our inward eyes, to enable them to see a certain eternal Light, which is Himself? What shall we give unto Him? Let us enquire, let us ascertain, if we can: and in the anxiety of our search, let us exclaim, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits unto me? And what doth he find? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Are ye able, He saith, to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Thence he saith to Peter, Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep: for whose welfare he was to drink the cup of the Lord. But the Lord upholdeth the righteous. The Lord knoweth the ways of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever.

9. Ver. 19. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time. What is meant by, shall not be ashamed in the evil time. In the day of trouble, in the day of distress, they shall not be ashamed, as he is ashamed whose hope deceives him. Who is the man that is ashamed? He who saith, "I have not found that which I was in hopes of." Nor undeservedly either; for thou didst hope it from thyself or from man, thy friend. But cursed is he that putteth his trust in man. Thou art ashamed, because thy hope hath deceived thee; thy hope that was set on a lie. For every man is a liar. But if thou dost place thy hopes on thy God, thou art not made ashamed. For He in Whom thou hast put thy trust, cannot be deceived. Whence also the man whom we mentioned just above, the now strengthened righteous man, when fallen on an evil time, on the day of tribulation, what saith he to shew that he was not ashamed? We glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed. Whence is it that hope maketh not ashamed? Because it is placed on God. Therefore follows immediately, Because the love of God is

spread in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Which is given unto us. The Holy Spirit hath been given to us already: how should He deceive us, of Whom we possess such an “earnest” already? They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

For here too there is a certain satisfaction for their needs provided. For the days of famine are the days of this life. While others are perishing with hunger, they are filled. For whence could that man glory, saying, We glory in tribulations, if he were suffering from the cravings of hunger within? Without there appeared to be straits, but there was enlargement within.

10. But what is the wicked man to do when he begins to suffer tribulation? Without he hath nothing; all hath been taken from him: in his conscience he finds no comfort, He hath not whither to go forth out of himself, that is full of trouble; he hath not whither to retire within himself; for that is full of wickedness. Justly therefore doth that come to pass in his case, which follows, For the wicked shall perish. For how can it be that they should not perish, for whom there is no place found any where? There is not consolation for him in that which is without; there is not in that which is within. For those things are without with respect to us, from which there is no consolation. And all those who have not God, who are devoted to the service of wealth, of glory, of friendship, of worldly power, and all bodily goods whatsoever, cannot be comforted from within, in the way that he was comforted, who, filled with spiritual good things, out of that very fulness broke forth, saying, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away. The Lord hath done as it seemed Him good. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Therefore for these transgressors there is no place in what is without; for there they are suffering tribulations. Conscience doth not comfort them, they do not stand well with themselves: for it cannot go well with the bad man. Whoever is a bad man stands badly with himself: he cannot but be tormented with self-inflicted torments. For he is his own punishment, whom his own conscience tortures. He may fly from an enemy whithersoever he can. Whither shall he flee from himself?

11. Thus a certain person had come over to us from the party of Donatus, having been accused and excommunicated by those of his own sect, seeking to find here, what he had lost there. But because he could not be received,

except in that place in which it was right he should be received, (for he had not quitted that side in full possession of all his rights among them, so that it might be clear that it was from choice, not from necessity, that he had so acted,) because, I say, he could not have what he was seeking for, and he was seeking for empty elevation, and vain glory; because he did not find here what he lost there, he is himself lost also. He was groaning under his wounds, and would not be comforted. For some secret and horrible stings were in his conscience. We endeavoured to comfort him out of the word of God; but he was not of the number of the prudent ants, who in summer lay up a store, on which to live in winter. For it is then when the times are peaceful, that man ought to collect for himself the Word of God, and ought to store it up in the inmost recesses of his heart, just as the ant shuts up in the storehouses of her holes the labours of the summer. For in summer time there is leisure for doing this; but let winter come, let tribulation, that is, come upon him, and unless he finds somewhat to feed on within, he needs must perish with hunger. Now this man had not laid up a store of the Word of God against his necessity: the winter came upon him: he could not find here, that which he was seeking; and could not be comforted except by obtaining it; from the Word of God he could derive no kind of consolation. Within, in his own breast, he possessed nothing; without, he could not find that which he sought. He was consumed by the fires of grief and indignation, his mind was violently agitated; and that too for a long time in secret, until at last it burst out into certain groans, audible to the brethren, yet so that he did not know them to be audible. He saw, and (God knows) we grieved to see a soul suffering so great a punishment, such rackings, so great a hell, so great torments! What need of more words? Unwilling to submit to a low place, that man, to whom such a place, if he had been wise, might have been salutary, shewed himself in such colours, that he came even to be cast out. Nor should we hence, my brethren, be led to despair of others, who haply have freely chosen the truth; not been led by necessity. For so far ought we to be from despairing of the rest, that even of that man I would not despair, so long as he liveth. For we need not despair of any man, so long as he lives. Now this ought to be known to you, dearly beloved brethren, concerning this very case; lest haply any one should tell you any thing different. For a Sub-deacon of theirs, who when no inquiry was set on foot against him there, freely chose reconciliation to the Church, and

Catholic unity, and came quitting them of his own accord, came as in sincerity, preferring what is good, and not as rejected by the bad; he, I say, has been received with such success, that we rejoice in his conversion, and commend him to your prayers. For God is able to make him better and better yet. We must not however pronounce concerning any one, either for good or for evil. For so long as we live here, the issue of tomorrow is always unknown. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

12. Ver. 20. For the wicked shall perish. But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly, even as the smoke. Recognise from the comparison itself the thing which he intimates. Smoke, breaking forth from the place where fire has been, rises up on high, and by the very act of rising up, it swells into a large volume: but the larger that volume is, the more unsubstantial does it become; for from that very largeness of volume, which has no foundation or consistency, but is merely loose, shifting and evanescent, it passes into air, and dissolves; so that you perceive its very largeness to have been fatal to it. For the higher it ascends, the farther it is extended, the wider the circumference which it spreads itself over, the thinner, and the more rare and wasting and evanescent does it become. But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly even as the smoke. Of such as these was it said, As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the Truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But how is it that they resist the Truth, except by the vain inflation of their swelling pride, while they raise themselves up on high, as if great and righteous persons, though on the point of passing away into empty air? But what saith he of them? As if speaking of smoke, he says, They shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, even as theirs also was. But the enemies of the Lord, even as they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall they consume away utterly, even as the smoke.

13. Ver. 20. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again. He receiveth, and will not repay. What is it he will not repay? Thanksgiving. For what is it that God would have of thee, what doth He require of thee, except that He

may do thee good? And how great are the benefits, which the sinner hath received, and which he will not repay! He hath received the gift of being; he hath received the gift of being a man; and of a being highly distinguished above the brutes; he hath received the form of a body, and the distinction of the senses in the body, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, the nostrils for smelling, the palate for tasting, the hands for touching, and the feet for walking; and even the very health and soundness of the body. But up to this point we have these things in common even with the brute; he hath received yet more than this; a mind capable of understanding, capable of Truth, capable of distinguishing right from wrong; capable of seeking after, of longing for, its Creator, of praising Him, and fixing itself upon Him. All this the wicked man hath received as well as others; but by not living well, he fails to repay that which he owes. Thus it is, the wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: he will not requite Him from Whom he hath received; he will not return thanks; nay, he will even render evil for good, blasphemies, murmuring against God, indignation. Thus it is that he (Ver. 21.) borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous sheweth mercy, and lendeth. The one therefore hath nothing; the other hath. See, on the one side, destitution: see, on the other, wealth. The one receiveth and payeth not again: the other sheweth mercy, and lendeth: and he hath more than enough. What if he is poor? Even so he is rich; do you but look at his riches with the eyes of Religion. For thou lookest at the empty chest; but dost not look at the conscience, that is full of God. He hath not means without, but he hath charity within. How great sums doth he expend out of the stores of his charity, and it is not exhausted. For if he hath means without, it is Charity herself still that gives, though she gives out of that which he hath: but if he finds not without ought to give, he gives good wishes; gives counsel, if he can; he gives help, if he can; finally, if he cannot assist either by counsel, or by cooperation, at least he assists by prayer; at least he prays for the brother in tribulation; and perhaps this one is heard in his prayer, more than he who bestows bread. He always hath wherewithal to give, whose heart is full of charity. Charity is that self-same thing, which is also called good-will. God asketh no more of thee than that which He hath given thee within. For good-will cannot be empty. For not having good-will, thou givest not to the poor, even though thou hast money to spare: whereas the very poor do offices of charity to one another from the resources of their good-will; are

not unfruitful the one towards the other. You see a blind man led by one who sees; because, being poor himself, he had not money to give, he hath lent eyes to him that had them not. Whence did it come to pass that he gave the use of his limbs to him that had them not, but that there was within good-will, the treasure of the poor: a treasure, in which is found most delightful rest, and true security? To endanger the loss of that, neither doth the thief find admission, nor is shipwreck dreaded. He preserves about him that which he hath within; he escapes stripped of every thing, and still is full. Thus it is the righteous sheweth mercy, and lendeth.

14. Ver. 22. For such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land, that is, they shall possess that righteous One: the only One, Who both is truly righteous, and maketh righteous: Who both was poor in this world, and brought great riches to it, wherewith to make those rich whom He found poor. For, it is He, Who hath enriched the hearts of the poor with the Holy Spirit; and having emptied out their souls by confession of sins, hath filled them with the richness of righteousness: He Who was able to enrich the fisherman, who, by forsaking his nets, spurned what he possessed already, but sought to draw up what he possessed not. For God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And it was not by an orator that He gained to Himself the fisherman; but by the fisherman that He gained to Himself the orator; by the fisherman that He gained the Senator; by the fisherman that He gained the Emperor. For such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land; they shall be fellow-heirs with Him, in that land of the living, of which it is said in another Psalm, Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living. Thou art my very portion, He saith unto God; and has not hesitated to make God his own portion. They shall inherit the land. (Ver. 22.) But they that curse Him shall be cut off. Yet that those should so bless, who bless, is a grace that hath been given them. For He came to them while they were yet cursing; and they were made to bless. And in this manner they that curse Him have been cut off already; since by His free gift they have been made to bless Him, Whom before they used to curse through their own wickedness, Whom, through His goodness, they now bless.

15. Ver. 23. Observe what follows: The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in His way. That man may himself ‘delight in the Lord’s way,’ his steps are ordered by the Lord Himself? For if the Lord did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He hath given this ransom; He hath done this good, and suffered these evils. Consider Him in what He hath done, He is God! Consider Him in what He hath suffered, He is Man! Who is that God-Man? Hadst not thou, O man, forsaken God, God would not have been made Man for thee! For that was too little for thee to requite, or for Him to bestow, that He had made thee man; unless He Himself should become Man for thee also. For it is He Himself that hath ordered our steps; that we should delight in His way. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in His way.

16. Now that thou art following the way of Christ, promise not thyself prosperity in the world. He walked through painful paths; but He promised great rewards. Follow thou Him; consider not only the way by which thou art to go, but also the destination at which thou art to arrive. Thou wilt have to endure temporal hardships; but thou wilt come to eternal joy. If thou wouldest endure the suffering, consider the reward. For even the labourer in the vineyard would sink, if he did not look to what he was to receive. But when thou hast considered what it is thou art to receive, all these things that thou sufferest will be inconsiderable in thine eyes; and thou wilt not esteem them worthy to earn that for thee. Thou wilt marvel that so great a recompense is given for so very little labour. For surely, brethren, for the sake of everlasting rest, everlasting labour ought to have been endured; and to attain everlasting happiness thou oughtest to undergo everlasting sufferings. But if thou wert to undergo everlasting toil, when couldest thou come to everlasting bliss? Thus it results that thy tribulation must needs be temporal, which being come to an end, thou mayest come to happiness that is without end. But yet, brethren, there might have been long tribulation to earn everlasting happiness:—to explain myself, as our happiness is to have no end, so our misery, and our pains, and our tribulations, might be of long duration. For were they even of a thousand years’ duration, set a thousand

years against eternity! What finite quantity, how great so ever it be, canst thou set against that which is infinite? Ten thousand, ten hundred thousand years, (if we may so speak,) nay, thousands of thousands of years, which are finite quantities, cannot be compared with eternity. To this is added, that God hath willed thy suffering should be not merely temporal, but also of short duration. The whole life of man is but of a few days' duration; even if joys were not mingled with its sorrows, whereas these are certainly both more numerous and of longer duration than its hardships. And it is for this reason the hardships are both fewer and shorter, that we may be able to endure. Now if man were to be through the whole of his life in toil, and in sufferings, in pain, in tortures, in prison, in scourgings, in hunger, and in thirst, every day, and every hour through the whole length of life, to the period of old age, yet the whole life of man is but a few days. That labour being over, there is to come the Eternal Kingdom; there is to come happiness without end; there is to come equality with the Angels; there is to come Christ's inheritance, and Christ, our joint Heir, is to come. How great is the labour, for which thou receivest so great a recompense? The Veterans who serve in the wars, and move in the midst of wounds for so many years, enter upon the military service from their youth, and quit it in old age: and to obtain a few days of repose in their old age, when age itself begins to weigh down those, whom the wars do not break down, how great hardships do they endure; what marches, what frosts, what burning suns; what privations, what wounds, and what dangers! And while suffering all these things, they fix their thoughts on nothing but those few days of repose in old age, at which they know not whether they will ever arrive. Thus it is, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in His way. This is the point with which I commenced. If thou dost delight in the way of Christ, and art truly a Christian, (for he is a Christian indeed, who does not despise the way of Christ, but delighteth in following Christ's way through His sufferings,) do not thou go by any other way, than that by which He Himself hath also gone. It appears painful; but it is the very way of safety; another perhaps is delightful; but it is full of robbers. And he delighteth in His way.

17. Ver. 24. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth his hand. See what it is to delight in Christ's way. Should it

happen that he suffers some tribulation; some forfeiture of honour, some affliction, some loss, some contumely, or all those other accidents, incident to mankind frequently in this life, he sets the Lord before him, what kind of trials He endured! and, though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth his hand, because He has suffered before him. For what shouldest thou fear, O man, whose steps are ordered so, that thou shouldest delight in the way of the Lord? What shouldest thou fear? Pain? Christ was scourged. Shouldest thou fear contumelies? He was reproached with, Thou hast a devil, Who was Himself casting out the devils. Haply thou fearest faction, and the conspiracy of the wicked. Conspiracy was made against Him. Thou canst not make clear the purity of thy conscience in some accusation, and sufferest wrong and violence, because false witnesses are listened to against thee. False witness was borne against Him first, not only before His death, but also after His resurrection. False witnesses were suborned that He might be condemned by His judges; the watch at the sepulchre came forward as false witnesses against Him. He rose again, with so great a miracle: the earth quaking opened a way for the Lord's resurrection. There was there earth watching the earth, but it was a harder earth, on which no impression could be made. It reported the truth; but was seduced by that which was false. That watch declared to the Jews what they had seen, and what had come to pass: they took money, and were told, Say ye, that while ye slept His disciples came and stole Him away. Behold here false witnesses even against His resurrection! But how great, my brethren, how great the blindness in the false witnesses! For this generally happens to false witnesses, that they are blinded, and do not perceive that they are saying things contradictory to their own words, from which it becomes evident that they are false witnesses. For what did they say, contradicting themselves? 'Whilst we were sleeping, His disciples came and stole Him away.' What testimony is this? Who is the person that bears it? The person who was asleep! To such narrators as those I would not give credence, not even if they were informing me of their dreams. It is madness and absurdity; if thou wert awake, wherefore didst thou suffer it; if thou wert asleep, how camest thou to know it?

18. So is it also with these children of those men, as ye remember, and we (the occasion having offered itself) must not omit to mention. For the more

anxious we are for their salvation, the more are we bound to dwell upon their inconsistency. Behold! Christ's Body has to endure false witnesses; the Body has to endure that which had already taken place in the case of the Head. It is not to be wondered at; and even now there are not wanting persons who say of the Body of Christ dispersed throughout the world, that it is the offspring of Traditors! You bear false witness! In that passage, following you a few words farther, I convict you of false witness. Thou sayest to me; "Thou art a Traditor." I say unto thee; "Thou art a liar." But thou dost not any where, or at any time, prove me to be a Traditor. I, here, at this very time, prove thy falsehood in thine own words. Unquestionably you there said that we 'are sharpening our swords.' I quote the proceedings of your Circumcelliones. Unquestionably you there said that you do not reclaim what has been taken from you. I quote the proceedings where you employed a Proctor to make the exaction. Unquestionably you there said, 'We offer the Gospels only.' I quote the so numerous rulings of the judges which you have employed to harass those who were separated from you: I quote the petition addressed to the Apostate emperor, to whom you said, that "in his breast justice only finds a place." I pray you does Julian's apostasy seem to you to be a part of "the Gospel?" See there I have convicted you of falsehood! What is there that you have said of me, that is entitled to credence? Even if I could find no grounds for shewing that your words were false, it is enough for me to prove you to be a liar, you who say that "such as you are yourself, such are the others also." For you had good reason to send such words as those to all your whole party: you wished to be rich in associates in lying: that you might not have singly to blush at your falsehood.

19. And yet he says, "Let the sentence pronounced by our Fathers against Cæcilian have weight." Why should it have weight? "Because they were Bishops that pronounced it." Let that too then have authority against you, which was pronounced by Maximianus's partizans. For previously, as I believe you know, the Bishops came to Carthage in concert with Maximianus, while yet the Deacon of this very man; as the Tractatory hath it, which these men even appended to their proceedings, when they (the Maximianists) were carrying on a civil suit for the possession of the House against the Proctor of that man "who does not reclaim what is taken from

him.” They first then sent round a “Tractatory” relating to him, complaining that he would not come before their tribunal: for this it was that they principally complained of. Observe how God has brought on their own heads the charge which they made in the case of Cæcilian. The coincidence is marvellous: God was pleased after so many years had passed to bring round upon them, to their face, what had been done in the former case; so that they can in no way find pretexts for feigning ignorance, or a loophole by which to escape. Should they say, “they had forgot what had been done before,” God does not suffer them to forget; and O that it might avail to their salvation! For it is in His mercy that God has done this, that they might consider what was done. Place then before your eyes, brethren, the unity of the Universal Church at that time, from which these men severed themselves in opposition to Cæcilian; set also before your eyes the party of Donatus at the present time, from which the Maximianists have severed themselves in opposition to Primianus. These men have done to Primianus now, what the others did at that time to Cæcilian. It is on this ground that the Maximianists declare themselves to be more sincere than the Donatists, in that they have really and truly imitated the acts of their ancestors. For they have set up Maximianus against Primianus in the same way that they set up Majorinus against Cæcilian; and they have complained of Primianus in the same way that they complained of Cæcilian. For if you remember, it was this that they said, that “Cæcilian, mindful of the guilt he was conscious of, refused to appear before them.” Indeed, he knew well their factious spirit. So also do these men complain that Primianus refused to appear before them. Why is Primianus at liberty to understand the character of the faction of the Maximianists, and Cæcilian not at liberty to understand the spirit of the Donatist faction? Maximian was as yet not ordained: charges were being made against Primianus: the Bishops came; they desired that he should appear before them: he did not come before them, as their Tractatory inserted in the Records, shews. He did not come before them. I do not find fault with him; nay, I even praise him. If you saw any factious combination, you ought not to come before the factious party, but should have reserved your case for the more impartial cognizance of your own party. For there remained a large part of Donatus’s party before whom Primianus might have cleared himself; therefore he refused to appear before those who had already factiously combined against him. Observe how we

praise your policy in opposition to the Maximianists: consider well Cæcilianus's case also: you will not examine it in the spirit of a brother; examine it then in that of a stranger. When you refused to appear, then, what was it that you said in your own breast? "These men have entered into a factious combination against my life; they have been corrupted to do me an injury; if I put myself into their hands, I suffer my cause to be condemned before it is heard. I will not appear; let my case be reserved for fairer judges, and men whose authority has greater weight. Sound policy this. What if Cæcilian said this also? Although you will have difficulty in proving what other Lucilla corrupted them to prejudice you, and will haply not be able to find such was the case, whereas to him it was a fact so well known, that it was afterwards proved in the proceedings. But (we will suppose) you saw something that was kept in the back ground; a report was brought to you of some danger to be feared by you. I allow your fear to justify that precaution; you did right not to appear before such judges, for there were others who could judge your case. Now consider Cæcilianus's case. You reserved Numidia to judge your case; he reserved the whole world. But if you wish the sentence of the Donatists against him to have force, then let those of the Maximianists now have force against you. Bishops condemned him; so did Bishops also condemn you! Wherefore did you afterwards plead your cause, and there make good your cause against the Maximianists, even as he pleaded his cause afterwards, and made it good against the Donatists? That which took place then is seen brought round before our very eyes in a marvellous and manifest manner, viz. that the Maximianists are making the same complaint of Primianus, that the whole of their party made of Cæcilian. I am affected by the circumstance to an extraordinary degree, Brethren; and thank God for it; for, in truth, the mercy of God has been establishing an example to enlighten them, if they would but be wise. Therefore if you can give your attention for a short time, Brethren, listen to the Council of the Maximianists, seeing God has put this also into our hands. (And whilst he was commenting, he himself read the Council of the Maximianists.)

20. "To our most Holy Brethren throughout all Africa;" (and whilst he was reading this, he also said, 'the entire Unity of their own body throughout Africa. But here there is the Catholic Church existing together with them,

while in other parts of the world they do not themselves exist together with the Catholic Church;’) and whilst he was commenting, he likewise read what follows: “To our most Holy Brethren, and Colleagues established throughout all Africa, i.e. throughout the Proconsular Province, Numidia, Mauritania, Byzacena, and Tripolis, and moreover to the Priests and Deacons, and to all the congregations militant with us in the truth of the Gospel, We, Victorinus, Fortunatus, Victorianus, Migginus, Saturninus, Constantius, Candorius, Innocentius, Cresconius, Florentius, Salvius, a second Salvius, Donatus, Geminius, Prætextatus; (and whilst he was reading, he likewise said, ‘That is the very Bishop of Assura, whom they afterwards readmitted. He afterwards readmitted the person who had given sentence against himself;’ and whilst he was commenting, he likewise read what follows;) “Maximianus, Theodorus, Anastasius, Donatianus, Donatus, a second Donatus, Pomponius, Pancratius, Januarius, Secundinus, Paschasius, Cresconius, Rogatianus, a second Maximianus, Benenatus, Gaianus, Victorinus, Guntasius, Quintasius, Felicianus;” (and whilst he was reading he likewise said, ‘Is this the Bishop of Mustita, who is still living? But perhaps it is some one from another See. The subscribers afterwards express the Sees also to which each belonged;’ and while commenting, he likewise proceeded to read what follows;) Salvius, Migginus, Proculus, Latinus, and the rest of us who were in the Council at Cabarsussis, send eternal health in the Lord. There is no one, Brethren, that is ignorant concerning the Priests of God, that it is not according to the impulse of their own will, but by the direction of the Divine Law, that they, according to justice and desert, either pass sentence against the criminal, or remove from the innocent that which has been inflicted upon them. For he will be exposed to no slight danger, whosoever shall either spare the guilty, or attempt to destroy the innocent: especially seeing it is written, ‘The innocent and the righteous slay thou not,’ and, ‘Thou shalt not justify the wicked.’ Being admonished, therefore, by this injunction of the Law, we have been obliged (letters from elders of the same Church calling upon us to do so) to hear and to discuss in the spirit of it the case of Primianus, whom the Holy People of the Church of Carthage had elected as their Bishop over God’s sheepfold, in order that all things being made clear, we might either if innocent, as was to be wished, clear him of the charges; or if guilty, at all events shew that he was condemned according to his just

deserts. For it was most to be wished for by us, that the Laity of the Church of Carthage might rejoice that they were dignified by the possession of such a Bishop as was accounted in all respects holy and in no point obnoxious to censure. Seeing that at all events the Lord's Priest ought for this reason to be such a person, that whatsoever the people be not able to effect with God for themselves, he may deserve to obtain for the people what he shall ask for them: because it is written, If the people shall sin, the Priest shall pray for them: but if the Priest sin, who shall entreat for him?" (And while he was reading, he also said commenting upon it, 'Even Apostles have written to congregations to pray for them; even Apostles were in the habit of saying in prayer, Forgive us our debts. Even the Apostle John said, We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins. But that was written concerning that Priest, Whom they know not, that the people might be admonished in prophecy, that they ought to recognise as their Priest such a Person as could have no one to intercede for Him. But who is there for whom no one prays, save Him Who intercedes for all? Because, therefore, the Levitical Priesthood was then in existence, in which the priest was wont to enter into the Holy Place, and offer victims for the people, while however he presented the shadow only, not the substance, of a certain Priest that was to come, for at that time the priests themselves were sinners, like the rest of mankind; God, willing by prophecy to remind the people, that even then such a Priest was to be anxiously looked for by them, Who might intercede for all, and for Whom none could have to intercede, pointing to such an One, He reminded them, saying, If the people sin, the Priest shall pray for them; but if the Priest shall sin, who shall entreat for him? Therefore, O people, choose as thy Priest such an one as thou canst not be compelled to pray for; and of Whose intercession for thyself, thou mayest be assured. That Person is our Lord Jesus Christ, the One Priest, the One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.' And while he was commenting, he proceeded to read what follows:) "Now the scandals of Primianus, and his extraordinary wickedness, have to such a degree excited the judgment of Heaven against him, that it was necessary to cut off utterly the author of these crimes; who being recently ordained,—" (And as he was reading, he at the same time said commenting upon it;) 'from this point begins the enumeration of the charges against him:' (and as he was commenting, he read what follows;)

“—endeavouring to induce certain Priests to combine with him in an impious conspiracy, did ask this as a favour of them, that in order to the condemnation of four Deacons, excellent persons, and of singular and approved merit, to wit, Maximianus, Rogatianus, Donatus, and Salgamius also.” (And as he read, he at the same time said commenting upon it, ‘Among these four was that author of the schism, severing from a fragment another fragment, and not grieving at being himself cut off from the whole body.’ And while he was commenting, he also read what follows;) “that they should without delay promise him their concurrence in order to this.” (And when he read this, commenting upon it, he said, ‘It was for this he made interest with them; they refused to promise him; but were silent; he did not scruple to execute the crime which he meditated by his own authority.’ And while he was commenting, he at the same time read,) “And when they, astounded by his wicked presumption, had by their silence rejected the proposal, he did not hesitate to perpetrate the crime he meditated on his own responsibility; to such a degree that he thought he might pass sentence on Maximianus, a Deacon, a man, (as is known to all,) innocent, and that too without pleading his cause—without being confronted with an accuser, or a witness—while absent, while lying sick on his couch.” (And whilst he read, he at the same time said by way of comment, ‘Observe the charge!’ and whilst he was commenting, he also read what follows;) “—having before condemned certain clerks in a similar ebullition of passion. For when he had been admitting unclean persons to the Communion of the Saints, contrary to the Law and the decrees of all Priests, and when, the great majority of the Laity making opposition to it, he was moreover called upon by the letters of the most considerable of the Elders of the Church, that he might himself correct the wrong that he had done, he, being possessed by that natural wilfulness of his, disdained to make amends. Affected, therefore, by this, the Elders of the said Church sent ambassadors and letters to the whole Body, in which they, not without tears, besought of us, that we would come to them with all diligence; that having weighed the cause in the balance, and having fully sifted the charges, we might clear the reputation of the Church. Having then come to this Church according to the letters of the parties aforesaid, he, inflamed to fury after his usual fashion, absolutely refused to acknowledge our arrival.” (And as he read this, he said commenting on it, ‘You know what is laid to

his charge, that the party of Donatus hath now become unclean. For this was a principle with them, that such as they are with whom they are in communion, such both each individually, and the entire body collectively, become also. Therefore, if these men speak truly, at this time the whole party of Donatus is unclean. Now let the Numidians come forth, and flatly say, “It does not concern us, if you have admitted to Communion those unclean persons, whoever they be. Could it injure us who are at so great a distance?” if that which takes place at Carthage does you no harm who are in Numidia, could what took place in Africa affect injuriously the Church Universal? At every point the reasons by which they defend themselves, serve to accuse them, and to exculpate us.’ And as he was commenting, he read what follows:) “He absolutely refused to acknowledge our arrival.” (And as he read this, he at the same time said; ‘The very same thing that they complained of in Cæcilian.’ And as he commented, he read what follows:) “Who in his rebellious spirit kicking against the pricks in every direction, persevered in his evil disposition, so that having hired a mob of abandoned character,—” (And as he read, he said at the same time; ‘Here indeed there is something more; this they never said of Cæcilian. See what he did—’ And as he was commenting, he at the same time read what follows;) “and having procured officers, blocked up the doors of the Basilicas,—” (And as he was reading, he at the same time said, ‘—in order that the Bishops might not enter;’ and as he was commenting, he also read what follows;) “that they might deprive us of the power of going in, and performing the usual solemnities. Whether it be consistent for a Bishop to do this, whether Christians are at liberty to perpetrate such deeds, whether the Gospels allow of this, let any one who is a lover or a champion of the truth judge, and if it be, approve them. For one, once our Brother, hath inflicted a wound upon us, which not even a stranger would ever have done.” (And as he was reading, he at the same time said; ‘Why should I say more? they say many things, and they condemn the man; but let us now read the condemnation itself.’ And as he was commenting, he at the same time read,) “All we, God’s Priests, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, have made a decree; that, ‘Whereas the said Primianus hath in the first place appointed Bishops to supersede others yet alive; hath admitted unclean persons to Communion with the Saints; hath attempted to constrain the Presbyters to enter into a conspiracy; hath caused Fortunatus a Presbyter

to be thrown into a sewer for administering Baptism to persons in sickness; hath refused Communion to Demetrius a Presbyter, that he might compel him to renounce his son; for that also the aforesaid Presbyter was reprimanded for having entertained the Bishops; and whereas the aforesaid Primianus did send a mob to raze the houses of Christians; and whereas the Bishops and the Clergy were besieged together, and afterwards stoned by his satellites; whereas the Elders of the congregation were beaten in the Basilica, because they expressed their indignation at the admission of the Claudianists to Communion, whereas he thought proper to condemn certain innocent Clerks; whereas he refused to present himself before us for the hearing of his cause; when by means of the mob and the officers he prevented us from entering the doors of the Basilicas; because he rejected with insults the envoys sent from us to him; and whereas he has kept possession of many places, first by “force, and afterwards by judicial authority,—” (And as he read, he said, ‘Behold the non-vindication of what is taken from him; whereas the Apostle Paul says, Dare any of you, having a matter with another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the Saints? Observe what sort of charge they brought against him! that he would not try the cause for the possession of the said places before the Bishops, but before the judge,’) “besides other his unlawful deeds, which not to pollute our writing we pass in silence; we therefore adjudge him to be for ever cut off from the Sacerdotal Body; lest from touching him the Church of God should be infected with contagion, or polluted with any crime. Which self-same thing the Apostle Paul prescribes, and admonishes us, Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and so, not regardless of the purity of the Church, we have thought it expedient by this our Tractatory to warn all our holy Colleagues in the Priesthood, all Clerks, and all of the Laity that are mindful of their being Christians, that they should all of them with all diligence shun Communion with him, as condemned. For whosoever shall by disobeying attempt to violate this our Decree, shall have to answer for himself for the loss of his soul. It hath verily seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, that time be granted to those who are slow to turn from their error; under this limitation, that whosoever of our Colleagues in the Episcopate, or of the Clergy, regardless of the salvation of their souls, shall not cease from Communion with the

aforesaid Primianus, from the day of his condemnation, i.e. from the twenty-second of June, until the twenty-second of December, should lie under a similar sentence. And of the Laity also, unless, between the day of his condemnation aforesaid, and the Easter Day next following, they shall renounce intercourse with him, that no one should be capable of being restored to the Church, save by penitence, in case they should remember themselves. Signed, Victorinus, Bishop of Munatia. Signed, Fortunatus, Bishop of Dionysianum. Signed, Victorianus, Bishop of Carcabia. Signed, Florentius, Bishop of Adrumetum. Signed, Migginus, Bishop of Elephantaria. Signed, Innocentius, Bishop of Thebalta. I, Miggin, signed for my colleague, Salvius of Membressis. Signed, Salvius, Bishop of Ausafa. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Sabrata. Signed, Gemelius, Bishop of Tanabœa.” (And as he read, he said, ‘See of the very parties to the condemnation, both Pretextatus of Assura, and Felicianus of Mustita.’ And as he was commenting, he recited as follows;) “Signed, Prœtextatus, Bishop of Assura. Signed, Maximianus, Bishop of Stabata. Signed, Datianus, Bishop of Camiceta, Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Fisciana. Signed, Theodorus, Bishop of Usula. I, Victorianus, signed as desired by my colleague Bishop Agnosius. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Cebresuta. Signed, Natalicus, Bishop of Thela. Signed, Pomponius, Bishop of Macriana. Signed, Pancratius, Bishop of Baliana. Signed, Januarius, Bishop of Aquenum. Signed, Secundus, Bishop of Jacondiana. Signed, Pascasius, Bishop of Vicus Augusti. Signed, Creso, Bishop of Conjustiacum. Signed, Rogatianus, Bishop. Signed, Maximianus, Bishop of Erumminum. Signed, Benenatus, Bishop of Tugutianum. Signed, Ritanus, Bishop. Signed, Gaianus, Bishop of Tigualala. Signed, Victorinus, Bishop of Leptimagna. Signed, Guntasius, Bishop of Benefa. Signed, Quintasius, Bishop of Capsa. Signed, Felicianus, Bishop of Mustita. Signed, Victorianus as deputed by Migginus, Bishop. Signed, Miggius, Bishop. Signed, Latinus, Bishop of Mugiaë. Signed, Proculus, Bishop of Girbita. I, Donatus, Bishop of Fabra, signed for my brother and colleague Marratius. I, Proculus, signed for my colleague Gallionus. Signed, Secundianus, Bishop of Prisianum. Signed, Helpidius, Bishop of Tusdrita. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Samurdata. Signed, Getulicus, Bishop of Victoriana. Signed, Annibonius, Bishop of Robauta. I, Annibonius, also signed, as requested by my colleague the Bishop of Augendiara. Signed, Tertullus, Bishop of Abita. Signed,

Primulianus, Bishop. Signed, Secundinus, Bishop of Arusia. Signed, Maximus, Bishop of Pittana. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Belma. Signed, Perseverantius, Bishop of Teberta. Signed, Faustinus, Bishop of Bina. Signed, Victor, Bishop of Altibura. In all fifty-three in number.”

And as he was reading, he at the same time said commenting upon it; Deign to give us your attention for a short space. This is the Sentence of your condemnation. We say to him; What will you? that it should have weight, or that it should not? I am in your favour; I say decidedly that all these have uttered falsehoods against you: and hear on what ground I believe it to be so. Because you maintained your cause before other judges, and the other party was condemned. If then I consider you to be innocent, because refusing to come before the tribunal of a factious cabal, you proved your innocence elsewhere, so that those who condemned you, were really deserving of condemnation, deign to acknowledge Cæcilianus’ innocence, who would not come before your predecessors, and reserved his cause for the cognizance of the Universal Church, just as you yourself reserved your own to the council of Numidia. If the See of Bagai reestablished your innocence, how much more so was his reestablished by the Apostolic See? Or would you rather that their sentence should be valid, who first pronounced condemnation? If theirs be valid, it is valid against you. For against Cæcilian it neither had nor will have validity; yet consider what a decision you are pronouncing against yourself.

22. Now here they dare to say, ‘But we who passed sentence against the Maximianists were more numerous than they.’ Let your sentence then be valid against Felician, and theirs against Cæcilian will be valid also. When they held a council at Bagai, they condemned Felician among the rest. At present Felician is in their Church. Either he has been reinstated being guilty; or was condemned being innocent. If then you reinstate a guilty person to preserve the peace of the Donatist Body, yield to all nations for the sake of the peace of Christendom. If however it was by an error on your part that Felician was condemned, being innocent, was it possible for three hundred and ten to err in condemning Felician, and impossible for seventy to err in condemning Cæcilian? What do you say then when you hear it said to you, ‘The Maximianists condemned you previously,’ you shelter

yourselves by saying, ‘But we who condemned the Maximianists were more in number.’ To both your positions a reply is directly made, because your predecessors also previously condemned Cæcilian. If priority gives validity, let the Primianists bow to the Council of the Maximianists. If superior numbers make valid, let the Donatists bow to the Church Universal. I think nothing can be fairer. ‘The Maximianists are few.’ ‘Aye, but their sentence of condemnation was passed first. A convicted party cannot convict. If you think this, how could you, condemned as you were, venture to pass sentence? For his own name stands in the list of the parties to the condemnation; and they did not reserve for him the position of the party who had his cause to plead. But Cæcilian’s case was different;—the position of the defendant was reserved for him, as indeed the sentence itself shews: for he was not readmitted to Communion except on his acquittal. This man, on the other hand, is found in one document condemned by the judges, in the other, himself passing sentence of condemnation among the judges. But allow that to be the lenity of the Council of Bagai; we will allow that without objection.’ ‘The Maximianists condemned you wrongfully; so too did those your predecessors condemn Cæcilian wrongfully. You established your innocence in the Council of Bagai; he his in the trial beyond the sea. The verdict in that trial was approved by all the world. What would you say?’ ‘We are more in number than the Maximianists.’ ‘Allow that you are more numerous: let us compare the number of the two majorities; see how vast a difference! You were condemned in your absence by the Maximianists, after you had refused to come before them. In this point indeed there is a resemblance: in this way was it that they also condemned Cæcilian in his absence, when he did not appear before their cabal: but, on the other hand, you caused sentence to be passed against them in the Council of Bagai, in their absence: while Cæcilian was acquitted, being present at the trial, and confronted with his adversary. There is besides another vast difference. The Numidians your judges, before whom you were to establish your innocence, you yourself appealed to; you yourself appointed them. The Maximianists asked not for them, whereas Donatus was beaten by Cæcilian before those very judges, for whom the Donatist party had petitioned. Now the Maximianists reply to you with justice, ‘We being Bishops of your province, of the Diocese that belongs to you, came to you at first, and would have judged your case; you

refused to acknowledge us, you would not come before us. If you feared to be tried by us, we should have named judges in conjunction at all events, you should not have gone to those you yourself pleased. Observe how wide a difference! Then moreover the Donatists petitioned the Emperor by letter, that he would name them judges. They found fault with those before whom they were condemned, whom, before they were condemned, they petitioned for. Others were assigned at their request; and before these also were they beaten; they appealed to the Emperor, and were beaten there. The Maximianist lost his cause once, when absent, and is silent; the Donatist, thrice beaten though present, refuses to be silent.

23. But you contend with the Maximianists on the score of numbers. As I said, I am in your favour. Three hundred and ten are more than one hundred, or as many as there were of them, who, on the side of Maximianus, condemned Primianus. And think you that the thousands of Bishops throughout the world who passed sentence in favour of Cæcilian against Donatus, should have no weight with you? But you will say, ‘What? Did thousands of Bishops from all the world condemn the Donatists?’ Very true. They did not condemn them. Why did they not? Because they were not present at the trial. If not present at the trial, it was for this very reason they did not condemn them, because they were utterly ignorant of that cause. Wherefore hast thou separated thyself from those who were innocent of it? There comes hither to thee from the Church throughout the world some person already baptized, whom you would fain rebaptize; and with loud exclamations and with groans appeals to you as, in the exercise of a now deadly ministerial act, you would fain repeat that which is given once for all and is not lost. And he says to thee, “What wouldest thou do? Rebaptize me?” (So speaks some one from Mesopotamia, or some one from Syria, or haply some one from Pontus, or some one settled yet farther off.) You reply, ‘Thou hast no Baptism!’ ‘How? Read the letters of the Apostle sent to me.’ There comes some one from Galatia, from Pontus; some one from Philadelphia, to which Churches John wrote. There comes some one from Colosse, from Philippi, from Thessalonica. ‘What? have I no Baptism? I, to whom an Apostle wrote, through whom thou hast Baptism thyself? Darest thou read mine Epistle, who dost abominate my Communion?’

PSALM 37

discourse the third

On the third Part of the Psalm.

The last part of this Psalm yet remained with you, undiscussed and unexplored. Therefore, as I perceive, it was not without His purpose, although not according to our own, that the Lord hath called us back hither, to discharge our debt. Be ye therefore attentive, brethren, that we may, with God's assistance, be enabled now to repay, what we know ourselves to owe. Who is the speaker of that which we have been but just now singing?"

Ver. 25. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

If it is spoken but in the person of one single individual, how long is the whole life of one man? And what is there wonderful in the circumstance, that a single man, fixed in some one part of the earth, should not, throughout the whole space of his life, being so short as man's life is, have ever seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread, although he may have advanced from youth to age. It is not any thing worthy of marvel; for it might have happened, that before his lifetime there should have been some "righteous man seeking bread;" it might have happened, that there had been some one in some other part of the earth not where he himself was. Hear too another thing, which makes an impression upon us. Any single one among you, (look you,) who has now grown old, may perhaps, when, looking back upon the past course of his life, he turns over in his thoughts the persons whom he has known, not find any instance of a righteous man begging bread, or of his seed begging bread, suggest itself to him; but nevertheless he turns to the inspired Scriptures, and finds that righteous Abraham was straitened, and suffered hunger in his own country, and left that land for another; he finds too that the son of the very same

man, Isaac, removed to other countries in search of bread, for the same cause of hunger. And how will it be true to say, I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread? And if he finds this true in the duration of his own life, he finds it is otherwise in the inspired writings, which are more trustworthy than human life is.

2. What are we to do then? Let us be seconded by your pious attention, so that we may discern the purpose of God in these verses of the Psalm, what it is He would have us understand by them. For there is a fear, lest any unstable person, not capable of understanding the Scriptures spiritually, should appeal to human instances, and should observe the virtuous servants of God to be sometimes in some necessity, and in want, so as to be compelled to beg bread: should particularly call to mind the Apostle Paul, who says, In hunger and thirst; in cold and nakedness; and should stumble thereat, saying to himself, “Is that certainly true which I have been singing? Is that certainly true, which I have been sounding forth in so devout a voice, standing in church? I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Lest he should say in his heart, ‘Scripture deceives us;’ and all his limbs should be paralyzed to good works: and when those limbs within him, those limbs of the inner man, shall have been paralyzed, (which is the more fearful paralysis,) he should henceforth leave off from good works, and say to himself, “Wherefore do I do good works? Wherefore do I break my bread to the hungry, and clothe the naked, and take home to mine house him who hath no shelter, putting faith in that which is written? I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread; whereas I see so many persons who live virtuously, yet for the most part suffering from hunger. But if perhaps I am in error in thinking the man who is living well, and the man who is living ill, to be both of them living well, and if God knows him to be otherwise; that is, knows him, whom I think just, to be unjust, what am I to make of Abraham’s case, who is commended by Scripture itself as a righteous person? What am I to make of the Apostle Paul, who says, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. What? that I should myself be in evils such as he endured, In hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness?”

3. Whilst therefore he thus thinks, and whilst his limbs are paralyzed to the power of good works, can we, my brethren, as it were, lift up the sick of the palsy; and, as it were, 'lay open the roof' of this Scripture, and let him down before the Lord. For you observe that it is obscure. If obscure therefore, it is covered. And I behold a certain patient paralytic in mind, and I see this roof, and am convinced that Christ is concealed beneath the roof. Let me, as far as I am able, do that which was praised in those, who opened the roof, and let down the sick of the palsy before Christ; that He might say unto him, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. For it was so that He made the inner man whole of his palsy, by loosing his sins, by binding fast his faith. But there were present there men, who had not eyes to see that the inward paralytic was already healed; and thought that the Physician was blaspheming, when He was making him whole. Who is this, they say, Who forgiveth sins? This man blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God alone? And because He really was God, He heard them thinking such things. This their thought of God, they thought truly; but they did not behold God present there. Therefore that Physician wrought a certain work in the body of the paralytic also, that He might heal the inward palsy of those also who said such things. For He wrought for them to see! He gave for them to believe! Come therefore, every one, who is feeble and weak in heart, so that, looking at human instances of worldly suffering, thou art fain to leave off from good works, and art relaxed as it were, by a certain inward paralysis; come, if we may be able, let us lay open the roof, that thou mayest be let down before the Lord.

4. For in His body, which is the Church, the Lord Himself hath 'been young' indeed in the first ages; and, lo! He hath now grown old. You know and acknowledge, and understand, that in this body ye are placed; and ye so believe, that Christ is our Head; that we are the body of that Head. Now are we alone so; and were not those who were before our time such also? All the righteous that have been from the beginning of the world have Christ for their Head. For they believed that He was to come, Whom we believe to have now come; and it was in faith in Him, in Whose faith we also have been made whole, that they were made whole also: so that He should be in His own person the Head of the whole of the City of Jerusalem: all the faithful, from the beginning unto the end, being included in the number, the

legions and the armies of the Angels being also joined to them, so that it might become one City under one King; and, as it were, one Province under one Governor, happy in perpetual peace and security, praising God eternally, and happy eternally. Now the body of Christ, which is the Church, like an individual man, was once indeed young; and, behold! she is now in a fruitful old age. For it was of her that it was said, she shall still be multiplied in fruitful old age. She hath multiplied herself through all nations; and this is her voice as she reflects upon her first period, and this her last, as if that of one individual. She looks back over all of it, because all ages are known to her by the Scripture; and she saith, exulting, and warning us, Once was I young; in the first ages of the world, and, lo! now am I old; I am now even in the last ages of the world; and never have I seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

5. Now do we recognise the Man Who was young, and now is old; and having, as it were, laid open the roof, we have come to Christ! But who is the righteous man, who hath never been seen forsaken, nor his seed begging bread? If you understand what is meant by bread, you understand who is meant by him. For the “bread” is the Word of God, which never departs from the righteous man’s mouth. For, that righteous man, when tempted in the person of his Head, gave this very answer. For, when the devil said to the Lord Himself, while an hungered, and suffering from hunger, Command that these stones be made bread, He answered, Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Consider now, my brethren, when it is that the righteous man doth not do the will of God. For he doth it alway, and lives according to His will. The will of God departeth not from his heart; for the will of God is the law of God. And what is said of such a person? And in His law doth he meditate day and night. That other sort of bread you feed on one hour, and you leave it. On that bread of the Word you feed both day and night. For both when you hear it, and when you read it, you are feeding upon it; when you think upon it, you are ruminating it, so as to be a ‘clean,’ and not an ‘unclean animal.’ Which Wisdom also indicates by the mouth of Solomon, saying, The treasure that is to be desired continueth in the mouth of the wise man; but a foolish man swalloweth it up. For he who swalloweth it up hastily, so that what he has devoured is not to be seen remaining in him, has forgotten what he heard. But he who has not

forgotten, thinks upon it, and by thinking upon it, ruminates it, and in the rumination of it finds delight. Whence it is said, Holy meditation shall keep thee. See now if ‘holy meditation doth keep thee’ in the rumination of this bread, then hast thou never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

6. Ver. 26. He is alway merciful, and lendeth. ‘Fœneratur’ is used in Latin indeed, both for him who lendeth, and for him who borroweth. But in this passage the meaning is more plain, if we express it by ‘fœnerat.’ What matters it to us, what the grammarians please to rule? It were better for us to be guilty of a barbarism, so that ye understand, than that in our propriety of speech ye be left unprovided. Therefore, that righteous man is all day merciful, and fœnerat. Let not the lenders of money on usury, however, rejoice. For we find it is a particular kind of lender that is spoken of, as it was a particular kind of bread; that we may, in all passages, remove the roof, and find our way to Christ. I would not have you be lenders of money on usury; and I would not have you be such for this reason, because God would not have you. For if I indeed would not have you be so, and God would have you be, do it; but if God would not have it, even though I would fain have it so, he who should do it, would do it to his hurt. Whence does it appear that God would not have it so? It is said in another place, He that putteth not out his money to usury. And how detestable, odious, and execrable a thing it is, I believe that even usurers themselves know. Again, on the other hand, I myself, nay rather our God Himself, bids thee be an usurer, and says to thee, “Lend unto God.” If thou lendest to man, hast thou hope? and shalt thou not have hope, if thou lendest to God? If thou hast lent thy money on usury to man, that is, if thou hast given the loan of thy money to one, from whom thou dost expect to receive something more than thou hast given, not in money only, but any thing, whether it be wheat, or wine, or oil, or whatever else you please, if you expect to receive more than you have given, you are an usurer, and in this particular are not deserving of praise, but of censure. ‘What then,’ you say, ‘am I to do, that I may lend profitably?’ Consider what the usurer does. He undoubtedly desires to give a less sum, and to receive a larger; do thou this also; give thou a little, receive much. See how thy principal grows, and increases! Give things temporal, receive things eternal: give earth, receive heaven! And perhaps

thou wouldest say, ‘To whom shall I give them?’ The self-same Lord, Who bade thee not lend on usury, comes forward as the Person, to Whom thou shouldest lend on usury! Hear from Scripture in what way thou mayest lend unto the Lord. He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord. For the Lord wanteth not aught of thee. But thou hast one who needs somewhat of thee: thou extendest it to him; he receives it. For the poor hath nothing to return to thee, and yet he would himself fain requite thee, and finds nothing wherewith to do it: all that remains in his power is the good-will that desires to pray for thee. Now when the poor man prays for thee, he, as it were, says unto God, “Lord, I have borrowed this; be Thou surety for me.” Then, though you have no bond on the poor man to compel his repayment, yet you have on a sponable security. See, God from His own Scriptures saith unto thee; “Give it, and fear not; I repay it. It is to Me thou givest it.” In what way do those who make themselves sureties for others, express themselves? What is it that they say? “I repay it: I take it upon myself. It is to me you are giving it.” Do we then suppose that God also says this, “I take it on Myself. It is unto Me thou givest it?” Assuredly, if Christ be God, of which there is no doubt, He hath Himself said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. And when they said unto Him, When saw we Thee hungry? that He might shew Himself to be the Surety for the poor, that He answers for all His members, that He is the Head, they the members, and that when the members receive, the Head receiveth also; He says, Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these that belong to Me, ye have done it unto Me. Come, thou covetous usurer, consider what thou hast given; consider what thou art to receive. Hadst thou given a small sum of money, and he to whom thou hadst given it were to give thee for that small sum a great villa, worth incomparably more money than thou hadst given, how great thanks wouldest thou render, with how great joy wouldest thou be transported! Hear what possession He to Whom thou hast been lending bestows. Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive—What? The same that they have given? God forbid! What you gave were earthly things, which, if you had not given them, would have become corrupted on earth. For what could you have made of them, if you had not given them? That which on earth would have been lost, has been preserved in heaven. Therefore what we are to receive is that which hath been preserved. It is thy desert that hath been preserved, thy desert hath been made thy treasure. For consider what it is that thou art to

receive. Receive—the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. On the other hand, what shall be their sentence, who would not lend? Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And what is the kingdom which we receive called? Consider what follows: And these shall go into everlasting burning; but the righteous into life eternal. Make interest for this; purchase this. Give your money on usury to earn this. You have Christ throned in heaven, begging on earth. We have discovered in what way the righteous lendeth. He is always merciful, and lendeth.

7. And his seed is blessed. Here too let not any carnal notion suggest itself. We see many of the sons of the righteous dying of hunger; in what sense then will his seed be blessed? His seed is that which remains of him afterwards; that wherewith he soweth here, and will hereafter reap. For the Apostle says, Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore time, he says, let us do good unto all men. This is that seed of thine which shall be blessed. You commit it to the earth, and gather ever so much more; and dost thou lose it in committing it to Christ? See it expressly termed seed by the Apostle, when he was speaking of alms. For this he saith; He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth in blessings, shall also reap in blessings. But, perhaps, it is a labour to thee when thou sowest; a pain to thee when thou shewest mercy, because thou seest the wretched. For it will be better for us, when some day we shall have no persons to whom to give those alms. When all shall be changed into incorruption, there will be no one hungry, to whom thou mayest offer bread: there will be no one thirsty, to whom thou mayest give drink: there will be no one naked for thee to clothe: there will be no stranger for thee to take in. Here, however, we are sowing the seed in the midst of afflictions, of travails, of griefs, of lamentation. But turn to another Psalm; They went forth, and wept as they were throwing their seed. Hear now that his seed shall be blessed. They shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, carrying their sheaves.

8. Observe therefore what follows, and be not slothful. (Ver. 27.) Depart from evil, and do good. Do not think it to be enough for thee to do, if thou dost not strip the man who is already clothed. For in not stripping the man who is already clothed, thou hast indeed departed from evil: but do not be

barren, and wither. So choose not to strip the man who is clothed already, as to clothe the naked. For this is to depart from evil, and to do good. And you will say, "What advantage am I to derive from it?" He to Whom thou lendest has already assured thee of what He will give thee. He will give thee everlasting life. Give to Him, and fear not! Hear too what follows; Depart from evil, and do good, and dwell for evermore. And think not when thou givest that no one sees thee, or that God forsakes thee, when haply after thou hast given to the poor, and some loss, or some sorrow for the property thou hast lost, should follow, and thou shouldest say to thyself, "What hath it profited me to have done good works? I believe God doth not love the men who do good." Whence comes that buz, that subdued murmur among you, except that those expressions are very common? Each one of you at this present moment recognises these expressions, either in his own lips, or on those of his friend. May God destroy them; may He root out the thorns from His field; may He plant the good seed, and the tree bearing fruit! For wherefore art thou afflicted, O man, that thou hast given some things away to the poor, and hast lost certain other things? Seest thou not that it is what thou hast not given, that thou hast lost? Wherefore dost thou not attend to the voice of thy God? Where is thy faith? wherefore is it so fast asleep? Wake it up in thy heart. Consider what the Lord Himself said unto thee, while exhorting thee to good works of this kind; Provide yourselves bags which wax not old; a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth. Call this to mind therefore when you are lamenting over a loss. Wherefore dost thou lament, thou fool of little mind, or rather of unsound mind? Wherefore didst thou lose it, except that thou didst not lend it to Me? Wherefore didst thou lose it? Who has caried it off? Thou wilt answer, "A thief." Was it not this, that I forewarned thee of? that thou shouldest not lay it up where the thief could approach? If then he who has lost any thing, grieves, let him grieve for this, that he did not lay it up there, whence it could not be lost.

9. Ver. 28. For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints. When the Saints suffer affliction, think not that God doth not judge, or doth not judge righteously. Will He, Who warns thee to judge righteously, Himself judge unrighteously? He loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints. But (think) how the 'life' of the Saints is 'hid with Him,' in such a

manner, that who now suffer trouble on earth, like trees in the winter-time, having no fruit and leaves, when He, like a newly-risen sun, shall have appeared, that which before was living in their root, will shew itself forth in fruits. He does then love judgment, and doth not forsake His Saints. But is the Saint afflicted with hunger? God will not forsake him. He scourges him. He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Thou despisest him when he is being scourged: thou art affrighted when he is enriched. For wherewith is he scourged? It is with temporal tribulations. When is he to be enriched? When it is to be said to him, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Be not thou reluctant to be chastened, that thou mayest be among the number of those who deserve to be received. To such a degree doth He love just judgment, that He forsaketh not His Saints, whom He scourgeth for a short time. And seeing that He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, He spared not His "Only Son," in Whom He found no fault. For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints. Will He therefore perhaps, since He doth not forsake them, give them what thou desirest here, to live many years, to come to old age? Thou dost not observe, that when thou wouldest wish old age to come, thou wishest for that, of which, when it shall have come, thou wilt complain. Let not thy soul therefore, whether through wickedness, or through weakness, or through littleness, say unto thee, How is it true the Lord loveth judgment; He forsaketh not His Saints. In very truth He forsook not the Three Children who praised Him in the furnace; the fire touched them not. Were not the Maccabees His Saints too, whose flesh indeed was consumed in the fire, but whose faith failed not? 'But this,' you say, 'involves a still greater question, because though their faith did not fail, He nevertheless did forsake them.' Hear what follows; They shall be preserved for ever. It was but a few years that you were desiring for them, which if He had given them, God (you think) would not have forsaken His Saints. He visibly did not forsake the Three Children. Invisibly He forsook not the Maccabees either. To the one He gave temporal life, to confound the unbelievers: the others He crowned invisibly, that He might judge the impiety of the persecutor. Yet neither the one nor the other did He forsake, Who forsaketh not His Saints. And it was no great reward the Three Children received, if they were not to be preserved for ever. They shall be preserved for ever.

10. But the unrighteous shall be punished; the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. Just as the seed of the other shall be blessed, so shall the seed of the wicked be cut off. For the seed of the wicked is the works of the wicked. For again, on the other hand, we find the son of the wicked man flourish in the world, and sometimes become righteous, and flourish in Christ. Be careful therefore how thou takest it; that thou mayest remove the covering, and make thy way to Christ. Do not take the text in a carnal sense; for thou wilt be deceived. But the seed of the wicked—all the works of the wicked—will be cut off: they shall have no fruit. For they are effective indeed for a short time; afterwards they shall seek for them, and shall not find the reward of that which they have wrought. For it is the expression of those who lose what they have wrought, that text which says, What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. The seed of the wicked, then, shall be cut off.

11. Ver. 29. The righteous shall inherit the land. Here again let not covetousness steal on thee, nor promise thee some great estate; hope not to find there, what you are commanded to despise in this world. That land in the text, is a certain land of the living, the kingdom of the Saints. Whence it is said; Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living. For if thy life too is the same life as that there spoken of, think what sort of land thou art about to inherit. That is the land of the living; this the land of those who are about to die: to receive again, when dead, those whom it nourished when living. Such then as is that land, such shall the life itself be also: if the life be for ever, the land also is to be thine for ever. And how is the land to be thine for ever?

And they shall dwell therein (it says) for ever. It must therefore be another land, where they are to dwell therein for ever. For of this land (of this earth) it is said, Heaven and earth shall pass away.

12. Ver. 30. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom. See here is that ‘bread.’ Observe with what satisfaction this righteous man feedeth upon it; how he turns wisdom over and over in his mouth. And his tongue talketh of judgment.

Ver. 31. The law of his God is in his heart. Lest haply thou shouldest think him to have that on his lips, which he hath not in his heart, lest thou shouldest reckon him among those of whom it is said, This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And of what use is this to him?

And none of his steps shall slide. The word of God in the heart frees from the snare; the word of God in the heart delivers from the evil way; the word of God in the heart delivers from the slippery place. He is with thee, Whose word departeth not from thee. Now what evil doth he suffer, whom God keepeth? Thou settest a watchman in thy vineyard, and feelest secure from thieves; and that watchman may sleep, and may himself fall, and may admit a thief. But He Who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his steps shall slide. Let him therefore live free from fear; let him live free from fear even in the midst of the wicked; free from fear even in the midst of the ungodly. For what evil can the ungodly or unrighteous man do to the righteous? Lo! see what follows.

Ver. 32. The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. For he says, what it was foretold in the book of Wisdom that he should say, He is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his life is not like other men's. Therefore he seeks to slay him. What? Doth the Lord, Who keepeth him, Who dwelleth with him, Who departeth not from his lips, from his heart, doth He forsake him? What then becomes of what was said before; And He forsaketh not His Saints?

13. Ver. 32, 33. The wicked therefore watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. But the Lord will not leave him in his hands. Wherefore then did He leave the Martyrs in the hands of the ungodly? Wherefore did they do unto them whatsoever they would? Some they slew with the sword; some they crucified; some they delivered to the beasts; some they burnt by fire; others they led about in chains, till wasted out by a long protracted decay. Assuredly the Lord forsaketh not His Saints. He will not leave him in his hands. Lastly, wherefore did He leave His own Son in the hands of the ungodly? Here also, if thou wouldest have all the limbs of thy inner man made strong, remove the covering of the roof, and find thy way to the Lord. Hear what another Scripture, foreseeing our Lord's future suffering at the

hands of the ungodly, saith. What saith it? The earth is given into the hands of the wicked. What is meant by earth being given into the hands of the ungodly? The delivering of the flesh into the hands of the persecutors. But God did not leave His righteous One there: from the flesh, which was taken captive, He leads forth the soul unconquered. God would have forsaken His “Just One” in the hands of the ungodly, if He had caused Him to consent to the ungodly: an evil against which He prays in another Psalm, and says, Deliver me not, O Lord, by mine own heart’s desire to the sinful man. It is necessary that thou shouldest not be abandoned to the sinful man, in consequence of “thine own heart’s desire;” lest while thou desirest this present life, thou shouldest fall into his hands, and lose life eternal. By what desire is it that he ought not to be abandoned to the sinful man? By that desire of which it is also said, Neither have I desired the day of man, Thou knowest. For he who sets his affections and desires on the day of man, when his adversary shall have threatened him that he will take from him the day of man, that he will kill him, and destroy this present life, then he who has no hope of another life faints, and gives way to the enemy. He however who listens to the words of the Lord, saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, even though the earth be delivered over into the hands of the enemy, even though the earthly house be taken, yet the spirit escapes away; and the spirit escaping out of their hands, the earth too shall rise again. The spirit shall be changed unto the Lord: earth shall be changed into heaven. For even of the earth itself, which is delivered for a time into the hands of the ungodly, not a particle is lost. The very hairs of your head are numbered. Security therefore there is, but it is provided that God be within. But God finds admission, if the devil be driven out.

Ver. 33. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when there shall be judgment for him. Some copies have it, and when He shall judge him, there shall be judgment for him. For him, however, means when sentence is passed upon him. For we can express ourselves so as to say to a person, Judge for me, i.e. ‘hear my cause.’ When therefore God shall begin to hear the cause of His righteous servant, since we must all be presented before the tribunal of Christ, and stand before it to receive every one the things he hath done in this body, whether good or evil, when therefore he shall have come to that Judgment, He will not condemn him; though he

may seem to be condemned in this present life by man. Even though the Proconsul may have passed sentence on Cyprian, yet the earthly seat of judgment is one thing, the heavenly tribunal is another. From the inferior tribunal he receives sentence of death; from the superior one a crown, Nor will He condemn him when there shall be judgment for him.

14. But when will it be? Think not it is to be now. Now is the season of labour; now is the season of seedtime; the season of winter. Sow thou thy seed, though it be in the midst of wind or of rain. Be not slothful. The summer will come to gladden thee; the summer in which thou wilt rejoice that thou hast sown. “What then am I to do now?”

Ver. 34. Wait on the Lord. And while I am waiting upon Him, what am I to do?—and keep His ways. And if I keep them, what am I to receive? And He shall exalt thee to inherit the land. “What land?” Once more let not any estate suggest itself to your mind:—that land of which it is said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. What of those, who have troubled us, in the midst of whom we have groaned, whose scandals we have patiently endured, for whom, while they were raging against us, we have prayed in vain? What will become of them? What follows? When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

And from how close a proximity wilt thou see it! Thou wilt be on the right hand; they on the left. This sight, however, belongs to the eyes of faith: which eyes whoever have not, they are grieved at the prosperity of the ungodly, and think that it is to no purpose that they are righteous, because they see the ungodly flourish here. But he who hath that eye of faith, what doth he say?

Ver. 35. I have seen the ungodly lifted up on high, and rising above the cedars of Libanus. And suppose him to be lifted up on high; suppose him to be towering above the rest; what follows?

Ver. 36. I passed by, and, lo, he was not! I sought him, and his place could no where be found! Why was he, “no more, and his place no where to be found?” Because thou hast passed by. But if thou art yet carnally-minded, and that earthly prosperity appears to thee to be true happiness, thou hast

not yet passed by him; thou art either his fellow, or thou art below him; go on, and pass him: and when thou hast made progress, and hast passed by him, thou observest him by the eye of faith; thou seest his end, thou sayest to thyself, “Lo! he who so swelled before, is not!” just as if it were some smoke that thou wert passing near to. For this too was said above in this very Psalm, They shall consume and fade away as the smoke. Smoke rises on high, and grows into a swelling volume; the greater the height to which it rises, the greater the bulk to which it expands. But when thou hast passed by, look behind thee; for the smoke is behind thee, if God be before thee. Look not on things which are behind out of longing after them, as Lot’s wife looked and remained behind in the way; but look back upon them out of contempt for them, and thou shalt see ‘the ungodly no where to be found,’ and thou shalt seek for his place. What is his place? That in which he hath power, riches, a certain rank in the world, so that many pay court to him; that he commands, and is obeyed; this place will be no more, but will pass away; so that you may say, I passed by, and he was not. What is meant by “passed by?” Advanced, arrived at what is spiritual: entered into the sanctuary of God; so as to consider his end. And, lo! he was not, and his place was no where to be found.

15. Ver. 37. Keep innocency; keep it even as thou usedst to keep thy purse, when thou wert covetous; even as thou usedst to hold fast that purse, that it might not be snatched from thy grasp by the thief, even so keep innocency, lest that be snatched from thy grasp by the devil. Be that thy sure inheritance, of which the rich and the poor may both be sure. Keep innocency. What doth it profit thee to gain gold, and to lose innocence?

Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing which is right. Keep thou thine eyes “right,” that thou mayest see the thing which is right; not perverted, wherewith thou lookest upon the wicked; not distorted, so that God should appear to thee distorted and wrong, in that He favours the wicked, and afflicts the faithful with persecutions. Dost thou not observe how distorted thy vision is? Set right thine eyes, and behold the thing that is right. What “thing that is right?” Take no heed of things present. And what wilt thou see?

For there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace. What is meant by there is a remainder? When thou art dead, thou shalt not be dead. This is the meaning of there is a remainder. He will still have something remaining to him, even after this life, that is to say, that seed, which shall be blessed. Whence our Lord saith, He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live;—seeing there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace.

16. Ver. 38. But the transgressors shall be destroyed in the self-same thing. What is meant by, in the self-same thing? It means for ever: or all together in one and the same destruction.

The remainder of the wicked shall be cut off. Now there is (a remainder) for the man that maketh peace: they therefore who are not peace-makers are ungodly. For, Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.

17. Ver. 39, 40. But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, and He is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the sinners. At present therefore let the righteous bear with the sinner; let the wheat bear with the tares; let the grain bear with the chaff: for the time of separation will come, and the good seed shall be set apart from that which is to be consumed with fire. The one will be consigned to the garner; the other to everlasting burning; for it was for this reason that the just and the unjust were at the first together; that the one should lay a stumbling-block, that the other should be proved; that afterwards the one should be condemned, the other receive a crown.

18. Thanks be to God! Brethren, we have discharged that debt which was owing, in Christ's name; yet Charity hath still a bond upon us, as her debtors still. For that debt is the only one, which if it be repaid every day, is still ever due. We have spoken many things against the Donatists; we have read many things in your ears; many documents, many things beside the canonical Scriptures, they having compelled us. For even if they find fault with this, that we read such things to you, we are willing to be found fault with, provided you derive instruction. For in this respect we may also reply to them in these words, I have become a fool; ye have compelled me. But

above all, my brethren, hold fast your inheritance; concerning which we have assurance that our names are in our Father's Will and Testament; not in any worthless deed of any mortal man. Of that we have assurance; for He Who made the bequest, Himself lives. He Who made that Will in favour of His heir, is Himself to judge of the Will that He Himself made. In things of this life, the testator is one person, the judge another: and yet the person who has the will wins before a judge who is a different party; not before a judge who is another party, and who is dead. How sure then is our winning, when He is to judge of it, Who made the Testament? For although Christ died for a time, yet now however He liveth for ever.

19. Let them therefore say against us whatever they please, let us on our part love them, even in spite of themselves. For we know, brethren, we know, I say, those tongues of theirs; on account of which let us not become enraged against them; do ye bear with them with patience, even as we do. For in their cause they see themselves to have nothing to rely on; and they begin to rail and speak evil of us, saying many things that they know, many also that they do not know. What they do know, are our past offences. For we ourselves also (even as the Apostle says) were sometime foolish, and unbelieving; and unto every good work reprobate. We were deluded and infatuated in a perverse error, we do not deny it; and in proportion as we do not deny what we were before, do we praise God Who hath not imputed these things unto us. Wherefore then, O heretic, dost thou leave the question, and attack the person? For what am I? What am I? Am I the Catholic Church? Am I Christ's inheritance, dispersed throughout the world? It is enough for me that I am in it. Thou revilest my past misconducts; what great result dost thou achieve thereby? I am more severe to my own past misconducts than thou art. What thou revilest, I have condemned. O that thou wouldest but imitate me, that one day thine error also might be a thing of the past! These are past misconducts, which they know of; misconducts committed principally in this city. For it was here that we lived wickedly, as I myself confess, and in proportion as I rejoice on account of the grace of God, so on account of my past misconducts, do I ——What shall I say? "Grieve?" I should grieve indeed, if they were still in existence. But what shall I say? do I "rejoice?" I cannot say this either, for, O that I had never been what I was before! Whatever I was before,

however, that is now, in Christ's name, past. That with which they charge me now, they know not. There are things in me with which they may charge me still; but for them it would be a hard matter to gain a knowledge of them. For I have much ado in my thoughts, struggling against the evil suggestions of my thoughts, and holding a protracted and an almost continual conflict with the assaults of the enemy trying to overthrow me. I groan unto God in mine infirmity; and He Who knew my birth, knoweth also what my heart travaileth of. With me, however, it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment, (saith the Apostle;) yea, I judge not mine own self. For I indeed know myself better than they do; but God knoweth me better than I know myself. Let them not therefore insult you on our account: Christ forbid! For they say, "And who are these men, and whence come they? Here, where they received baptism, we knew them wicked." If they really know us well, they know that once we went to sea; that we travelled abroad; that we returned a different person from what we went out. It was not here then that we were baptized; but where we were baptized, is a Church known to all the world. And there are many brethren of ours, who both know that we were baptized, and were baptized together with us. It is easy therefore to ascertain this, if any of the brethren is anxious on that subject. Shall we, however, give satisfaction to these men, and give them any thing of a demonstration of the testimony of the Church, with which they are not in communion? No wonder they do not know us to have been baptized in Christ beyond the sea, who beyond the sea have not Christ Himself either. For he who hath the communion of the whole Church, hath Christ Himself on the other side of the sea also. How can he know where I was baptized, when his own communion scarcely crosses the sea? However, my brethren, what shall I say unto them? Suspect what ill you please of me. If we be good, we are the corn in Christ's Church; if wicked, we are the chaff in Christ's Church; we have not, however, quitted the 'floor.' But as for thee who hast been blown abroad by the blast of temptation, what art thou? The wind bears not away the corn from the floor; learn then, from the place where thou art, to know what thou art.

20. "But who art thou," (saith he,) "that speakest such great things against us?" Whoever I may be, consider what is said, not by whom it is said. "But," says he, "unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, that thou

takest My covenant in thy mouth?" Be it so, that "the Lord saith this to the wicked;" haply there is a class of sinners, to whom the Lord rightly so speaks: but of whomsoever He speaks, He saith so for this reason, that the sinner himself profiteth not, when he pronounceth the law of God. Does he therefore not profit his hearers? In the Church, as the Lord hath said, we have both kinds, the evil as well as the good. For when the good preach, what is it that they say? Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ. And of the good what is said also? But be thou an example of the believers. This is what we are striving to the uttermost to be: what we really are, however, is known to Him, unto Whom we groan. Of the wicked, however, it is said, The Scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: what they say, do ye: but do not the things which they do. Thou seest that on the seat of Moses, to which the seat of Christ hath succeeded, the evil also sit; yet do not, while they speak what is good, do harm to their hearers. Wherefore hast thou, because of the wicked, forsaken His very Seat itself? Return to peace, to reconciliation with that Catholic unity that gives thee no occasion of offence. If my words, and my actions, are both of them good, then imitate me; but if I myself do not do what I say, thou hast a rule from the Lord, 'Do the things that I say, but do not after my works:' at all events, do not forsake the Catholic See. Lo! in Christ's name we are about to go forth, and they will say many things: where will it end? Do ye soon cease to care to defend our cause. Say to them no more than, "Brethren, reply to the question before us; Augustine is a Bishop in the Catholic Church. He bears his own burden; he is to give account of himself to God. I know him to be among the good; if he be wicked, is known to himself; if he be a good man, even so he is not my hope. For this have I learned before all other things in the Catholic Church, not to have my hope placed in man. No wonder therefore that you find fault with the persons, since your own hopes are placed on man." Assuredly when they find fault with us, do you too despise us. For we ourselves know already, what place we hold in your affections, seeing we know what place you hold in ours. Contend not in our defence against them. Whatever they say of us, pass it quickly by, lest while contending for the defence of our cause, you neglect the care of your own. For this is the object they are artfully aiming at: Being afraid and unwilling to let us speak of the merits of the case itself, they heap accusations upon us in order to call us off, that while we are bent upon defending ourselves, we may refrain

from confuting them. For, of a certainty, as for you who call me wicked, I call myself both this and innumerable other names. Away with the subject quickly from our discussion; bring my defence to a close; discuss the merits of the case itself; consider the question that affects the Church; look to the position in which you yourself stand. From whatever quarter Truth speaks to thee, accept it as if hungry; lest haply the Bread should never find its way to thee, whilst in a fastidious and calumnious spirit thou art always seeking for somewhat to find fault with in the vessel which contains it.

PSALM 38

A Psalm to David himself, on the remembrance of the Sabbath.

Apposite to what we have been chanting, (viz.) I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin, is the answer of this woman in the Gospel lesson. For the Lord, looking on her iniquities, called her a dog, saying, It is not meet to cast the children's meat to dogs. But she, who knew how to declare her iniquity, and to be sorry for her sin, denied not what the Truth pronounced; but by confessing her misery, she the better obtained commiseration, being sorry for her sin. For she had prayed for her daughter to be made whole, perhaps, under the name of her daughter, implying her own life. Attend, therefore, whilst to the best of our power, we examine and discuss the meaning of the whole Psalm. The Lord be present with our hearts, that we may healthfully find here our own words, and as we shall have found them, utter them; neither finding difficulty in discovering them, nor uttering them without understanding.

2. Its title is, A Psalm to David himself, on the remembrance of the Sabbath. We examine what has been written for us concerning the holy Prophet David, of whose seed according to the flesh the Lord Jesus Christ came, and among the good things which are known to us about him by the Scriptures, we find not that on any occasion he called the Sabbath to remembrance. For why should he call it to remembrance, considering that Jewish observance, with which they were then wont to observe the Sabbath? Wherefore should he thus call to remembrance that which would necessarily come after an interval of seven days? To observe it therefore, not thus to call it to remembrance, was his duty. Now no one calls any thing to remembrance, but what is not present before him. For instance, in this city you call to remembrance Carthage, where you have at some time been; and to-day you call to remembrance yesterday, or some day of the preceding year, or any previous one that you please; and any deed of your

own that you have already done, or somewhere that you have been, or some transaction at which you have been present. What doth this recollection of the Sabbath mean? What is this Sabbath? For it is with groaning that he calls it to recollection. You have both heard already when the Psalm was read, and you will now hear it when we shall go over it, how great is his groaning, his mourning, his tears, his misery. But happy he, who is wretched after this manner! Whence the Lord also in the Gospel called some who mourn blessed. “How should he be blessed if he is a mourner? How blessed, if he is miserable?” Nay rather, he would be miserable, if he were not a mourner. Such an one then let us understand here too, calling the Sabbath to remembrance, (viz.) some mourner or other: and would that we were ourselves that ‘some one or other!’ For there is here some person sorrowing, groaning, mourning, calling the Sabbath to remembrance. The Sabbath is rest. Doubtless he was in some disquietude, who with groaning was calling the Sabbath to remembrance.

3. He therefore tells and commends unto God, the disquietude under which he was suffering, fearing somewhat more grievous than there was, where he was. For that he is in evil case, he states expressly; there is no need of a commentator to prove this, nor of any inference by implication, nor conjecture. Nor is it necessary that we should enquire, but only that we should understand what he says. And unless he feared something worse than that in which he was involved already, he would not begin in this way.

Ver. 1. O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation; neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. For it will be that some shall be chastened in God’s hot displeasure, and rebuked in His indignation. And haply not all who are rebuked will be chastened; yet are there some that are to be saved in the chastening. So it is to be indeed, because it is called chastening, but yet it shall be so as by fire. But there are to be some, who will be rebuked, and will not be corrected. For he will at all events rebuke those to whom He will say, I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; and all the rest, which He there follows out at length, as He upbraids with unprofitableness and with inhumanity the wicked on His left hand, to whom is said, Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. It is these more grievous evils which he is in dread of, not taking

into account this present life, in the miseries of which he is groaning and lamenting, when he asks and says, Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation. Let me not be among those to whom Thou wilt hereafter say, Go ye into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. Neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure; so that Thou mayest cleanse me in this life, and make me such, that I may after that stand in no need of the cleansing fire, for those who are to be saved, yet so as by fire. Why? Why, but because they build upon the foundation, wood, stubble, and hay. Now they should build on it, gold, silver, and precious stones; and should have nothing to fear from either fire: not only that which is to consume the ungodly for ever, but also that which is to purge those who are to escape through the fire. For it is said, he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. And because it is said, he shall be saved, that fire is thought lightly of. For all that, though we should be saved by fire, yet will that fire be more grievous than any thing that man can suffer in this life whatsoever. And you know how great sufferings bad men have endured, and may endure; yet their sufferings are only just so great as good men may have endured also. For what has any malefactor, robber, adulterer, any desperately wicked, or any sacrilegious person, endured by the law, which has not been endured by a martyr in his confession of Christ. These evils which are here, are far more tolerable; and yet observe how men often do any thing which you command them, that they may not suffer them. How much better were it would they do what God commands, that they might not suffer those more grievous ills!

4. Now on what ground does this person pray that he may not be rebuked in indignation, nor chastened in hot displeasure? (He speaks,) as if he would say unto God, ‘Since the things which I already suffer are many in number, I pray Thee let them suffice;’ and he begins to enumerate them, by way of satisfying God; offering what he suffers now, that he may not have to suffer worse evils hereafter.

Ver. 2, 3. For Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh, from the face of Thine anger. He has now begun telling these evils, which he is suffering here: and yet even this already was from the wrath of the Lord, because it was of the vengeance of

the Lord. 'Of what vengeance?' That which He took upon Adam. For think not that punishment was not inflicted upon him, or that God had said to no purpose, Thou shall surely die; or that we suffer any thing in this life, except from that death, which we earned by the original sin. For we bear about a mortal body, (which otherwise would not be mortal,) full of temptations, full of anxieties; liable to bodily pains and wants; subject to weariness even when in sound health, because not as yet completely sound, to say the least. For whence did he come to say, There is no soundness in my flesh, except that what is called soundness in this life, is not however in reality soundness in the eye of persons who judge rightly, and call to remembrance the Sabbath? For if you do not eat, hunger disturbs you: that is a kind of natural malady; for, by way of vengeance, punishment has been made our nature. That which was the first man's punishment, is our nature. Whence the Apostle says, We were also by nature the children of wrath, even as others. By nature the children of wrath, that is, bearing punishment about us. But wherefore says he, We were? Because, in hope, we are so no longer; for, in fact, we are so still; but it is better to say that, in hope, we are already; because of our hope we have certain assurance. For our hope is not an uncertain one, so that we should feel doubts concerning it. Hear even boasting in hope. We groan within ourselves, (says he,) waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Why so, Paul? Art thou not as yet redeemed? Has not the ransom been already paid for thee? Has not that Blood been already shed? Is not that the ransom for us all? It is, verily, the very one appointed ransom. But see what he says, For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope? For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Now what is that he with patience waits for? Salvation. The salvation of what? Of the body itself; because this is what he spoke of in speaking of the redemption of the body. If it is the salvation of the body that he was waiting for, then that was not health which he possessed already. Hunger, thirst, destroy life, if remedies be not taken for them. For food is the remedy for hunger, and drink for thirst; and sleep is the remedy for fatigue. Remove these remedies; and see if the things that are there do not destroy. If, these being out of the question, no disorders exist, this is considered sound health. But if thou hast something that, if thou eatest not, must destroy thee, boast not of health; but wait with groaning, for the

redemption of thy body. Rejoice that thou art redeemed; but let it be in hope, not as if in fact, that thou feelest assurance. For if thou dost not groan in the hope, thou wilt never come to the substance. “This then is not health,” says he; There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger. Whence then do His arrows stick fast in him? The very punishment, the very vengeance, and haply the pains both of mind and of body, which it is necessary for us to suffer here, these he describes by these self-same arrows. For of these arrows holy Job also made mention, and said that the arrows of the Lord stuck fast in him, whilst he was labouring under those pains. We are used, however, to call God’s words also arrows; but could he grieve that he should be struck by these? The words of God are arrows, as it were, that inflame love, not pain. Or is it that that very love can not exist without pain? For whatever we love, and do not possess, we must needs be pained for. For he who has what he loves, both loves, and grieves not: while he who loves, and has not yet what he loves, must needs, as I said, groan in pain. Thence is that which is said in the person of the Church, the spouse of Christ, in the Song of Songs, I am wounded with love. She spake of herself as wounded with love: for she was in love with some object, and did not yet possess it: she was in pain, because she had not possession of it as yet. Therefore if she was in pain, she was wounded; this wound however hastened her to seek true soundness. Whoever has not been smitten with that wound, will never be able to attain to true soundness. Is he then to be for ever smitten with this wound? We may then understand the arrows sticking fast, thus; Thy words are fixed fast in my heart; and by those words themselves is it come to pass, that I called the Sabbath to remembrance: and that very remembrance of the Sabbath, and the non-possession of it at present, prevents me from rejoicing at present; and causes me to acknowledge that there is neither health in my very flesh, neither ought it to be so called when I compare this sort of soundness to that soundness, which I am to possess in the everlasting rest; where this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and see that in comparison with that soundness this present kind is but sickness.

6. Neither is there any rest in my bones, from the face of my sin. It is commonly enquired, of what person this is the speech; and some understand it to be Christ’s, on account of some things which are here said of the

Passion of Christ; to which we shall shortly come; and which we ourselves shall acknowledge to be spoken of His Passion. But how could He Who had no sin, say, There is no rest in my bones, from the face of my sin. The meaning therefore of necessity constrains us to recognise here the whole and entire person of Christ, that is, both the Head and the Body. For when Christ speaks, He speaks sometimes in the Person of the Head only; Which is the Saviour Himself, born of the Virgin Mary: sometimes in the person of His Body, which is the Holy Church, dispersed through all the world. And we ourselves are in His Body, if, that is, our faith be sincere in Him; and our hope be certain, and our charity fervent. We are in His body; and members of His; and we find ourselves to be speaking in that passage, according to the Apostle's saying, For we are members of His body; and this the Apostle says in many passages. For if we were to say that they are not the words of Christ, those words, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? will also not be the words of Christ. For there too you have, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? The words of mine offences are far from my health. Just as here you have, from the face of my sins, so there also you have, the words of my offences. And if Christ is, for all that, without sin, and without offences, we begin to think those words in the Psalm also not to be His. And it is exceedingly harsh and inconsistent that that Psalm should not relate to Christ, where we have His Passion as clearly laid open as if it were being read to us out of the Gospel. For there we have, They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Why should I mention that the first verse of that Psalm was pronounced by the Lord Himself while hanging on the Cross, with His own mouth, saying, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? What did He mean to be inferred from it, but that the whole of that Psalm relates to Him, seeing He Himself, the Head of His Body, pronounced it in His own Person? Now when it goes on to say, the words of mine offences, it is beyond a doubt that they are the words of Christ. Whence then come the sins, but from the Body; which is the Church? Because both the Head, and the Body of Christ, are speaking. Why do they speak as if one person only? Because they twain, as He hath said, shall be one flesh. This (says the Apostle) is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Whence also when He Himself was speaking in the Gospel, in answer to those who had introduced a question concerning the putting away of a wife, He says, Have ye not read

that which is written, that from the beginning God made them male and female; and a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. If therefore He Himself hath said, they are no more twain, but one flesh, what wonder if, as they are but one flesh, they should have but one tongue, and the same speech, as being but one flesh, the Head and the Body. Let us listen to them then as being one person; but yet let us hear the Head as the Head, and the Body as the Body. The persons are not separated: but their dignities are distinguished; because the Head saves, the Body is saved: it belongs to the Head to shew mercy, to the Body to mourn over misery; the office of the Head is to cleanse, the duty of the Body, to confess sins; yet have they but one speech, in which it is not written when it is the Body that speaks, and when the Head; but we indeed, while we hear it, distinguish the one from the other; He however speaks as but one. For why should He not say, my sins, Who said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in. I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Assuredly the Lord was not in prison. Why should He not say this, to Whom when it was said, When saw we Thee a hungred, and athirst, or in prison; and did not minister unto Thee? He replied, that He spake thus in the person of His Body. Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it not unto Me. Why should He not say, from the face of my sins, Who said to Saul, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me, Who, however, being in Heaven, now suffered from no persecutors? But, just as, in that passage, the Head spake for the Body, so here too the Head speaks the words of the Body; whilst you hear at the same time the accents of the Head Itself also. Yet do not either, when you hear the voice of the Body, separate the Head from it; nor the Body, when you hear the voice of the Head: because they are no more twain, but one flesh.

7. There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of thine anger. But perhaps God is unjustly angry with thee, O Adam; unjustly angry with thee, O son of man; because now brought to acknowledge that thy punishment, now that thou art a man that hath been placed in Christ's Body, thou hast said, There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger. Declare the justice of God's anger: lest thou shouldest seem to be excusing

thyself, and accusing Him. Go on to tell whence the anger of the Lord proceeds. There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones. He repeats what he said before, There is no soundness in my flesh; for, There is no rest in my bones, is equivalent to this. He does not however repeat from the face of Thine anger; but states the cause of the anger of God. There is no rest in my bones from the face of my sins.

8. Ver. 4. For mine iniquities have lifted up my head; and are like a heavy burden too heavy for me to bear. Here too he has placed the cause first, and the effect afterwards. What consequence followed, and from what cause, he has told us. Mine iniquities have lift up mine head. For no one is proud but the unrighteous man, whose head is lifted up. He is lifted up, whose head is lifted up on high against God. You heard when the lesson of the Book of Ecclesiasticus was read; The beginning of pride is when a man departeth from God. He who was the first to refuse to listen to the Commandment, “his head iniquity lifted up” against God. And because his iniquities have lifted up his head, what hath God done unto him? They are like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear! It is the part of levity to lift up the head, just as if he, who lifts up his head, had nothing to carry. Since therefore that which admits of being lifted up is light, it receives a weight by which it may be weighed down. For his mischief returns upon his own head, and his violent dealing comes down upon his own pate. They are like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear.

9. Ver. 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt. Now he who has wounds, is not perfectly sound. Add to this, that the wounds stink and are corrupt. Wherefore do they stink? Because they are corrupt: now in what way this is explained in reference to human life, who doth not understand. Let a man but have his soul’s sense of smelling sound, he perceives how foully sins stink. The contrary to which stink of sin, is that savour of which the Apostle says, We are the sweet savour of Christ unto God, in every place, unto them which be saved. But whence is this, except from hope? Whence is this, but from our calling the Sabbath to remembrance? For it is a different thing that we mourn over in this life, from that which we anticipate in the other. That which we mourn over is ‘stench,’ that which we reckon upon is ‘fragance.’

Were there not therefore such a perfume as that to invite us, we should never call the Sabbath to remembrance. But since, by the Spirit, we have such a perfume, as to say to our Betrothed, Because of the savour of Thy good ointments we will run after Thee; we turn our senses away from our own unsavourinesses, and turning ourselves to Him, we gain some little breathing-time. But indeed, unless our evil deeds also did smell rank in our nostrils, we should never confess with those groans, My wounds stink and are corrupt. And wherefore? from the face of my foolishness. From the same cause that he said before, from the face of my sins; from that same cause he now says, from the face of my foolishness.

10. Ver. 6. I am troubled, I am bowed down even unto the end. Wherefore was he bowed down? Because he had been lifted up. If thou art humble, thou shalt be exalted; if thou exaltest thyself, thou shalt be bowed down; for God will be at no loss to find a weight wherewith to bow thee down. That weight shall be the burthen of thy sins, that shall be redoubled upon thine head, and thou shalt be bowed down. Now what does to be bowed down mean? It is to be unable to lift one's self up. Such was the woman, whom the Lord found bowed down for eighteen years. She could not lift herself up. Such are those who have their heart set on the earth. But indeed since that woman found out the Lord, and He healed her, let her hear the words; 'Lift up your heart.' Yet so far as she is bowed down, she still groaneth. For he is still bowed down, who saith, The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things. Let him groan on these things; that he may receive the other; let him 'call the Sabbath to remembrance,' that he may deserve to arrive at it. For that which the Jews used to celebrate was but a sign. Of what thing was it the sign? Of that which he calls to remembrance, who saith, I am troubled, and am bowed down even unto the end. What is meant by even unto the end? Even to death.

I go mourning all the day long. All day long, that is, "without intermission." By all the day long, he means, "all my life long." But from what time hath he known it? From the time that he began to call the Sabbath to remembrance. For so long as he calls to remembrance what he no longer

possesses, wouldst thou not have him go mourning? All the day long have I gone mourning.

11. Ver. 7. For my soul is filled with illusions, and there is no soundness in my flesh. Where there is the whole man, there there is soul and flesh both. The soul is filled with illusions; the “flesh” hath no soundness. What does there remain that can give joy? Is it not meet that one should go mourning? All the day long have I gone mourning. Let mourning be our portion, until our soul be divested of its illusions; and our body be clothed with soundness. For true soundness is no other than immortality. How great however are the soul’s illusions, were I even to attempt to express, when would the time suffice me? For whose soul is not subject to them? There is a brief particular that I will remind you of, to shew how our soul is filled with illusions. The presence of those illusions sometimes scarcely permits us to pray. We know not how to think of material objects without images, and such as we do not wish, rush in upon the mind; and we wish to go from this one to that, and to quit that for another. And sometimes you wish to return to that which you were thinking of before, and to quit that which you are now thinking of; and a fresh one presents itself to you; you wish to call up again what you had forgotten; and it does not occur to you; and another comes instead which you would not have wished for. Where meanwhile was the one that you had forgotten? For why did it afterwards occur to you, when it had ceased to be sought after; whereas while it was being sought for, innumerable others, which were not desired, presented themselves instead of it? I have stated a fact briefly; I have thrown out a kind of hint or suggestion to you, brethren, taking up which, you may yourselves suggest the rest to yourselves, and discover what it is to mourn over the illusions of our soul. He hath received therefore the punishment of illusion; he hath forfeited Truth. For just as illusion is the soul’s punishment, so is Truth its reward. But when we were set in the midst of these illusions, the Truth Itself came to us, and found us overwhelmed by illusions, took upon Itself our flesh, or rather took flesh from us; that is, from the human race. He manifested himself to the eyes of the Flesh, that He might by faith heal those to whom He was going to reveal the Truth hereafter, that Truth might be manifested to the now healed eye. For He is Himself the Truth, which He promised unto us at that time, when His Flesh was to be seen by the eye,

that the foundation might be laid of that Faith, of which the Truth was to be the reward. For it was not Himself that Christ shewed forth on earth; but it was His Flesh that he shewed. For had He shewed Himself, the Jews would have seen and known Him; but had they known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory. But perhaps His disciples saw Him, when they said unto Him, Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us; and He, to shew that it was not Himself that had been seen by them, added; Have I been so long with you, and have ye not known Me, Philip? He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. If then they saw Christ, wherefore did they yet seek for the Father? For if it were Christ whom they saw, they would have seen the Father also. They did not therefore yet see Christ, who desired that the Father should be shewn unto them. To prove that they did not yet see Him, hear that, in another place, He promised it by way of reward, saying, He who loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and whoso loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love Him, and (as if it were said to Him, “what wilt Thou give unto him, as Thou lovest him?” He saith,) I will manifest Myself unto him. If then He promises this by way of a reward unto them that love Him, it is manifest that the vision of the Truth, promised to us, is of such a nature, that, when we have seen it, we shall no longer say, My soul is filled with illusions.

12. Ver. 8. I am become feeble, and am bowed down greatly. He who calls to mind the transcendent height of the Sabbath, sees how greatly he is himself bowed down. For he who cannot conceive what is that height of rest, sees not where he is at present. Therefore another Psalm hath said, I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. For his mind being taken up thither, he beheld something sublime; and was not yet entirely there, where what he beheld was; and a kind of flash, as it were, if one may so speak, of the Eternal Light having glanced upon him, when he perceived that he was not yet arrived at this, which he was able after a sort to understand, he saw where he himself was, and how he was cramped and bowed down by human infirmities. And he says, I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. Such is that certain something which I saw in my trance, that thence I perceive how far off I am, who am not already there. He was already there who said that he was caught up into the third Heaven, and there heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for

a man to utter. But he was recalled to us, in order that, as requiring to be made perfect, he might first mourn his infirmity, and afterwards be clothed with might. Yet encouraged for the ministration of his office by having seen somewhat of those things, he goes on saying, I heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Now then what use is it for you to ask, either of me or of any one, the things which it is not lawful for man to utter. If it was not lawful for him to utter them, to whom is it lawful to hear them? Let us however lament and groan in Confession; let us own where we are; let us call the Sabbath to remembrance, and wait with patience for what He has promised, Who hath, in His own Person also, shewed forth an example of patience to us. I am become feeble, and bowed down greatly.

13. I have roared with the groaning of my heart. You observe the servants of God generally interceding with groaning; and the reason of it is asked, and there is nothing apparent, but the groaning of some servant of God, if indeed it does find its way at all to the ears of a person placed near him. For there is a secret groaning, which is not heard by man: yet if the thought of some strong desire has taken so strong hold of the heart, that the wound of the inner man finds expression in some uttered exclamation, the reason of it is asked; and a man says to himself, “Perhaps this is the cause of his groaning;” and, “Perhaps this or that hath befallen him.” Who can determine, but He in Whose Eyes and Ears he groaned? Therefore he says, I roared with the groaning of mine heart; because if men ever hear a man’s groanings, they for the most part hear but the groaning of the flesh; they do not hear him who groans with the groaning of his heart. Some one hath carried off his goods; he roareth, but not with the groaning of his heart: another because he has buried his son, another his wife; another because his vineyard has been injured by a hailstorm; another because his cask has turned sour; another because some one hath stolen his beast; another because he has suffered some loss; another because he fears some man who is his enemy: all these roar with the groaning of the flesh. The servant of God, however, because he roareth from the recollection of the Sabbath, where the Kingdom of God is, which flesh and blood shall not possess, says, I have roared with the groaning of my heart.

14. And who observed and noticed the cause of his groaning?

Ver. 9. All my desire is before Thee. For it is not before men who cannot see the heart, but it is before Thee that all my desire is open! Let your desire be before Him; and the Father, Who seeth in secret, shall reward thee. For it is thy heart's desire that is thy prayer; and if thy desire continues uninterrupted, thy prayer continueth also. For not without a meaning did the Apostle say, Pray without ceasing. Are we to be without ceasing bending the knee, prostrating the body, or lifting up our hands, that he says, Pray without ceasing? Or if it is in this sense that we say that we pray, this, I believe, we cannot do without ceasing. There is another inward kind of prayer without ceasing, which is the desire of the heart. Whatever else you are doing, if you do but long for that Sabbath, you do not cease to pray. If you would never cease to pray, never cease to long after it. The continuance of thy longing is the continuance of thy prayer. You will be ceasing to speak, if you cease to long for it. Who are those who have ceased to speak? They of whom it is said, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. The freezing of charity is the silence of the heart; the burning of charity is the cry of the heart. If love continues still, you are still lifting up your voice; if you are always lifting up your voice, you are always longing after something; if always longing for something absent, you are calling "the Sabbath rest to remembrance." And it is important you should understand too before whom the roaring of thine heart is open. Now then consider what sort of desires those should be, that are before the eyes of God. Should it be the desire for the death of our enemy? a thing which men flatter themselves they lawfully wish for? For sometimes we pray for what we ought not. Let us consider what they flatter themselves they pray for lawfully! For they pray that some person may die, and his inheritance come to them. But let those too, who pray for the death of their enemies, hear the Lord saying, Pray for your enemies. Let them not pray for this, that their enemies may die; but rather pray for this, that they may be reclaimed; then will their enemies be dead; for from the time that they are reclaimed, henceforth they will be enemies no longer. And all my desire is before Thee. What if we suppose that our desire is before Him, and that yet that very groaning is not before Him? How can that be, since our desire itself finds its expression in "groaning?" Therefore follows, And my groaning is not hid from Thee.

From Thee indeed it is not hid; but from many men it is hid. The servant of God sometimes seems to be saying in humility, And my groaning is not hid from Thee. Sometimes also he seems to smile. Is then that longing dead in his heart? If however there is the desire within, there is the groaning also. It does not always find its way to the ears of man; but it never ceases to sound in the ears of God.

15. Ver. 10. My heart is troubled. Wherefore is it troubled? And my courage hath failed me. Generally something comes upon us on a sudden; the heart is troubled; the earth quakes; thunder is sent from Heaven; a formidable attack is made upon us, or a horrible sound heard. Perhaps a lion is seen on the road; the heart is troubled. Perhaps robbers lie in wait for us; the heart is troubled: we are filled with a panic fear; from every quarter something excites anxiety. Wherefore? Because my courage hath failed me. For what would be feared, did that courage still remain unmoved? Whatever bad tidings were brought, whatever threatened us, whatever sound was heard, whatever were to fall, whatever appeared horrible, would inspire no terror. But whence that trouble? My courage faileth me. Wherefore hath my courage failed me? The light of mine eyes also is gone from me. Thus Adam also could not see the light of his eyes. For the 'light of his eyes' was God Himself, Whom when he had offended, he fled to the shade, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise. He shrunk in alarm from the face of God: and sought the shelter of the trees; thenceforth among the trees he had no more the light of his eyes, at which he had been wont to rejoice. If therefore it was so with him as the stock, and with us as the shoots of that stock, and if these members are returning to Him, the last Adam, (because the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit,) and if they cry aloud as in His Body, in the words of this confession, The light of mine eyes is gone from me; if these things be so, is one, now a penitent confessing his sins, is he now redeemed, now a member of Christ's body, and is the light of his eyes not with him? In good truth it is not with him; but yet it is with them so far as they still call to remembrance the Sabbath, as in hope beholding it: but that Light whereof it is said, I will manifest Myself unto him, is not as yet theirs. Something of light there is, in that we are the sons of God; and hold this already by faith; but that light which we shall see, is not yet. For it doth not yet appear what we shall be; we do know, that, when He shall appear,

we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is. For now we have the light of faith, and the light of hope. For as long as we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight. For so long as we hope for that which we see not, we with patience wait for it. These are the words of those who are absent from their home; not yet settled in their country. And he says rightly, and truly too, (and truly, unless he be a hypocrite, does he confess also,) the light of mine eyes also is not with me. These things man suffers within; there, by himself, in himself, and toward himself; from no other person, and in relation with no other person beside himself: all these he hath deserved to be unto himself, to his own punishment; namely, all that he hath enumerated above.

16. But is this all then that man suffers? For he suffers inwardly from himself, outwardly from those among whom he lives: he suffers evils of his own: he is compelled to suffer also evils of others. Whence those two sentences, Cleanse Thou me, O Lord, from my secret faults; and from sins of others spare Thy servant, O Lord. He hath already confessed concerning his own secret faults, from which he desires to be cleansed: let him speak also of those of others, from the effects of which he desires that he may be spared.

Ver. 11. My lovers; why should I henceforth speak of my enemies? My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me. Understand this that he saith, Stood over against me. For if they stood against me, they fell against themselves. My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh and stood over against me. Let us now recognise the words of the Head speaking; now let our Head in His Passion begin to dawn upon us. Yet again when the Head begins to speak, do not sever the Body from it. If the Head would not separate itself from the words of the Body, should the Body dare to sever itself from the sufferings of the Head? Do thou suffer in Christ's suffering: for Christ, as it were, sinned in thy infirmity. For just now He spoke of thy sins, as if speaking in His own Person, and called them His own. For He said from the face of My sins, though they were not His sins. As therefore He willed our sins should be His own, on account of our being His Body, let us also regard His sufferings as our own, on account of His being our Head. For He hath not suffered the enmity of those who

were before friends, and we not suffered it also. Nay rather, let us prepare ourselves against this, to be entertained after the same manner; let us not reject a Cup like His, that by the way of His humility we may arrive at His exaltation. For to those who wished to be near His exaltation, yet thought not of His humility, He answered and said to them, Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Those sufferings of the Lord then are our sufferings also: and were each individual to serve God well, to keep faith truly, to render to each their dues, and to conduct himself honestly among men, I should like to see if he does not suffer even that which Christ here details in the account of His Passion. My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me.

And my neighbours stood afar off. Who were the neighbours that drew nigh, and who were those who stood afar off? The Jews were neighbours because near kinsmen, they drew near even when they crucified Him: the Apostles also were His neighbours; and they also stood afar off, that they might not have to suffer with Him. This may also be understood thus: My friends, that is, those who feigned themselves 'My friends:' for they feigned themselves His friends, when they said, We know that Thou teachest the way of God in truth; when they wished to try Him, whether tribute ought to be paid to Cæsar; when He convinced them out of their own mouth, they wished to seem to be His friends. But He needed not that any should testify of man, for He Himself knew what was in man; so that when they spoke unto Him words of friendship, He answered them, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? My friends and my neighbours then drew near and stood over against me, and my neighbours stood afar off. You understand what I said. I called those neighbours, who drew nigh, and at the same time stood afar off. For they drew nigh in the body, but stood afar off in their heart. Who were in the body so near to Him, as those who lifted Him on the Cross? Who in heart so far off, as those who blasphemed Him? Hear this sort of distance described by the Prophet Isaiah; observe this nearness and distance at one and the same time. This people honours Me with their lips: behold, with their body they draw near; but their heart is far from Me. The same persons are at the same time near and afar off also: with their lips they are near, in heart afar off. However, because the Apostles also stood afar off, through fear, we understand it more simply and properly of them; so that we mean

by it, that some drew near, and others stood afar off; since even Peter, who had followed more boldly than the rest, was still so far off, that being questioned and alarmed, he thrice denied the Lord, with Whom he had promised to “be ready to die.” Who afterwards that, from being afar off, he might be made to draw nigh, heard after the resurrection the question, Lovest thou Me? and said, I love Thee; and by so saying was brought nigh, even as by denying Him, he had become far off; till with the threefold confession of love, he had put away from him his threefold denial. And my neighbours stood afar off.

18. Ver. 12. They also that sought after my soul, were preparing violence against me. It is now plain who “sought after His soul;” viz. those who had not His soul, in that they were not in His Body. They who were seeking after His soul, were far removed from His soul; but they were seeking it to destroy it. For His soul may be sought after in a right way also. For in another passage He finds fault with some persons, saying, There is no man to care for My soul. He finds fault with some for not seeking after His soul; and again, with others for seeking after it. Who is he that seeketh after His soul in the right way? He who imitates His sufferings. Who are they that sought after His soul in the wrong way? Even those who prepared violence against Him; and crucified Him.

19. He goes on; Those who sought after My faults had spoken vanity. What is, sought after My faults? They sought after many things, and found them not. Perhaps He may have meant this; ‘They sought for criminal charges against me.’ For they sought for somewhat to say against Him, and they found not. For they were seeking to find evil things to say of “the Good;” crimes of the Innocent; When would they find such things in Him, Who had no sin? But because they had to seek for sins in Him, Who had no sin, it remained for them to invent that which they could not find. Therefore, those who sought after My faults have spoken vanity, i.e. untruth, and imagined deceit all the day long; that is, they meditated treachery without intermission. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against the Lord, before He suffered. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against Him, even after His resurrection. For those soldiers who watched His sepulchre of whom Isaiah spake, I will appoint the wicked for His

burial, (for they were wicked men, and would not speak the truth, and being bribed they disseminated a lie,) consider what vanity they spake. They also were examined, and they said, While we slept, His disciples came and stole Him away. This it is, to speak vanity. For if they were sleeping, how could they know what had been done?

20. He saith then, (ver. 13.) But I as a deaf man heard not. He Who replied not to what He heard, did, as it were, not hear them. But I as a deaf man heard not. And I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. And he repeats the same things again.

Ver. 14. And I became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. As if He had nothing to say unto them, as if He had nothing wherewith to reproach them. Had He not already reproached them for many things? Had He not said many things, and also said, Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, and many things besides? Yet when He suffered, He said none of these things; not that He had not what to say, but He waited for them to fulfil all things, and that all the prophecies might be fulfilled of Him, of Whom it had been said, And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so openeth He not His mouth. It behoved Him to be silent in His Passion, though not hereafter to be silent in Judgment. For He had come to be judged, then, Who was hereafter coming to judge; and Who was for this reason to come with great power to judge, that He had been judged in great humility.

21. Ver. 15. For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou wilt hear, O Lord, my God. As if it were said to Him, “Wherefore openedst thou not thy mouth? Wherefore didst Thou not say, ‘Refrain?’ Wherefore didst Thou not rebuke the unrighteous, while hanging on the Cross?” He goes on and says, For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear. He warns you what to do, should tribulation haply befall. For you seek to defend yourself, and perhaps your defence is not listened to by any one. Then are you confounded, as if you had lost your cause; because you have none to defend or to bear testimony in your favour. Keep but your innocence within, where no one can pervert thy cause. False-witness has prevailed against you before men. Will it then prevail before God, where your cause has to be pleaded? When God shall be Judge, there shall be no other witness than

your own conscience. In the presence of a just judge, and of your own conscience, fear nothing but your own cause. If you have not a bad cause, you will have no accuser to dread; no false-witness to confute, nor witness to the truth to look for. Do but bring into court a good conscience, that you may say, For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear.

22. Ver. 16. For I said, Let not mine enemies ever rejoice over me. And when my feet slip, they magnify themselves against me. Again He returns to the infirmity of His Body: and again the Head takes heed of Its feet. The Head is not in such a manner in Heaven, as to forsake what It has on earth; He evidently sees and observes us. For sometimes, as is the way of this life, our feet are turned aside, and they slip by falling into some sin; there the tongues of the enemy rise up with the bitterest malignity. From this then we discern what they really had in view, even while they kept silence. Then they speak with an unsparing harshness; rejoicing to have discovered what they ought to have grieved for. And I said, Lest at any time my adversaries should rejoice over me. I said this indeed; and yet it was perhaps for my correction, that Thou hast caused them to magnify themselves against me, when my feet slipped; that is to say, when I stumbled, they were elated, and said many things. For pity, not insult, was due from them to the weak; even as the Apostle speaks; Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness: and he combines the reason why; considering thyself also, lest thou also be tempted. Not such as these were the persons of whom He speaks; And when my feet slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me: but they were such as those of whom He says elsewhere; They that hate me will rejoice if I fall.

23. Ver. 17. For I am prepared for the scourges. Quite a magnificent expression; as if He were saying, "It was even for this that I was born; that I might suffer." For He was not to be born, but from Adam, to whom the scourge is due. But sinners are in this life sometimes not scourged at all, or are scourged less than their deserts: because the wickedness of their heart is given over as already desperate. Those, however, for whom eternal life is prepared, must needs be scourged in this life: for that sentence is true; My son, faint not under the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and

scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Let not mine enemies therefore insult over me; let them not magnify themselves; and if my Father scourgeth me, I am prepared for the scourge; because there is an inheritance in store for me. Thou wilt not submit to the scourge: the inheritance is not bestowed upon thee. For every son must needs be scourged. So true it is that every son is scourged, that He spared not even Him, Who had no sin. For I am prepared for the scourges.

24. And my sorrow is continually before me. What sorrow is that? Perhaps, a sorrow for my scourge. And, in good truth, my brethren, in good truth, let me say unto you, men do mourn for their scourges, not for the causes on account of which they are scourged. Not such was the person here. Listen, my brethren; If any person suffers any loss, he is more ready to say, "I did not deserve to suffer it," than to consider why he suffered it, mourning the loss of money, not mourning over that of righteousness. If thou hast sinned, mourn for the loss of thy inward treasure. Thou hast nothing in thy house, but perhaps thou art still more empty in heart; but if thine heart is full of its Good, even thy God, why dost thou not say, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord was it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Whence then was it that He was grieving? Was it for the scourging wherewith He was scourged? God forbid. And my sorrow (says He) is continually before me. And as if we were to say, "What sorrow? whence comes that sorrow?" he says; (ver. 18.) For I declare mine iniquity; and I will have a care for my sin. See here the reason for the sorrow! It is not a sorrow occasioned by the scourge; not one for the remedy, not for the wound. For the scourge is a remedy against sins. Hear, brethren; We are Christians, and yet if any one's son dies, he mourns for him; but does not mourn for him, if he sins. It is then, when he sees him sinning, that he ought to make mourning for him, to lament over him. It is then he should restrain him, and give him a rule to live by; should impose a discipline upon him: or if he has done so, and the other has not taken heed, then was the time when he ought to have been mourned over; then he was more fatally dead whilst living in luxury, than when, by death, he brought his luxury to its close: at that time, when he was doing such things in thine house, he was not only "dead, but he stank also." These things were worthy to be lamented; the others were such as might well be endured; those, I say, were tolerable;

these worthy to be mourned over. They were to be mourned over in the same way that you have heard this person mourn over them; For I declare mine iniquity. I will have a care for my sin. Be not free from anxiety, when you have confessed your sin, as if always able to confess thy sin, and to commit it again. Do thou declare thine iniquity in such a manner, as to have a care for thy sin. What is meant by having a care of thy sin? To have a care of thy wound. If you were to say, I will have a care of my wound, what would be meant by it, but I will do my endeavour to have it healed. For this is to have a care for one's sin, to be ever struggling, ever endeavouring, ever exerting one's self, earnestly and zealously, to heal one's wound. Behold! thou art from day to day mourning over thy sins; but perhaps, thy tears indeed flow, but thy hands are unemployed. Do alms, redeem thy sins, let the poor rejoice of thy bounty, that thou also mayest rejoice of the Grace of God. He is in want; so art thou in want also: he is in want at thy hands; so art thou also in want at God's hand. Dost thou despise one who needs thy aid; and shall God not despise thee when thou needest His? Do thou therefore supply the needs of him, who is in want of thine aid; that God may supply thy needs within. This is the meaning of, I will have a care for my sin. I will do all that ought to be done, to blot out and to heal my sin. And I will have a care for my sin.

25. Ver. 19. But mine enemies live. They are well off: they rejoice in worldly prosperity, while I am suffering, and roaring with the groaning of my heart. In what way do His enemies live, in that He hath said of them already, that they have spoken vanity? Hear in another Psalm also; Whose sons are as young plants; firmly rooted. But above He had said, Whose mouth speaketh vanity. Their daughters polished after the similitude of a temple: their garners full bursting forth more and more; their cattle fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their streets; no hedge falling into ruin; no cry in their streets. Mine enemies then live. This is their life; this life they praise; this they set their hearts upon: this they hold fast to their own ruin. For what follows? They pronounce the people that is in such a case blessed. But what sayest thou, who 'hast a care for thy sin?' What sayest thou, who confessest thine iniquity? He says, Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.

But mine enemies live, and are strengthened against me, and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. What is hate me wrongfully? They hate me, who wish their good, whereas were they simply requiting evil for evil, they would not be righteous; were they not to requite with good the good done to them, they would be ungrateful: they, however, who hate wrongfully, actually return evil for good. Such were the Jews; Christ came unto them with good things; they requited Him evil for good. Beware, brethren, of this evil; it soon steals upon us. Let no one of you think himself to be far removed from the danger, because we said, "Such were the Jews." Should a brother, wishing your good, rebuke you, and you hate him, you are like them. And observe, how easily, how soon it is produced; and avoid an evil so great, a sin so easily committed.

26. Ver. 20. They also that render evil for good, were speaking evil of me, because I have pursued the thing that is just. Therefore was it that I was requited evil for good. What is meant by pursued after the thing that is just. Not forsaken it. That you might not always understand persecutio in a bad sense, He means by persecutus, pursued after, thoroughly followed. Because I have followed the thing that is just. Hear also our Head crying with a lamentable voice in His Passion; And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination. Was it not enough that He was dead? wherefore in abomination also? Because He was crucified. For this death of the Cross was a great abomination in their eyes, as they did not perceive that it was spoken in prophecy, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. For He did not Himself bring death; but He found it here, propagated from the curse of the first man; and this same death of ours, which had originated in sin, He had taken upon Himself, and hung on the Tree. Lest therefore some persons should think, (as some of the Heretics think,) that our Lord Jesus Christ had only a false body of flesh; and that the death by which He made satisfaction on the Cross was not a real death, the Prophet notices this, and says, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. He shews then that the Son of God died a true death, the death which was due to mortal flesh: lest if He were not accursed, you should think that He had not truly died. But since that death was not an illusion, but had descended from that original stock, which had been derived from the curse, when He said, Ye shall surely die: and since a true death assuredly extended

even to Him, that a true life might extend itself to us, the curse of death also did extend to Him, that the blessing of life might extend even unto us. And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination.

27. Ver. 21. Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, depart not from me. Let us speak in Him, let us speak through Him, (for He Himself intercedeth for us,) and let us say, Forsake me not, O Lord my God. And yet He had said, My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me? and He now says, O My God, depart not from Me? If He does not forsake the body, did He forsake the Head? Whose words then are these but the First Man's? To shew then that He carried about Him a true body of flesh derived from him, He says, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? God had not forsaken Him. If He does not forsake Thee, who believest in Him, could the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One God, forsake Christ? But He had transferred to Himself the person of the First Man. We know by the words of an Apostle, that our old man is crucified with Him. We should not, however, be divested of our old nature, had He not been crucified in weakness. For it was to this end that He came, that we may be renewed in Him, because it is by aspiration after Him, and by following the example of His suffering, that we are renewed. Therefore that was the cry of infirmity; that cry, I mean, in which it was said, Why hast Thou forsaken Me? Thence was it said in that passage above, the words of mine offences. As if He were saying, These words are transferred to My Person from that of the sinner.

28. Ver. 22. Depart not from me. Make haste to help me, Lord of my salvation. This is that very salvation, Brethren, concerning which, as the Apostle Peter saith, Prophets have enquired diligently, and though they have enquired diligently, yet have not found it. But they searched into it, and foretold of it; while we have come and have found what they sought for. And see, we ourselves too have not as yet received it; and after us shall others also be born, and shall find, what they also shall not receive, and shall pass away, that we may, all of us together, receive the penny of salvation in the end of the day, with the Prophets, the Patriarchs, and the Apostles. For you know that the hired servants, or labourers, were taken into the vineyard at different times; yet did they all receive their wages on an equal footing. Apostles, then, and Prophets, and Martyrs, and ourselves

also, and those who will follow us to the end of the world, it is in the End itself that we are to receive everlasting salvation; that beholding the face of God, and contemplating His Glory, we may praise Him for ever, free from imperfection, free from any punishment of iniquity, free from every perversion of sin: praising Him; and no longer longing after Him, but now clinging to Him for Whom we used to long to the very end, and in Whom we did rejoice, in hope. For we shall be in that City, where God is our Bliss, God is our Light, God is our Bread, God is our Life; whatever good thing of ours there is, at being absent from which we now grieve, we shall find in Him. In Him will be that rest, which when we call to remembrance now, we cannot choose but grieve. For that is the Sabbath which we call to remembrance; in the recollection of which, so great things have been said already; and so great things ought to be said by us also, and ought never to cease being said by us, not with our lips indeed, but in our heart: for therefore do our lips cease to speak, that we may cry out with our hearts.

PSALM 39

The title of this Psalm, which we have just chanted and proposed to discuss, is, On the end, for Idithun, a Psalm for David himself. Here then we must look for, and must attend to, the words of a certain person who is called Idithun; and if each one of ourselves may be Idithun, in that which he sings he recognises himself, and hears himself speak. For thou mayest see who was called Idithun, according to the ancient descent of man; let us, however, understand what this name is translated, and seek to comprehend the Truth in the translation of the word. According therefore to what we have been able to discover by enquiry in those names which have been translated from the Hebrew tongue into the Latin, by those who study the sacred writings, Idithun being translated is, over-leaping them. Who then is this person over-leaping them? or who those whom he hath over-leaped? Because it is not simply over-leaping, but over-leaping them. Is it because he overleaps that he sings? Or is it by singing that he over-leapeth? Whether it is that he sings because he is leaping beyond, or that it is by singing that he leaps beyond, nevertheless it is the song of one leaping beyond, that we have just been singing. Whether we ourselves are persons leaping beyond, God, to Whom we were singing it, knoweth. But if any one who is already leaping beyond hath sung it, let him rejoice that he is the thing of which he has sung; if any one has sung it, who is still clinging to earth, let him wish to be that of which he has been singing. For there are some persons, yet clinging to the earth, yet bowed down to the ground, yet setting their hearts on what is below, yet placing their hopes in things that pass away, whom he who is called over-leaping them hath over-leaped. For whom hath he over-leaped, but those who remained behind?

2. You know that some of the Psalms are entitled, Songs of Degrees; and in the Greek it is obvious enough what the word ἀναβαθμῶν means. For ἀναβαθμοὶ are degrees (or steps) of them that ascend, not of them that

descend. The Latin, not being able to express it strictly, expresses it by the general term; and in that it called them steps, left it undetermined, whether they were steps of persons ascending or descending. But because there is no speech or language where their voices are not heard among them, the earlier language explains the one which comes after it: and what was ambiguous in one is made certain in another. Just then as there the singer is some one who is ascending, so here is it some one who is over-leaping. But both that ascent and this leaping is effected not by the feet, not by the help of ladders, not by wings: and yet, if you mean the inner man, at once by the feet, by ladders, and by wings. For if it be not by the feet, why does the inward man say, O let not the foot of pride come unto me? If not by ladders, what mean those which Jacob saw, where Angels were ascending and descending? If not with wings, what becomes of him who saith, Who shall give me wings like a dove? then will I fly away and be at rest. But in bodily things, the feet, the wings, ladders, are different things. Within, the feet, the ladders, and the wings, are the affections of a good will. With these let us walk; with these let us ascend; with these let us fly. When therefore every one hears of this man leaping beyond, and would fain imitate him, let him not study by the lightness of his body to leap over ditches, or to clear any rather high places by a leap. But I am speaking of what relates to the body; for there are ditches which he also leaps over. The things are burned with fire, and dug up, that shall perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance. What things are those that are burned, and dug up, which shall perish at the rebuke of the Lord, except sins? The things burnt with fire, are the effects which desire, inflamed unlawfully, produceth; the things dug up, are the effects of fear, unreasonably dejected. For from hence do all sins arise; either from desire or from fear. Let such an one then overleap all things by which he might be detained on earth; let him rear his ladders; let him spread forth his wings; let him observe whether any one recognises himself in this picture. Yes verily, in the grace of our Lord, many do recognise themselves here; who haply now holding the world in no account, as well as all that delights us in the world, make their choice to live righteously, as long as they live here, in certain spiritual delights. And whence are these derived, as long as we are walking upon earth, except from the Divine Oracles, from God's Word, from the search and investigation of some Parable in Scripture, from the delight which belongs to discovery, preceded by the labour of enquiry?

There are in books some pleasures that are holy and good. For there are none such in gold and silver, in banquets and in luxury, in hunting and fishing, in diversion and in jest, in the vanities of the theatres, in the pursuit and endeavour after ruinous honours. For indeed it is not so that in all these there are true joys, and none in these books. Rather then let the soul that leaps beyond all these things below, and takes delight in these that we describe, say with confidence, because it says with truth too, The unjust have told me of pleasures, but not such as Thy law. Let this Idithun come still to us, let him overleap those whose delight is in things below, and take delight in these things, and let him rejoice in the Word of the Lord; in the delight of the law of the Most High. But what shall we say? Is he even from this point to leap over to another? Or is it up to this point that he who desires to overleap, is able to advance by leaping beyond? Let us choose rather to listen to his own words: for to me it appears, that this person who leaps beyond them, was already living in the oracles of God, and there learnt that which we are going to hear.

3. Ver. 1. I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Believe that whilst engaged in his work, in reading, commenting, preaching, admonishing, rebuking, and exhorting, whilst he was tried by certain difficulties incident to man, himself a man, and living among men, though already leaping beyond those who take no delight in these things, (inasmuch as it is difficult for a man not to slip with his tongue, and he who hath not offended in word, as it is written, the same is a perfect man;) he had perhaps said some things requiring to be repented of, and there had fallen from his lips things that he wished, but was not able, to recal. For it is not without reason that the tongue is set in a moist place, but because it is so prone to slip. Perceiving therefore how hard it was for a man to be under the necessity of speaking, and not to say something that he will wish unsaid, and filled with disgust at these sins, he seeks to avoid the like. To this difficulty is he exposed who is seeking to leap beyond. Let no one pronounce judgment on my words, who is himself not yet endeavouring to leap beyond. Let him leap over, and prove the truth of what I say: for then he will be a witness to the truth, as well as a son of the Truth. When this had happened to him then, he had resolved not to speak, lest he should say any thing that he would be sorry for having said. This is intimated by his first

words; I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Keep then thy ways, Idithun, and do not sin with thy tongue; examine thoroughly, weigh well, what thou art about to say; refer to thy inward apprehension of the truth, and then put it forth before the hearer without. Thou searchest for these things often in the turmoil of business, when the attention is taken up, whilst the infirmity of a soul, pressed down by the corruptible body, longs both to hear and to say something, to take something in at the ear, and to give something forth through the lips, and thus (being on some occasions thrown off of its balance, by its desire of speaking) makes some slip through carelessness in taking heed to what it says, and under these circumstances says something, that perhaps ought not to have been said. Against these evils silence is a better remedy. For a sinner, of some one peculiar description, a proud or envious man is standing by, he hears the man who is leaping beyond speak; he catches at his words, he lays snares in his way: it will go hard but that he will find something said, in a way that it should not have been said; nor does he on hearing it make allowance for him, but through spite cavils at it. To guard against such persons, this Idithun had thought it better to be silent; whence he sung thus, I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. How long am I to be ensnared by the spiteful, or to have snares laid for me, even if I be not taken in them? I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Although I have leaped beyond the pleasures of earth, although the fleeting passions for things temporal ensnare me not, though now I despise these things below, and am rising up to better things than these, yet in these very better things the satisfaction of knowledge in the sight of God is enough for me. Of what use is it for me to speak what is to be laid hold of, and to give a handle to cavillers? Therefore, I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue.

I keep my mouth with a bridle. Wherefore is this? Is it on account of the religious, the thoughtful, the faithful, the holy ones? God forbid! These persons hear in such a manner, as to praise what they approve; but as for what they disapprove, perhaps, among much that they praise they rather excuse than cavil at it; on account of what persons then dost thou take heed to thy ways, and place a guard on thy lips that thou mayest not sin with thy tongue? Hear: it is,

While the wicked standeth over against me. It is not 'by me' that he takes up his station, but against me. Why? what could I say at all, whereby I could satisfy them? I speak of spiritual things to one who is carnal, to one who has ears and eyes for outward things, but is inwardly blind and deaf. For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. Now were he not proved to be a natural man, when would he cavil? Happy is he who speaketh a word to an ear that taketh heed; not to the ear of a sinner that taketh his stand against him. For there were many such standing around Him, and gnashing their teeth at Him, when He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened not His mouth. For what would you say to men swollen with pride, agitated by passion, prone to cavil, litigious, and full of words. What would you say to them, that is holy and pious, and that in the matter of religion overleaps them, when even to those who heard with willingness, who were eager to learn, who were yearning for the food of truth, and who received it with eagerness, even the Lord Himself says, I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And the Apostle, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Yet not as to persons to be despaired of, but as to those who still required to be nourished. For he goes on to say, As babes in Christ, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able. Well, tell it unto us even now. Neither yet now are ye able. Be not therefore impatient to hear that which as yet thou art not capable of; but grow that thou mayest be able to bear it. It is thus we address the little one, who yet requires to be fed with kindly milk in the bosom of Mother Church, and to be rendered meet for the strong meat of the Lord's Table. But what can I say even of that kind to the sinner, who taketh his stand against me, who either thinks or pretends himself capable of what he cannot bear; so that when I say any thing unto him, and he has failed to comprehend it, he should not suppose that it was not he that had failed to comprehend, but I who had broken down. Therefore because of this sinner, who taketh up his stand against me, I keep my mouth as it were with a bridle.

4. Ver. 2. I became deaf, and was humbled, I held my peace from good. For this person, who is leaping beyond, suffers some difficulty in a certain stage to which he hath already attained; and he desires to advance beyond, even

from thence, to avoid this difficulty. I was afraid of committing a sin; so that I spoke not; that I imposed on myself the necessity of silence: for I had spoken thus, I will take heed to my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue. Whilst I was too much afraid of saying any thing wrong, I kept silence from all that is good. I became deaf, and was humbled, and I kept silence even from good. For whence could I say good things, except that I heard them? It is Thou that shalt make me to hear of joy and gladness. And the friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom's voice, not his own. That he may speak true things, he hears what he is to say. For it is he that speaketh a lie, that speaketh of his own. Therefore something sad and annoying has befallen him; and by his confession, he warns us that what has befallen him, should not be imitated, but guarded against. For being, as I said, too much afraid of saying something that was not good, he made up his mind to say nothing, not even what was good: and as he resolved to be silent, so he began not to hear. For if you are a person leaping beyond, you stand waiting to hear something from God, to say unto men; if you are one leaping beyond, you go to and fro between God Who is rich, and the needy who is craving for something to hear; that you may hear on the one side, and deliver it on the other. If you make your choice not to speak on this side, you will not deserve to hear any thing on the other; you yourself despise the poor; you will yourself be despised by Him to Whom riches belong. Did you forget that you were the servant, whom the Lord hath set over His Household, to give their meat to his fellow-servants? Wherefore then are you anxious to receive, what you are slow to expend? Since then you would not say that which you had received, you are justly hindered from receiving what you wished to receive. For something you yourself were wishing for: something you possessed already; impart what you possess, that you may deserve to receive what you do not possess. When therefore I had put a bridle, as it were, on my lips; and constrained myself to silence, because I saw that every where speech was dangerous, then, says he, that came to pass upon me, which I did not wish, I became deaf, and was humbled; not humbled myself, but was humbled; and I held my peace even from good. Whilst afraid of saying any evil, I began to refrain from speaking what is good: and I condemned my determination; for I was holding my peace even from what is good.

Ver. 2. And my sorrow was stirred up again. Inasmuch as I had found in silence a kind of respite from a certain sorrow, that had been inflicted upon me by those who cavilled at my words, and found fault with me: and that sorrow that was caused by the cavillers, had ceased indeed; but when I held my peace even from good, my sorrow was stirred up again. I began to be more grieved at having refrained from saying what I ought to have said, than I had before been grieved by having said what I ought not. And my sorrow was stirred up again.

5. Ver. 3. And while I was musing, the fire burned. My heart began to be discomfited. I saw men insensate; and I was consumed with grief; I did not rebuke them; and whilst I was thus silent, the zeal of Thine house was eating me up. For I reflected on the words of my Lord, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put My money to the exchangers, and I at My coming should receive it again with usury. And that which follows may God avert from those who are His stewards! Bind him hand and foot, and let him be cast into outer darkness; the servant, who was not a waster of his master's goods, so as to destroy them, but was slothful in laying them out to improve them. What ought they to expect, who have wasted them in luxury, if they are condemned, who through slothfulness have kept them? As I was musing, the fire burned. And as he was in this state of wavering suspense, between speaking and holding his peace, between those who are prepared to cavil, and those who are anxious to be instructed, between those that "abound," and those that "are in need;" having become a reproach to those who abounded, and an object of contempt to the proud; having regard to the blessedness of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; being in difficulty and in trouble in whichever alternative he adopts, being in danger of casting pearls before swine, and in danger of not bestowing their meat on his fellow-servants, in this state of suspense, he prays for a better place, a place different from this his present stewardship, in which man is in such difficulty and in such danger, and sighing after a certain "end," when he was not to be subject to these things, when the Lord is to say to the faithful dispenser, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, he says,

Then spake I with my tongue. In this fluctuation, in the midst of these dangers, and these difficulties, because, that in consequence of the abundance of offences the love of many is waxing cold, although the law of the Lord inspires delight, in this fluctuation then, (I say,) then spake I with my tongue. To whom? not to the hearer whom I would fain instruct; but to Him Who heareth and taketh heed also, by Whom I would fain be instructed myself. I spake with my tongue to Him, from Whom I inwardly hear, whatever I hear that is good, or true.—What saidst thou?

Ver. 4. Lord, make me to know mine end. For some things I have passed by already; and I have arrived at a certain point, and that to which I have arrived is better than that from which I have advanced to this; but yet there remains a point, which has to be left behind. For we are not to remain here, where there are trials, offences, where we have to bear with persons, who listen to us and cavil at us. Make me to know mine end; the end, from which I am still removed, not the course which is already before me.

6. The end he speaks of, is that which the Apostle fixed his eye upon, in his course; and made confession of his own infirmity, perceiving in himself a different state of things from that which he looked for elsewhere. For he says, Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. And that you might not say, “If the Apostle hath not apprehended, have I apprehended? If the Apostle is not perfect, am I perfect?” Observe what he is doing; attend to what he is saying. What art thou doing then, O Apostle? Hast thou not yet apprehended? Art thou not yet perfect? What art thou doing? What action is that, to which thou exhortest me? What is it you propose for me to follow and to imitate? But this one thing, saith he, I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press forward towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is by way of pressing forward towards it; not as yet by arriving at it; not as having as yet apprehended. Let us not relapse to the point from which we have already made a start; nor remain stationary in the place to which we have already arrived. Let us run; let us stretch forward; we are already on the way; be not so confident in consequence of what you have passed by already, as anxious for what you have not as yet attained to. Forgetting what

is behind, he says, reaching forward to what is before, I press forward for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. For He is Himself the End. But this one thing. This is that one thing, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. One thing, which is in another Psalm also called one petition. One (petition) have I desired of the Lord, which I will require. (Forgetting what is behind, reaching forward to what is before.) One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. And wherefore? to behold the joy of the Lord. For there I shall have a companion to rejoice in; I shall not have an adversary to fear: for there I shall have a friend to share with me in that contemplation, not an enemy to catch at my words. It is this which Idithun would fain have known to him, whilst here; that he might know what was yet wanting to him; and not rejoice so much in what he had at present attained to, as long after what he had not attained to yet; and having passed through some stages, should not linger on the road, but be borne along by fervent desire to things above, till he who had left some things behind, should leave all behind, and from the sprinkling of the rain-drops of the Lord, that come from the clouds of Scripture, he should come (like the hart) to the very Well of Life, and in that light should see light, and in the presence of God should be hid from the provoking of men; where he might say, 'It is well, I wish for nothing farther. Here I love every one, I fear no one.' A right desire, a holy desire! Ye who have this already, rejoice with us, and pray that we may persevere and hold it to the end; and may not fall away in the midst of the causes of offence. For this same blessing we ourselves ask for you. For we are not worthy to pray for you, and you too are unworthy to pray for us. The Apostle indeed commended himself to the prayers of his hearers, to whom he was preaching the Word of God. Pray ye therefore for us, brethren; that we may both see clearly what it is requisite we should see; and say well what it is requisite we should say. This affection, however, I well know is to be found but in few persons: nor do those persons understand me thoroughly, who have not tasted that of which I speak. We however speak to all; both to those who have such an affection, and to those who have not; to those who have, that they may sigh with us for those things; to those who have not, that they may shake off their lethargy; that they may rise above things below; that they may arrive at the delights of the law of the Lord; and may not linger behind in the pleasures

of the wicked. For many persons talk of many things; and many persons praise many things; the unrighteous commend unrighteous things. And in fact those unrighteous things have a pleasure, but not such as thy law, O Lord. Let those therefore join us in saying these things, who believe that we say them also. For this matter is one that is within you: no words can set it forth; but let him whose heart is set on this believe that others also are engaged in it: not that he alone has received what is God's. In this case then let Idithun say, Lord, let me know mine end.

7. And the number of my days, what it is. I ask of the number of my days, what it is. I can speak of number without number, and understand "number without number," in the same sense, as 'years without years' may be spoken of. For where there are years, there is a sort of number at all events, also. But yet, Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Make me to know the number of my days; but to know what it is. What then? that number in which thou art, think you that it "is" not? Assuredly, if I weigh the matter well, it has no being; if I linger behind, it has a sort of being; if I rise above it, it has none. If, shaking off the trammels of these things, I contemplate things above, if I compare things that pass away with those that endure, I see what has a true being, and what rather seems to be, than really is. Should I say that these days of mine "are;" and shall I rashly apply this word so full of meaning to this course of things passing away? To such a degree have I my own self almost ceased to be, failing as I am in my weakness, that He escaped from my memory, Who said, I AM HE THAT IS. Hath then any number of days any existence? In truth it hath, and it is "number without end." But in the case of these days I would say that some part of them existed, if I can keep hold of that day of which you ask me; do you, yourself, in order that you may ask me, keep hold the day about which you ask! Dost thou retain this present day? If you retained yesterday, you retain possession of to-day also. But you say, "yesterday I do not retain in my possession, because it "is" no longer; this one, however, which now is, and which is by me, I do still retain. Has it so escaped thee, how much of this has now past since the break of day? Did not this day begin with the first hour? Give me its first hour! Give me its second also, for perhaps that also has past away. "I will give you its third hour," you say, (for in that hour we are perhaps at this present time.) "These days therefore certainly do

exist.” And is the third hour a day? And in giving me the third hour, thou wilt be giving me not a day, but an hour. Even this however I do not concede to you, if you have in any way left them behind. Give me even the third hour, that in which you are at present; for if any part of it has already past, and any part is as yet remaining, you can neither give me what has already past, because it is no longer in being; nor that which is as yet to come, because not yet in being. Of this very hour which is now passing, what will you give me, to which you will venture to apply the word, it is? When you say the very word ‘est,’ (it is,) it is but one syllable, but one single motion, and the syllable has but three letters; in the very sounding of the word, you do not arrive at the second letter of the word, unless the first is finished. The third letter will not sound, except when the second also shall have past. Of this single syllable what will you give me? And can you retain the days, who cannot retain a syllable? Every thing is swept on by a series of moments, fleeting by, one after the other; there is a torrent of existences ever flowing on and on; a torrent, of which He drank in the way, Who hath now lift up His Head. These days then have no true being; they are gone almost before they arrive; and when they are come, they cannot continue; they press upon one another, they follow the one the other, and cannot check themselves in their course. Of the past nothing is called back again; what is yet to be, is expected as something to pass away again: it is not as yet possessed, whilst as yet it is not arrived; it can not be kept when once it has arrived. He asks then concerning the number of his days, which is; not that which is not: and (which confounds me by a still greater and more perplexing difficulty) at once is, and is not. We can neither say that that is, which does not continue; nor that it is not, when it has come and is passing. It is that absolute ‘IS,’ that true ‘IS,’ that ‘IS,’ in the true sense of the word, that I long for; that ‘IS;’ which is in that Jerusalem which is the Bride of my Lord; where there will not be death, there will not be failing; there will be a day, that passeth not away, but continueth: which has neither a yesterday to precede it, nor a to-morrow pressing close upon it. This number of my days, which is, this, (I say,) make Thou me to know.

8. That I may know what is wanting to me. For while I am struggling here, this is wanting unto me: and so long as it is wanting unto me, I do not call myself perfect. So long as I have not received it, I say, not that I have

already attained, either am already perfect; but I am pressing towards the prize of God's high calling. This let me receive as the prize of my running the race! There will be a certain resting-place, to terminate my course; and in that resting-place there will be a Country, and no pilgrimage, no dissension, no temptation. Make me then to know this number of my days, which is, that I may know what is wanting unto me; because I am not there yet; lest I should be made proud of what I already am, that I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness. For, when in comparison with that which truly is, considering those things which so "are not," and seeing that there is more wanting to me than already present with me, I shall be rather humbled by what is wanting to me than puffed up by what I already possess. For they who consider themselves to possess any thing while they live here, by indulging in pride fail to receive what is wanting to them; because they think what they already possess to be something great. For if a man think himself to be any thing, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. Yet do they not make themselves great thereby. For that which is swollen and puffed up counterfeits bulk indeed, but hath no soundness.

9. By this time then this man, who is leaping beyond, performing a certain secret act within his heart, which is not known except to him, who does likewise, attaining now what he asked, in that "his end" has been made known to him, in that he has been made to know the number of his days, not the number which is passing away, but 'that which is,' he turns his thoughts to these things which he has left behind, and hath compared them with the knowledge he before had. And just as if you were to say to him, "Wherefore did you long for the number of your days that really is? for what say you of these present days?" Looking at them from that height, he speaks these words.

Ver. 5. Behold, thou hast made my days old. For these days are waxing old. I long for new days that never shall wax old, that I may say, Old things have passed away; behold, things are become new. Already new in hope; then in reality. For though, in hope and in faith, made new already, how much do we even now do after our old nature! For we are not so completely clothed upon with Christ, as not to bear about with us any thing derived from Adam. Observe that Adam is waxing old within us, and Christ is being

renewed in us. Though our outward man is perishing, yet is our inward man being renewed day by day. Therefore, while we fix our thoughts on sin, on mortality, on time, that is hastening by, on sorrow, and toil, and labour, on stages of life following each other in succession, and continuing not, passing on insensibly from infancy even to old age; whilst, I say, we fix our eyes on these things, let us see here the old man, the day that is waxing old; the Song that is out of date; the Old Testament; when however we turn to the inner man, to those things that are to be renewed in place of these which are to be changed, let us find the new man, the new day, the new song, the New Testament; and that newness, let us so love, as to have no fears of its waxing old. Now, however, we are on our course passing from old things to new; the very transition is now taking place, in which outward things are decaying; and those within are being renewed, till this outward part, which is consuming away, shall pay the debt to nature; shall have arrived at death; be itself too renewed in the resurrection. Then shall all things that yet remain unrenewed, which in hope are renewed already, be made new in deed, in reality also. You are therefore effecting something even now, whilst you are putting off old things, whilst you are hasting forward to those which are new. This man, therefore, who is hasting forward to those things which are new, and reaching forward to those things which are before, says, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the number of my days, which really is, that I may know what is wanting unto me. See he still drags with him Adam; and even so he is hasting unto Christ. Behold, saith he, thou hast made my days old. It is those days that are derived from Adam, those days, I say, that thou hast made old. They are waxing old day by day: and so waxing old, as to be at some day or other consumed also.

And my substance is as nothing before Thee. Before Thee, O Lord, my substance is as nothing. Before Thee; Who seest this; and I too, when I see it, see it only when before Thee. When “before men” I see it not. For what shall I say? What words shall I use to shew, that that which I now am is nothing in comparison of That which truly IS? But it is within that it is said; it is within that it is felt, so far as it is felt. Before Thee, O Lord, where Thine eyes are; and not where the eyes of men are. And where Thine eyes are, what is the state of things; That which I am is as nothing.

10. But, verily, every man living is altogether vanity. But, verily. For what was he saying above? Behold, I have already leaped beyond all mortal things, and despised things below, have trampled under foot the things of earth, have soared upwards to the delights of the law of the Lord, I have been afloat in the dispensation of the Lord, have yearned for that End which Itself is to know no end, have yearned for the number of my days that truly is, because the number of days like these hath no real being. Behold, I am already such a one as this; I have already overleaped so much; I am longing for those things which abide. But verily, in the state in which I am here, so long as I am here, so long as I am in this world, so long as I bear mortal flesh, so long as the life of man on earth is a trial, so long as I sigh among causes of offence, as long as while I stand I am in fear lest I fall, as long as both my good and my ill hangs in uncertainty, every man living is altogether vanity. "Every man," I say; both he who clings to the world, and he who is leaping beyond it: even Idithun himself comes under the description of altogether vanity up to this present time; for that all is vanity, and vanity of vanities. What profit hath a man of all his labour, which he taketh under the sun? What then? Is Idithun too still under the sun? He hath something under the sun: he hath also something beyond it. He hath under the sun, to wake, to sleep, to eat, to drink, to hunger, and to thirst; to be vigorous, to be weary; to grow up to boyhood, to youth, to old age; to have all the objects of his hopes and his fears uncertain. All these things even Idithun, even the very man who is leaping beyond them, hath beneath the sun. How is it then he is leaping beyond them? It is from that longing of his, Lord, make me to know mine end. For this [object of his] longing is beyond the sun; it is not under the sun. All that is under the sun, are visible things; whatever is not visible is not under the sun. Faith is not visible, hope is not visible, charity is not visible, kindness is not visible; lastly, that fear which is clean, and endureth for ever, is not visible. Idithun placing his delight and comfort in all these, and conversing with them beyond the sun, because his conversation is in heaven, groans on account of those things, which he hath still under the sun; and contemns and is disgusted with these things; while he burns for those things, which he is now longing to arrive at. He hath spoken of those already, let him now speak of these also. You have heard what ought to be desired; hear now what ought to be despised. But, verily, every man living is altogether vanity.

11. Ver. 6. Albeit man walketh in the Image. In what Image, save that of Him, Who said, Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness. Albeit man walks in the Image. For the reason he says albeit, is, that this is some great thing. And this albeit is followed by nevertheless, that the albeit which you have already heard, should relate to what is beyond the sun; but this nevertheless, which is to follow, to what is under the sun, and that the one should relate to the Truth, the other to vanity. Albeit, then, that man walketh in the Image, nevertheless he is disquieted in vain. Hear the cause of his disquieting, and see if it be not a vain one; that thou mayest trample it under foot, that thou mayest leap beyond it, and mayest dwell on high, where that vanity is not. What vanity is that?

He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not for whom he may be gathering them together. O infatuated vanity! Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities, nor lying deceits. To you indeed, O covetous man, to you I seem to be out of my senses, these words appear to you to be “old wives’ tales.” For you, a man of great judgment, and of great prudence, to be sure, are daily devising methods of acquiring money, by traffic, by agriculture, by eloquence perhaps, by making yourself learned in the law, by warfare, perhaps you even add that of usury. Like a shrewd man as you are, you leave nothing untried, whereby you may pile coin on coin; and may store it up more carefully in a place of secrecy. You plunder others; you guard against the plunderer; you are afraid lest you should yourself suffer the wrong, that you yourself do; and even what you do suffer, does not correct you. But indeed you do not suffer it; for you are a man of prudence; you take good care of it; you do not only understand well how to raise it; you have a place in which to deposit it; a person to whose care to commit it, by which means nothing is lost of what you have gathered together. I will question your own heart, I would discuss the prudence of your conduct! See, you have gathered together; you have taken such care of them, that you cannot lose any part of what you have stored up: tell me now, for whom are you keeping them. I am not arguing with you, I am not dwelling upon, I am not exaggerating whatever else of evil there is in that covetousness of our vanity. This is the one thing I put before you, that I would question you upon, which the occasion of the reading of this present Psalm suggests to me. We will suppose you are gathering together, are

heaping up riches; I do not say, beware lest whilst thou art gathering up, thou shouldest thyself be gathered up. I do not say, beware lest when thou wouldest seize prey, thou shouldest thyself be a prey; this I will express more clearly; for perhaps, blinded by avarice, thou hast not understood, lest haply then, I say, while you would yourself be preying on the weaker, you become yourself the prey of the greater. For you do not observe that you are in a sea; you do not see that the smaller fishes are devoured by the larger. I speak not of these things; I am not speaking of the difficulties and the dangers involved in the mere acquisition of wealth; how much they endure, who are heaping it up: to what a degree they are in danger in every situation; how they almost see death in every place, all this I pass by. We will suppose that you heap up riches without opposition from any one; that you keep them without any one robbing you of them. Examine your own heart, and that prudence of yours, which leads you to deride me, to think me out of my senses for saying these things: and tell me now, “You are heaping up treasures; for whom are you gathering them together?” I see what you would tell me; as if what you would say had not occurred to the person described here; you will say, I am keeping them for my children? This is the voice of parental affection; the excuse of injustice. “I am keeping them” (you say) “for my children.” So then you are keeping them for your children, are you? Did not Idithun then know this? Assuredly he did; but he reckoned it one of the things of the old days, that have waxed old, and therefore he despised it: because he was hastening on to the new days.

12. For, look, I proceed to examine the case of you and your children. You are yourself to pass away, and are keeping them for those who are to pass away also; nay rather, you are yourself passing away already, and are keeping them for those who are themselves passing away also. For when I spoke of you thus, as one “about to pass away,” I spoke of you as if you had some permanence now. During this very day, from the time that we began speaking, up to this very moment, do you perceive that we have been growing old? For you do not see even the growth of the hair of your head; and at this moment, while you are standing, while you are here, while you are employed on something or other, while you are speaking, your hairs are growing on your head; for they have not grown all in a moment to such a length, that you require a barber. Time therefore goes on hasting by, both in

the case of those who consider, and in the case of those who think not of it, and who are unwisely employed on something else. You are passing away, and are keeping it for your son who is also passing away. I ask you, first of all, this question; “Do you know that he for whom you are keeping them will possess them; or if he is not yet born, do you know that he ever will be born? You are keeping it for sons, of whom it is uncertain whether they will be born, or whether they will come into possession; and you do not lay up your treasure where it ought to be laid up. For your Lord would not give such advice as this to His servant, that he should lose his own property. You are the servant of a certain great Householder, having much that is your own. That which thou lovest and possessest, He Himself bestowed upon thee; and He would not have thee lose what He hath given thee, seeing He would give Himself unto thee also. But even this too, which He hath given thee but for a time, He would not have thee lose. There is a great deal of it; it overflows, it exceeds the limits of thy wants. Surely now the superfluity may be retrenched. I would not have thee lose even this, saith the Lord. And what am I to do? Remove; the place where you have placed it is not a place of security. Surely you wish to comply with the dictates of covetousness. Look now whether my counsel does not chime in with the dictates of covetousness itself. For you wish to have what you have, and not to lose it; I am shewing you where to deposit it. Lay not up treasures on earth; not knowing for whom you are gathering them together: and afterwards, how he who will have and possess them hereafter, will expend them. Perhaps, while he possesses them, he will be himself possessed: and will not keep that which he shall have from you. Perhaps while you are keeping it for him, you will lose it before he comes. I am offering advice to your covetousness. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven. If you wished to keep riches here on earth, you would seek for a store-house; perhaps you would not trust it to your own house, because of your domestics; you would deposit it in the street of the Bankers. For there accidents can hardly happen; there the thief does not easily find an entrance; every thing is well taken care of. Why do you think of that plan, except that you have no better place in which to keep it? What if I give you a better place? say to you, ‘Do not trust it to the person, who is not a sufficiently sponisible one. But there is One Who is sufficiently sponsible; entrust it to Him; He hath great store-houses; where riches cannot be lost. He is great and rich beyond all rich

men.' Now you will haply say, "And when shall I venture to entrust it to such a Person?" What if He Himself exhorts thee to do so? Recognise Him; He is not merely an "Householder;" but He is thy Master also. "My servant," (He says,) "I would not have thee lose thy personalities; consider where thou art placing them, why wouldest thou deposit them where thou mayest lose them; where even though thou lovest them not, thou canst not thyself continue for ever. There is another place, to which I shall remove thee. Let what thou hast precede thee: fear not lest thou shouldest lose it; I was the Giver of it. I will be the Keeper of it. This thy Lord saith unto thee; put thy faith to the question; see whether thou wilt put faith in Him." You will say, "I count what I do not see as lost already; I would fain see it here." Through your wish to see it here, you will neither see it here, and you will also have nothing there. You have some treasures hid in the earth; when you go forth, you do not carry them with you. You have come to hear a Discourse; to gather together inward wealth; you are thinking of your outward wealth. I pray you, have you brought it hither? Lo! even now, you cannot see it! You believe that you have in your house, what you know that you laid by; do you know that you have not lost it? How many have returned to their homes, and not found what they laid by? At this, perhaps, the hearts of the covetous are alarmed; and because I said, that many had returned to their homes, and not found what they had laid by, every one has said in his heart, "That be far from us, Bishop! Wish and ask for us what is good! Be it far from us, such a thing should happen: God forbid it should happen so. I put my trust in God, that I shall find what I put by in safety." Do you put your trust in God, and do you not believe God's own word? "I put my trust in Christ, that what I put by will be safe; no one will come near it; no one will carry it away." You wish to be ensured, by putting your trust in Christ, against losing any thing out of your house: you will be better ensured, by believing Christ's word, so as to deposit it where He hath counselled thee! Have you no doubts of your servant? and have you doubts about your Lord? Have you no fears for your house, and have you fears for heaven? "But" (you say) "how am I to lay it up in heaven?" He hath given you counsel: "Deposit it where I tell you; I would not have you know in what manner it finds its way thither." Deposit it in the hands of the poor, give it to the needy; what matters it to thee in what manner it makes its way thither? Shall not I bring thither what I receive? Hast thou forgotten, When

ye did it unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it unto Me? If any friend of yours had certain basins or cisterns, and you were in search of some receptacles contrived for the keeping of any fluid, whether oil, or wine, in which to conceal or to store up your fruits, and he were to say, "I will keep them for you;"—and if he had certain secret ducts and passages to those basins, so that what was openly poured therein, might secretly find its way through these; and were he to say, "Pour here what you have;" and you were, on the other hand, to think that it was not the place where you thought of storing them, and to be afraid to pour them in;—then would not he, who knew that his places had some secret contrivance, say to you, "Pour it in, and fear not; it finds its way from hence to that place; you do not see by what way: but trust me, who was the builder of it." For He, by Whom all things were made, hath built mansions for all of us: thither He would have that which we have go before us; that we may not lose it on earth. When, however, you have kept them on earth, tell me for whom you are to gather them together? You have children: add one more to their number; and give something to Christ also. He heaps up riches; and cannot tell for whom he may be gathering them together. He is disquieted in vain.

13. Ver. 7. And now. And now, saith this Idithun,—(looking back on a certain vain show, and looking up to a certain Truth, standing mid-way where he has something beyond him, and something also behind him, having below him the place from which he took his spring, having above him that toward which he has stretched forth,)—And now, when I have "overleaped" some things, when I have trampled many things under foot, when I am no longer captivated by things temporal; even now, I am not perfect, I have not yet apprehended. For it is by hope that we are saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Therefore he says;

Ver. 7. And now what wait I for? Is it not for the Lord? He is my expectation, Who hath given me all those things, that I might despise them. He will give unto me Himself also, even He Who is above all, and by Whom all things were made, and by Whom I was made amongst all; even He, the Lord, is my Expectation! You see Idithun, brethren, you see in what

way he waiteth for Him! Let no man therefore call himself perfect here; he deceives and imposes upon himself; he is beguiling himself, he cannot have perfection here, and what avails it that he should lose humility?

And now what wait I for? Is it not for the Lord? When it has arrived, then it is no longer an object of expectation; then that perfection will actually be. “Now,” however, how much ground soever Idithun hath overleaped, he is but waiting still.

And my substance is ever before Thee. Already advancing, already tending towards Him, and to some extent already beginning to be, still (he says) my substance is ever before Thee. Now that other substance is also before men. You have gold, silver, slaves, estates, trees, cattle, servants. These things are visible even to men. There is a certain substance that is ever before Thee. And my substance is ever before Thee.

14. Ver. 8. Deliver me from all my transgressions. I have “overleaped” a great deal of ground, a very great deal of ground already; but, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. I have “overleaped” a great deal: but still do I beat my breast, and say, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Thou therefore art my expectation! my End. For Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness, unto every man that believeth. From all mine offences: not only from those, that I may not relapse into those which I have already “overleaped;” but from all, without exception, of those on account of which I now beat my breast, and say, Forgive us our debts. Deliver me from all mine offences: me being thus minded, and holding fast what the Apostle said, As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded. For at the time that he said that he was not already perfect, he then immediately goes on and says, As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded. What is the meaning of, As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded? Thou hadst already said, Not that I have already apprehended, or am already perfect. Observe the order of the words. But this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I am pressing toward the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. For this very reason he is not perfect, that he is pressing toward the prize of the high calling of God; which he hath not found as yet, unto which he hath not as yet attained. But

if he is not perfect at present, because he hath not as yet attained unto it, which of us is perfect? Yet he goes on and says, Yet let as many of us as be perfect, be thus minded. Art thou then, O Apostle, not perfect, and are we perfect? But hath it escaped you, that he did just now call himself perfect? For he does not say, As many of you as are perfect, be ye thus minded; but as many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded; after having said a little before, Not that I have already attained; either am already perfect. In no other way then can you be perfect in this life, than by knowing that you cannot be perfect in this life. This then will be your perfection, so to have “overleaped” some things, as to have still some point to which you are hastening on: so as to have something remaining, to which you will have to leap on, when every thing else has been passed by. It is such faith as this that is secure; for whoever thinks that he has already attained, is exalting himself, so as to be abased hereafter.

15. Therefore because I am thus minded, because I speak of myself as perfect and as not perfect at the same time; (not perfect indeed, because I have not yet attained that which I desire; perfect, because I know the thing that is yet wanting to me;) therefore, because I am thus minded, because I despise worldly things, because I refuse to take delight in perishable things, because I am laughed to scorn by the covetous man, boasting himself that he is prudent, and laughing me to scorn as one out of my senses, because I act thus; because I pursue this course.

Thou hast made me the reproach of the foolish. Thou hast so willed it, that I should live among those, and preach the Truth among those, who love vanity; and I cannot but be a laughing-stock to them. For we have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men: to angels who praise, to men who censure, us; or rather to angels, some of whom praise, some of whom are censuring us: and to men also, some of whom are praising, and some censuring us. We have arms on the right hand, and on the left, with which we wage war, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true. This we do in the sight of angels; this in the sight of men; because even among the angels there are holy Angels, to whom we give pleasure by living virtuously; and there are transgressing angels, to whom we give pleasure by living ill. And

among men also, there are holy men, to whom the life we live gives pleasure; there are also very wicked men, who mock at our good life. Both the one and the other are arms to us: the one on the right hand, the other on the left: arms however they are both of them; both of these kinds of arms, both those on the right hand, and those on the left; both those who praise, and those who censure; both those who pay us honour, and those who heap dishonour upon us; with both these kinds I contend against the devil; with both of these I smite him; I defeat him with prosperity, if I be not corrupted by it; by adversity, if I am not broken in spirit by it.

16. Thou then hast made me the reproach of the foolish.

Ver. 9. I became dumb, and I opened not my mouth. But it was to guard against the foolish man, that I became dumb, and opened not my mouth. For to whom should I tell what is going on within me? For I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me; for He will speak peace unto His people. But, There is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked. I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because it is Thou that madest me. Was this the reason that thou openedst not thy mouth, because God made thee? That is strange; for did not God make thy mouth, that thou shouldest speak? He that planted the ear, doth He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not see? God hath given thee a mouth to speak with; and dost thou say, I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because Thou madest me? Or does the clause, Because Thou madest me, belong to the verse that follows? Because Thou madest me,

Ver. 10. Remove Thy stroke away from me. Because it is Thou that hast made me, let it not be Thy pleasure to destroy me utterly; scourge, so that I may be made better, not so that I faint; beat me, so that I may be beaten out to a greater length and breadth, not so that I may be ground to powder. Because Thou hast made me, remove Thy stroke away from me.

By the heaviness of Thy hand I fainted in corrections. That is, I fainted while Thou wast correcting me. And what is meant by correcting me? except what follows,

Ver. 11. Thou with rebukes hast chastened man for iniquity; Thou hast made my life to consume away like a spider. There is much that is discerned by

this Idithun; by every one, who discerns as he does; who overleaps as he does. For he says, that he has fainted in God's corrections; and would fain have the stroke removed away from him, because it is He Who made him. Let Him renew me, Who also made me; let Him, Who created me, create me anew. But yet, Brethren, do we suppose that there was no cause for his fainting, so that he wishes to be renewed, to be created anew? It is for iniquity, saith he, that Thou hast chastened man. All this, my having fainted, my being weak, my crying out of the deep, all of this is because of iniquity; and in this Thou hast not condemned, but hast chastened me. Thou hast chastened man for sin. Hear this more plainly from another Psalm; It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. I have been afflicted, and at the same time it is good for me; it is at once a punishment, and an act of favour. What hath He in store for us after punishment is over, Who inflicts punishment itself by way of favour? For He it is of Whom it was said, I was brought low, and He made me whole: and, It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. Thou chastenest man for iniquity. And that which is written, Thou formest my grief in teaching me, could only be said unto God by one who was leaping beyond his fellows; Thou formest my grief in teaching me; Thou makest, that is to say, a lesson for me out of my sorrow. It is Thou that formest that very grief itself; Thou dost not leave it unformed, but formest it; and that grief, that has been inflicted by Thee, when formed, will be a lesson unto me, that I may be set free by Thee. For the word *finges* is used in the sense of forming, as it were moulding, my grief; not in the sense of feigning it; in the same way that *fingit* is applied to the artist, in the same sense that *figulus* is derived from *fingere*. Thou therefore hast chastened man for iniquity. I see myself in afflictions; I see myself under punishment; and I see no unrighteousness in Thee. If I therefore am under punishment, and if there is no unrighteousness with Thee, it remains that Thou must have been chastening man for iniquity.

18. And by what means hast Thou chastened him? Tell us, O Idithun, the manner of thy chastening; tell us in what way thou hast been chastened. And Thou hast made my life consume like a spider. This is the chastening! What consumes away sooner than the spider? I speak of the creature itself; though what can be more liable to consume away than the spider's webs?

Observe too how liable to decay is the creature itself. Do but set your finger lightly upon it; and it is a ruin; there is nothing at all more easily destroyed. To such a state hast Thou brought my life, by chastening me because of iniquity. When chastening makes us weak, there is a kind of strength that would be a fault. I perceive that some of you have already flown before me to my meaning, and have already understood; but those who are quicker of apprehension must not leave the slow behind, that they may pursue the road of our discourse in company. This is what I said; this I would have you understand. If it is the chastening of a just God that has produced this state of weakness, there is a kind of ‘strength’ that would be a fault. It was by a kind of strength that man offended, so as to require to be corrected by weakness: for it was by a certain pride that he offended; so as to require to be chastened by humility. All proud persons call themselves strong men. Therefore have many come from the East and the West, and have attained to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven. Wherefore was it that they so attained? Because they would not be strong. What is meant by ‘would not be strong?’ They were afraid to presume of their own merits. They did not go about to establish their own righteousness, that they might submit themselves to the righteousness of God. Lastly, at the time when the Lord spake thus, Many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom, (i.e. the Jews, who were ignorant of the righteousness of God, and went about to establish their own,) shall be cast into outer darkness; call to mind the faith of one single person from among the Gentiles, the Centurion; who was so weak in confidence in himself, so far from being “a strong man,” as to say I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof. He was not worthy to receive Christ in his house, and he had already received Him in his heart! For that Teacher of humility, the Son of Man, had in his breast already found where He might lay His head. To this speech of the Centurion’s our Lord alluded, when He spake to them that followed Him, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in any in Israel. He found this man weak: the Israelites He found strong; so that He said, referring to both, They that are whole need not a phycician, but they which are sick. It is on account of this then, that is, on account of this humility, that many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham,

and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness. Behold! you are mortal; and you bear about you a body of flesh that is corrupting away; And ye shall fall like one of the princes. Ye shall die like men, and shall fall like the devil. What good does the remedial discipline of mortality do you? The devil is proud, as not having a mortal body, as being an angel. But as for you, who have received a mortal body, and to whom even this does no good, so as to humble you by so great weakness, you shall fall like one of the princes. This then is the first grace of God's gift, to bring us to the confession of our infirmity, that whatever good we can do, whatever ability we have, we may be that in Him; that He that glorieth, may glory in the Lord. When I am weak, saith he, then am I strong. Thou chastenest man for iniquity, and Thou makest my life to consume away, even as a spider.

19. But surely every man living disquieteth himself in vain. He returns to what he mentioned a little before. Although he be improving here, yet for all that, every man living disquieteth himself in vain; forasmuch as he lives in a state of uncertainty. For who has any assurance even of his own goodness? He is disquieted in vain. Let him cast upon the Lord the burden of his care; let him cast upon Him whatever causes him anxiety. Let Him sustain thee; let Him keep thee. For on this earth what is there that is certain, except death? Consider the whole sum of all the good or the ill of this life, either those belonging to righteousness, or those belonging to unrighteousness; what is there that is certain here, except death? Have you been advancing in goodness? You know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! Are you a sinner? you know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! You hope for wealth; it is uncertain whether it will fall to your lot. You hope to have a wife; it is uncertain whether you will obtain one, or what sort of one you will obtain. You hope for sons; it is uncertain whether they will be born to you. Are they born? it is uncertain whether they will live: if they live, it is uncertain whether they will grow up in virtue, or whether they will fall away. Whichever way you turn, all is uncertain, death alone is certain. Art thou poor? It is uncertain whether thou wilt grow rich? Art thou unlearned? It is uncertain whether thou wilt become learned. Art thou in feeble health, it is uncertain whether thou wilt regain thy strength. Art thou born? It is certain

that thou wilt die: and in this certainty of death itself, the day of thy death is uncertain. Amidst these uncertainties, where death alone is certain, while even of that the hour is uncertain, and while it alone is studiously guarded against, though at the same time it is in no way to be escaped, every man living disquieteth himself in vain.

20. Being now then in the act of passing by and leaving behind these things, and dwelling now in the midst of some higher things than these, and despising these things below, in a position mid-way between both, he says,

Ver. 12. Hear my prayer, O Lord. Whereof shall I rejoice? Whereof should I groan? I rejoice on account of what is past, I groan longing for these which are not yet come. Hear my prayer, and give ear unto my cry. Hold not Thy peace at my tears. For do I now no longer weep, because I have already past by, have left behind so great things as these? Do I not weep much the more? For, He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. The more I long for what is not here, do I not so much the more groan for it until it comes? do I not so much the more weep until it comes? Do I not weep for it, so much the more that scandals multiply the more that iniquity aboundeth, the more that the love of many waxeth cold? Do I not say, O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears. Hear my prayer, and give ear unto my tears; hold not Thy peace from me. Let me not become deaf to all eternity, Hold not Thy peace from me. Let me hear Thy voice! For God speaketh in secret; He speaketh to many persons within their heart, and loud is the sound heard there in the profound silence of the heart, while with a loud voice He saith, I am thy salvation. It is on account of this voice wherewith God saith unto the soul, I am Thy salvation; that he prays, God would not hold His peace from him. Hold not Thou Thy peace from me.

21. For I am a sojourner with Thee. But with whom am I a sojourner? When I was with the devil, I was a sojourner; but then I had a bad host and entertainer; now, however I am with Thee; but I am a sojourner still. What is meant by a sojourner? I am a sojourner in the place from which I am to remove; not in the place where I am to dwell for ever. The place where I am to abide for ever, should be rather called my home. In the place from which I am to remove I am a sojourner; but yet it is with my God that I am a sojourner, with Whom I am hereafter to abide, when I have reached my

home. But what home is that to which you are to remove from this estate of a sojourner? Recognise that home, of which the Apostle speaks, We have an habitation of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. If this house is eternal in the Heavens, when we have come to it, we shall not be sojourners any more. For how should you be a sojourner in an eternal home? But here, where the Master of the house is some day to say to you, "Remove," while you yourself know not when He will say it, be thou in readiness. And by longing for your eternal home, you will be keeping yourself in readiness for it. And be not angry with Him, because He gives thee notice to remove, when He Himself pleases. For He made no covenant with thee, nor did He bind Himself by any engagement; nor didst thou enter upon the tenancy of this house on a certain stipulation for a definite term: thou art to quit, when it is its Master's pleasure. For therefore is it that you now dwell there free of charge. For I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Therefore it is there is my country: it is there is my home. I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Here too is understood with Thee. For many are strangers with the devil: but they who have already believed and are faithful, are, it is true, strangers as yet, because they have not yet come to that country and to that home: but still they are strangers with God. For so long as we are in the body, we are strangers from the Lord, and we desire, whether we are strangers, or abiding here, we may be accepted with Him. I am a sojourner with Thee; and a stranger, as all my fathers were. If then I am as all my fathers were, shall I say that I will not remove, when they have removed? Am I to lodge here on other terms, than those on which they lodged here also.

22. What then does it result from this, that I ought to ask for, seeing I am undoubtedly to remove from hence?

Ver. 13. Grant me some remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence. Consider well, Idithun, consider what knots those are which thou wouldest have loosed unto thee, that thou mightest be refreshed before thou goest hence. For thou hast certain fever-heats from which thou wouldest fain be refreshed, and thou sayest, that I may be refreshed, and "grant me a remission." What should He remit, or loosen unto thee, save that difficulty, under which, and in consequence of which, thou sayest, Forgive us our

debts. Grant me a remission before I go hence, and be no more. Set me free from my sins, before I go hence, that I may not go hence with my sins. Remit them unto me, that I may be set at rest in my conscience, that it may be disburthened of its feverish anxiety, the anxiety with which I am sorry for my sin. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed, (before every thing else,) before I go hence, and be no more. For if thou grantest me not a remission, that I may be refreshed, I shall go and be no more. Before I go thither, where if I go, I shall thenceforth be no more. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed. A question has suggested itself, how he will be no more. "See! he has not then departed to his rest;" a consummation which God avert from Idithun! For Idithun will go, will assuredly go to his rest. But suppose some unrighteous person, some one not an Idithun, not leaping beyond them, some one laying up treasures here, some one brooding over his possessions; unjust, proud, a boaster, puffed up, a despiser of the poor man who lies before his door, will not even he too be in existence? What is meant then by be no more? For if that Dives was not in existence, who is that who was tormented in the flame? Who is that who desired a drop of water from Lazarus' finger to be dropped upon his tongue? Who is that person, who said, Father Abraham, send Lazarus? Assuredly he was in existence to speak, and to be "tormented in the flame," and to rise again against the last day, and to be condemned with the devil to everlasting fire. What is meant then by shall be no more, unless Idithun is alluding to what is true being, and what is not true being. For he was beholding with the mind, with which he could do so, with the "mind's eye," by which he was able to behold it, that end, which he had desired to have shewn unto him, saying, Lord, make me to know mine end. He was beholding the number of his days, which truly is; and he observed that all that is below, in comparison of that true being, has no true being. For those things are permanent; these are subject to change; mortal, and frail, and the eternal suffering, though full of corruption, is for this very reason not to be ended, that it may ever be being ended without end. He alluded therefore to that realm of bliss, to the happy country, to the happy home, where the Saints are partakers of eternal Life, and of Truth unchangeable; and he feared to go where that is not, where there is no true being; longing to be there, where Being in the highest sense is! It is on account of this contrast then, while standing mid-way between them, he says, Grant me a remission, that I may

be refreshed before I go hence and be no more. For if Thou grantest me not a remission of my sins, I shall go from Thee unto all eternity! And from whom shall I go to all eternity? From Him Who said, I am HE that Am: from Him Who said, Say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. He then who goes from Him, in the contrary direction, goes to non-existence.

23. Therefore, my brethren, even if I have taxed severely the endurance of your bodies, take it patiently, because I too have had fatigue to endure. And it is with truth I say, that it is you yourselves that impose that fatigue upon yourselves. For I should soon hold my peace, did I perceive that you were weary of what is said by me.

PSALM 40

Of all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ has foretold, we know part to have been already accomplished, part we hope will be accomplished hereafter. All of them, however, will be fulfilled, because He is the Truth Who speaks them, and requires of us to be as faithful, as He Himself speaks them faithfully. He who believes, will rejoice in their coming to pass; he who believes not, will be confounded at their coming. They will however come assuredly, whether men wish for them, or wish them away; whether they believe, or whether they believe not; as the Apostle speaks; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself. But above all things, my brethren, remember this short text, and hold fast this which we all of us have just heard from the Gospel. He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Our fathers have already been delivered up to councils, have pleaded their causes before the enemies whom they loved; they gave to them as much of reproof as they could; and shewed them as much love as they could; and the seed of the righteous blood hath been sown, and from that blood, as from seed sown throughout the world, the harvest of the Church has risen. The age that follows is that of scandals, and of hypocrisy, and of trials, from those who say, Lo! here is Christ; or Lo! there. That enemy of ours was at that time a Lion, while he was raging with open violence; now that he is in secret, conspiring against us, he is a Dragon. But may He to Whom it was said, Thou shalt trample under thy feet the Lion and the Dragon, inasmuch as we are His body and His limbs, just as He then trampled under the feet of our Fathers the Lion, while raging against us openly, and dragging on the Martyrs to their sufferings, even so now in like manner trample the Dragon under our feet likewise, that he may not lie in wait for us. Against which dragon the Apostle, wishing to put us on our guard, says, I have espoused you to one husband to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ. But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be

corrupted from the purity that is in Christ Jesus. That old adulterer then, the serpent, seeks to corrupt the purity of the mind, not that of the flesh. But even as the human tempter rejoices in his wickedness, when he corrupts the flesh, even so does that devil triumph, when he corrupts the mind. But just as our fathers had need of patience in their conflict with the Lion, so have we of vigilance in ours with the serpent. But the persecution of the Church, whether it come from the Dragon, or from the Lion, never ceases; and the enemy is more to be feared when he is deceiving, than whilst he is raging. At that time he used to constrain Christians to deny Christ, at the present time he persuades them to deny Christ. His manner then was to constrain by force, now he persuades. At that time then he brought violence to bear upon us; at this time treachery; at that time he was seen, when roaring against us; now, while he is wandering about with slippery stealth, he is seen with difficulty. In what way however he used at that time to force Christians to deny Christ, is well known. For they were dragged before judgment-seats, that they might deny Christ; and by confessing Him, they earned the crown. Now however he persuades men into denying Christ; and the reason that he succeeds in deceiving is, that he who is being persuaded to deny Christ, appears to himself to be (as it were) not departing from Christ. For what is said in these days by the Heretics to the Catholic? ‘Come, and be a Christian.’ It is for this reason that they say, ‘Be a Christian,’ that he may say, “Am I not one?” It is a very different thing to say, “Come, be a Christian,” and to say, “Come, deny Christ.” The manifest danger, the roar of the lion, is heard long beforehand: is guarded against long beforehand. The slippery serpent makes his approaches, creeping along with stealthy gliding; stealing on with noiseless trail, insinuating into your ears his artful whisper, and he does not say, deny Christ; (for since the time that the Martyrs were crowned, who would listen to his voice?) but he says, ‘Be a Christian.’ And the other, (the extraordinary speech having made an impression upon him,) if the poison hath not yet penetrated him, replies, ‘Assuredly, I am a Christian already.’ But if he is moved, and bitten by the serpent’s fangs, answers, “Why do you say to me, Be a Christian? What? am I not a Christian already?” The other answers, “No.” “Am I then really not a Christian?” “No.” “Do you then make me one now, if I am not one already.” Come, then, but when you begin to be questioned by the Bishop, as to who you are, do not say, “I am a Christian,” or “I am a believer;” but

say that you are not one, in order that you may be made one. For when he has heard the confession of a Christian believer, he dares not baptize thee over again; but when he hears that he is not one, he gives it to him as that which he had not before; that he himself may have the appearance of being free from blame, in that he acts according to the other's words. On which point, I demand of you, Heretic, why you think yourself to be free from blame? What is it that I hear in this your answer? "That it is not you that deny Christ, but the other." If he who denies is in fault, what is he who teaches the person, who denies, to make that denial? Are you, however, in deed so perfectly free from blame, who, being a Christian, effect the same object by persuasion, that the Pagan used to effect by threats? And what do you effect by it? Do you remove what he had, because he denies what he really has? You do not make him not have it, but you make him have it to his own punishment! For what he has, he has. That Baptism is a kind of 'character' stamped upon him; it decorated the soldier; it convicts the deserter! For what is it you would do? You are building Christ upon Christ! If you yourself were single minded, you would not seek to double Christ. Then I would ask you, have you forgotten that Christ is a stone, and the stone which the builders rejected, has become the head-stone of the corner? If Christ then be a stone, and you would lay Christ upon Christ, you have let slip what you heard in the Gospel, there shall not be one stone upon another. Yet so great is the force of the connecting bond of charity, that although many living stones meet together in the building of God's Temple, yet they altogether make but one stone. You however have split yourself off; you call men away from the "being built up;" you call them to a downfall! And these insidious designs are too common, and they never cease; and we see it, and we endure it with patience, and endeavour to check them to the best of our power by disputing with them, by refuting them, by meeting them, by threatening them, yet in all things loving them. And when, in spite of our so doing, they persevere in their evil way, and our heart consumes away with grief for our brother's death, while it grieves over those who are without and fears for those within, in the midst of the manifold distresses and unceasing trials with which this life abounds, what shall we do? For from iniquity abounding thus, a kind of lethargy falls upon our charity. Because iniquity aboundeth, the love of many waxeth cold. And

what else should we do, but what follows, if at least by His help we may be able to do it. He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

2. Let us say then what this Psalm says. (Ver. 1.) I waited patiently for the Lord. I waited patiently for the promise of no mere mortal, who can both deceive and be himself deceived: I waited for the consolation of no mere mortal, who may be consumed by sorrow of his own, before he gives me comfort. Should a brother mortal attempt to comfort me, when he himself is in sorrow likewise? Let us mourn in company; let us weep together, let us wait patiently together, let us join our prayers together also. Whom did I wait for but for the Lord? The Lord, Who though He puts off the fulfilment of His promises, yet never recals them? He will make it good; assuredly He will make it good, because He has made many of His promises good already: and of God's truth we ought to have no fears, even if as yet He had made none of them good. Lo! let us henceforth think thus, 'He has promised us every thing; He has not as yet given us possession of any thing; He is a sponisible Promiser; a faithful Pay-master: do you but shew yourself a dutiful exactor of what is promised; and if you be weak, if you be one of the little ones, claim the promise of His mercy. Do you not see tender lambs striking their dams' teats with their heads, in order that they may get their fill of milk? I waited patiently for the Lord, says he. And what does He in return? Has He turned away His face from thee? Hath He despised thee when waiting patiently upon Him? Or has He perhaps not seen thee? Not so, by any means. But what has He done to thee?

And He took heed unto me, and heard my cry. He took heed to it, and He heard it. See thou hast not waited in vain. His eyes are over thee. His ears turned towards thee. For, the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. What then? Did He not see thee, when thou usedst to do evil and to blaspheme Him? What then becomes of what is said in that very Psalm, The face of the Lord is upon them that do evil? But for what end? That He may cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. Therefore, even when thou wert wicked, He took heed of thee; but He took no heed to thee. So then to him who waited patiently for the Lord, it was not enough to say, He took heed of me, He says, He took heed to me; that

is, He took heed by comforting me, that He might do me good. What was it that He took heed to? and He heard my cry.

3. And what hath He accomplished for thee? What hath He done for thee. (Ver. 2.) He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. (Ver. 3.) And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. He hath given us great blessings already: and still He is our debtor; but let him who hath this part of the debt repaid already, believe that the rest will be also, seeing that he ought to have believed even before he received any thing. Our Lord has employed facts themselves to persuade us, that He is a faithful promiser, a liberal giver. What then has He already done? He has brought me out of a horrible pit. What horrible pit is that? It is the depth of iniquity, from the lusts of the flesh, for this is meant by the miry clay. Whence hath He brought thee out? Out of a certain deep, out of which thou criedst out in another Psalm, Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord. And those who are already “crying out of the deep,” are not absolutely in the lowest deep: the very act of crying is already lifting them up. There are some deeper in the deep, who do not even perceive themselves to be in the deep. Such are those who are proud despisers, not pious entreaters for pardon; not tearful criers for mercy: but such as Scripture thus describes. The sinner when he comes into the depth of evil despiseth. For he is deeper in the deep, who is not satisfied with being a sinner, unless instead of confessing he even defends his sins. But he who has already cried out of the deep, hath already lifted up his head in order that he might ‘cry out of the deep,’ has been heard already, and has been brought out of the horrible pit, and out of the mire and clay. He already has faith, which he had not before; he has hope, which he was before without; he now walks in Christ, who before used to go astray in the devil. For on that account it is that he says, He hath set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Now that Rock was Christ. Supposing that we are upon the rock, and that our goings are ordered, still it is necessary that we continue to walk; that we advance to something farther. For what did the Apostle Paul say when now upon the Rock, when his goings had now been established? Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. What then has been done for thee, if thou hast not

apprehended? On what account dost thou return thanks, saying, But I have obtained mercy? Because his goings are now established, because he now walks on the Rock? For what does He say, But this one thing I do, forgetting what is behind. What is behind? The horrible pit. What is behind? It is the mire and clay, the lusts of the flesh, the darkness of iniquities. Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before. Now he would not speak of himself as reaching forth unto those things which are before, if he had already reached them. For the mind reacheth forwards from longing for an object desired; not from delight in one obtained. Reaching forth, he says, to those which are before, I press toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He was then on his course, he was hastening on to the victory. And in another place, when now close to the prize, he cries, I have finished my course. Therefore, when he was saying, I press forward toward the prize of my high calling, because his feet were now set on the Rock, and his goings were ordered, because he was now walking on the right way, he had something to return thanks for; something to ask for still; returning thanks for what he had received already, while he was claiming that which still remained due. For what things already received was he giving thanks? For the remission of sins, for the illumination of faith; for the strong support of hope, for the fire of charity. But in what respects had he still a claim of debt on the Lord? Henceforth, he says, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. There is therefore something due to me still. What is it that is due? A crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. He was at first a loving Father to bring him forth from the horrible pit; to forgive his sins, to rescue him from the mire and clay; hereafter he will be a righteous Judge, requiting to him walking rightly, what He promised; to him, (I say,) unto whom He had at the first granted that power to walk rightly. He then as a righteous Judge will repay; but whom will he repay? He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.

4. Ver. 3. He hath put a new song in my mouth. What new song is this? Even a hymn unto our God. Perhaps you used to sing hymns to strange gods; old hymns, because they were uttered by the old man, not by the new man; let the new man be formed, and let him sing a new song; being himself made new, let him love those new things by which he is himself

made new. For what is more Ancient than God, Who is before all things, and is without end and without beginning. He becomes new to thee, when thou returnest to Him; because it was by departing from Him, that thou hadst become old; and hadst said, I have waxed old because of all mine enemies. We therefore utter a hymn unto our God; and the hymn itself sets us free. For I will call upon the Lord to praise Him, and I will be safe from all mine enemies. For a hymn is a song of praise. Call on God to praise Him, not to find fault with Him. For when you call on God to destroy your enemy, when you would fain rejoice in another's ill, and call on God to bring this ill about, you are trying to make Him a partaker of your own malice. Now if you make Him a partaker of your own malice, you call upon Him, not to praise, but to reflect upon Him. For you think God to be such an one as yourself. Whence in another place it is said unto you, These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: and thou thoughtest wickedly that I was altogether such an one as thyself. Call on the Lord then to praise Him. Think Him not to be like unto thee, that thou mayest thyself become like unto Him. For, Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father is perfect; He, Who makes His sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. Praise thou, therefore, the Lord, so as not to wish ill unto thine enemies. 'And how much good,' (sayest thou,) 'am I to wish him.' As much as to thine own self. For it will not be out of what is thine that they will receive the gift of becoming good; nor will what is to be given to them, be a diminution of what thou possessest. Thine enemy is thine enemy, because he is wicked; as soon as he becomes good, he becomes thy friend and thy partner; so that thou mayest be willing to possess in conjunction with him, what thou before desiredst; He will henceforth be thy brother. Call then on God to praise Him: sing an hymn unto thy God. The sacrifice of praise, (He says,) glorifieth Me. What? Will God's glory be greater because thou glorifiest Him? Or do we add any thing to God's glory, when we say to Him, 'I glorify Thee, O my God;' or make Him more holy, when we say to Him, 'I bless Thee, O my God?' When He Himself blesseth us, He maketh us more holy: He maketh us more happy: when He glorifieth us, He maketh us more glorious, more honourable: when we glorify Him, it profiteth ourselves, not Him. For how do we glorify Him? It is by calling Him, not by making Him, glorious. What then does He go on to say, after saying, The sacrifice of praise glorifieth Me. Lest thou shouldest think that

thou doest any thing for God, by offering Him the sacrifice of praise He says, And there is the way, where I will shew unto him my salvation. Thou seest that it is thyself, not God, that it will profit, if thou praisest God. Dost thou praise God? Thou art walking in the right way. Dost thou reflect upon Him? Then hast thou lost the way.

5. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even a hymn unto our God. If haply any one asks, what person is speaking in this Psalm? I would say briefly, "It is Christ." But as ye know, brethren, and as we must say frequently, Christ sometimes speaks in His own Person, in the Person of our Head. For He Himself is the Saviour of the Body. He is our Head; [even He,] the Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, suffered for us, rose again for our justification, sitteth at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us: Who is also to recompense to the evil and to the good, in the judgment, all the evil and the good that they have done. He deigned to become our Head; to become the Head of the Body, by taking of us that flesh, in which He should die for us; that flesh which He also raised up again for our sakes, that in that flesh He might place before us an instance of the resurrection; that we might learn to hope for that, of which we heretofore despaired, and might henceforth have our feet upon the rock, and might walk in Christ. He then sometimes speaks in the name of our Head; sometimes also He speaks of us who are His members. For both when He said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat, He spoke on behalf of His members, not of Himself: and when He said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? The Head was crying on behalf of its members: and yet He did not say, Why dost thou persecute My members? but, Why persecutest thou Me? If He suffers in us, then shall we also be crowned in Him. Such is the love of Christ. What is there can be compared to this? This is the thing on account of which He hath put a hymn in our mouth, and this He speaks on behalf of His members.

6. The just shall see and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. The just shall see. Who are the just? The faithful; because it is by faith that the just shall live. For there is in the Church this order, some go before, others follow; and those who go before make themselves an example to those who follow; and those who follow imitate those who go before. But do those then follow

no one, who exhibit themselves as an ensample to them that come after? If they follow no one, at all, they will fall into error. These persons then must themselves also follow some one, that is, Christ Himself. For all the better sort of persons in the Church, for whom there now remained no longer any man worthy to be a model for their imitation; because, by the proficiency they have made, they had left all others behind; for them Christ Himself remains, as One Whom they may follow even unto the end. And that there are degrees of precedence you see by the Apostle Paul, saying, Be ye followers of Me, even as I also am of Christ. Let those then who have already had their goings established on the Rock, let them be an example to the believers. But be thou, saith he, an example of the believers. These very believers are the just, who, fixing their eyes on those who precede them in goodness, follow them in the way of imitation. In what way do they follow? The just shall see, and fear. “Shall see, and shall fear” to follow the evil way; when they see that all the better sort of persons have already chosen the good way; and they say in their hearts, just as travellers are wont to do, when being themselves in uncertainty about the road, and wavering, as it were, as to which they should travel by, they observe others walking on a certain road with confidence, and say to themselves, It is not without reason that these men go this road, while they are intending to arrive at the same point with ourselves; and wherefore is it that they go this way with great confidence, except that it is fatal to go the other. The just therefore, shall see, and shall fear. They see a narrow way on the one hand; on the other side, a broad road: on this side they see few, on the other many. But thou art a just man; count them not, but weigh them; bring “a just balance,” not a deceitful one: because thou art called just. The just shall see, and fear, applies to thee. Count not therefore the multitudes of men that are filling the “broad ways,” that are to fill the circus to-morrow; celebrating with shouts the City’s Anniversary, while they defile the City itself by evil living. Look not at them; they are many in number; and who can count them? But there are a few travelling along the narrow road. Bring forth the balance, I say. Weigh them; see what a quantity of chaff you lift up on the one side, against a few grains of corn on the other. Let this be done, by the just, the believers, who are to follow. And what shall they who precede, do? Let them not be proud, let them not exalt themselves; let them not deceive those who follow them. How may they deceive those who follow them? By promising them

salvation in themselves. What then ought those who follow to do? The just shall see, and fear: and shall trust in the Lord; not in those who go before them. But indeed they fix their eyes on those who go before them, and follow and imitate them; but they do so, because they consider from Whom they have received the grace to go before them; and because they trust in Him. Although therefore they make these their models, they place their trust in Him from Whom the others have received the grace, whereby they are such as they are. The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Just as in another Psalm, I lift up mine eyes unto the hills, we understand by hills, all distinguished and great spiritual persons in the Church; great in solidity, not by swollen inflation. By these it is that all Scripture hath been dispensed unto us; they are the Prophets, they are the Evangelists; they are sound Doctors: to these I lift up mine eyes, from whence shall come my help. And lest you should think of mere human help, he goes on to say, My help cometh from the Lord, Which made heaven and earth. The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

7. Come then, all those who would fain trust in the Lord, who see and fear. Let them fear to walk the evil way; the broad road. Let them choose the narrow road, there where there are some persons' goings established on the Rock. Let them now hear what they ought to do.

Ver. 4. Blessed is that man, that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities or lying madnesses. Behold the way by which thou wouldest fain have gone. Behold the multitude that fill the 'broad way.' It is not without reason that road leads to the amphitheatre. It is not without reason it leads to Death. The broad way leads unto death, its breadth delights for time: its end is straitness to all eternity. Aye; but the multitudes murmur; the multitudes are rejoicing together; the multitudes are hastening along; the multitudes are flocking together! Do not thou imitate them; do not turn aside after them: they are vanities, and lying madnesses. Let the Lord thy God be thy hope. Hope for nothing else from the Lord thy God; but let the Lord thy God Himself be thine hope. For many persons hope to obtain from God's hands riches, and many perishable and transitory honours; and, in short, any thing else they hope to obtain at God's hands, except only God Himself. But do thou seek after thy God Himself: nay,

indeed, despising all things else, make thy way unto Him! Forget other things, remember Him. Leave other things behind, and press forward unto Him. Surely it is He Himself, Who set thee right, when turned away from the right path; Who, now that thou art set in the right path, guides thee aright, Who guides thee to thy destination. Let Him then be thy hope, Who both guides thee, and guides thee to thy destination. Whither does worldly covetousness lead thee? And to what point does it conduct thee at the last? Thou didst at first desire a farm; then thou wouldest possess an estate; thou wouldest shut out thy neighbours; having shut them out, thou didst set thy heart on the possessions of other neighbours; and didst extend thy covetous desires till thou hadst reached the shore: arriving at the shore, thou covetest the islands: having made the earth thine own, thou wouldest haply seize upon heaven. Leave thou all thy loves. He Who made heaven and earth is more beautiful than all.

8. Blessed is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his hope, and who hath not regarded vanities and lying madnesses. For whence is it that madness is called “lying?” Insanity is a lying thing, even as it is sanity that sees the Truth. For what thou seest as good things, thou art deceived; thou art not in thy sound senses: a violent fever has driven thee to frenzy: that which thou art in love with is not a reality. Thou applaudest the charioteer; thou cheerest the charioteer; thou art madly in love with the charioteer. It is vanity; it is a lying madness. ‘It is not,’ (he cries.) “Nothing can be better; nothing more delightful. What can I do for one in a state of high fever? Pray ye for such persons, if you have any feelings of compassion in you. For the physician himself also in a desperate case generally turns to those in the house, who stand around weeping; who are hanging on his lips to hear his opinion of the patient who is sick and in danger. The physician stands in a state of doubt: he sees not any good to promise; he fears to pronounce evil, lest he should excite alarm. He devises a thoroughly modest sentence; “The good God can do all things. Pray ye for him.” Which then of these madmen shall I check? Which of them will listen to me? Which of them would not call us miserable? Because they suppose us to have lost great and various pleasures, of which they are madly fond, in that we are not as madly in love with them as they are: and they do not see that they are lying pleasures. When I offer him an egg, or hold forth the cup that is to restore health to

him, I hurt him. And when shall I find a way, whereby to restore him to health? Should I exhort him to take refreshment, lest he should sink from exhaustion, and not attain to sound health, he presents his fists; he wishes to vent his fury upon his physician. And though he strike one, still let him be loved; though he do one an injury, let him not be given over; he will return to a sound mind, he will thank us by and bye. How many are there here, who examine themselves, who consider each other, and speak of each other in the Church of God: who in the Holy Church's bosom observe that their now rightly directed desires after the word of God, after the offices and duties of charity, after the frequenting of Christ's flock, do not stray from the Church, they look at each other, and talk of each other in turns. "Who is this passionate lover of the Circus? Who is this lover and admirer of such an actor, and such a gladiator?" He applies it to another; and the other to him. Assuredly these things are true; assuredly we rejoice in persons of this description. If we rejoice in such persons as these, let us not despair of such persons as these. Let us pray for them; dearly beloved: it is out of these, out of the number of those who once composed the number of the ungodly, that the number of the Saints is increased. And hath not respected vanities, and lying madnesses. "Such a one has won," he cries; "he harnessed such and such a horse," he proclaims aloud. He would fain be a kind of diviner; he aspires to the honours of divination by abandoning the fountain of Divinity; and he frequently pronounces an opinion, and is frequently mistaken. Why is this? Even because they are lying madnesses. But why is it that what they say sometimes comes true? That they may lead astray the foolish ones; that by loving the semblance of truth there, they may fall into the snare of falsehood: let them be left behind, let them be given over, let them be cut off. If they were members of us, they must be mortified. Mortify, he says, your members which are upon the earth. Let our God be our hope. He Who made all things, is better than all! He Who made what is beautiful, is more beautiful than all that is such. He Who made whatever is mighty, is Himself mightier. He Who made whatever is great, is Himself greater. He will be unto you every thing that you love. Learn in the creature to love the Creator; and in the work Him Who made it. Let not that which has been made by Him detain thine affections, so that thou shouldest lose Him by Whom thou thyself wert made also. Blessed, then, is the man, that maketh

the Name of the Lord his trust; and hath not respected vanities and lying madneses.

9. Perhaps he, who being impressed by that verse, desires to amend his ways, and being seized by fear for the righteousness of faith, shall desire to walk the narrow road; perhaps he (I say) will say unto us, I shall not be able to persevere in walking, if I have nothing to behold. What are we to do then, brethren? Are we to leave him altogether without a spectacle? He will die; he will not persevere; He will not follow us. What shall we do then? We will give him other sights in exchange for sights [like these]. And what sights shall we present to the Christian, whom we would fain divert from those sights? I thank the Lord our God; He in the following verse of the Psalm hath shewn us, what sights we ought to present and offer to spectators who would fain have sights to see? Let us now suppose him to be weaned from the circus, the theatre, the amphitheatre; let him be looking after, let him by all means be looking after, some sight to see; we do not leave him without a spectacle. What then shall we give in exchange for those? Hear what follows.

Ver. 5. Many, O Lord my God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast made. He used to gaze at the wonderful works of man; let him now contemplate the wonderful works of God. Many are the wonderful works that God has made. Why are they become vile in his eyes? He praises the charioteer guiding four horses; running all of them without fault and without stumbling. Perhaps the Lord has not made such wonderful works in things spiritual. Let him control lust, let him control cowardice, let him control injustice, let him control imprudence, I mean, the passions which falling into excess produce those vices; let him control these and bring them into subjection, and let him hold the reins, and not suffer himself to be carried away; let him guide them the way he himself would have them go; let him not be forced away whither he would not. He used to applaud the charioteer, he himself shall be applauded for his own charioteering; he used to call out that the charioteer should be invested with a dress of honour; he shall himself be clothed with immortality. These are the spectacles, these the sights that God exhibits to us. He cries out of heaven, "My eyes are

upon you. Strive, and I will assist you; triumph, and I will crown you.” Many, O Lord my God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast made.

And in Thy thought there is none that is like unto Thee. Now then look at the actor! For the man hath by dint of great pains learnt to walk upon a rope; and hanging there he holds thee hanging in suspense. Turn to Him who exhibits spectacles far more wonderful. This man hath learned to walk upon the rope; but hath he caused another to walk on the sea? Forget now thy theatre; behold our Peter; not a walker on the rope, but, so to speak, a walker on the sea. And do thou also walk on other waters, (though not on those on which Peter walked, to symbolize a certain truth,) for this world is a sea. It hath a deleterious bitterness; it hath the waves of tribulations, the tempests of temptations; it hath men in it who, like fish, delight in their own ruin, and prey upon each other; walk thou here, set thou thy foot on this. Thou wouldest see sights; be thyself a spectacle. That thy spirit may not sink, look on Him Who goes before thee, and says, We have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men. Tread thou on the waters; suffer not thyself to be drowned in the sea. Thou wilt not go there, thou wilt not “tread it under foot,” unless it be His bidding, Who was Himself the first to walk upon the sea. For it was thus that Peter spoke. If Thou art, bid me come unto Thee on the waters. And because He was, He heard him when praying; He granted his wish to him when expressing his desire; He raised him up when sinking. These are the wonderful works that the Lord hath made. Look on them; let faith be the eye of him who would behold them. And do thou also likewise; for although the winds alarm thee, though the waves rage against thee, and though human frailty may have inspired thee with some doubt of thy salvation, thou hast it in thy power to cry out, thou mayest say, Lord, I perish. He Who bids thee walk there, suffers thee not to perish. For in that thou now walkest on the Rock, thou fearest not even on the sea! If thou art without the Rock, thou must sink in the sea; for the Rock, on which thou must walk, is such an one, as is not sunk in the sea.

10. Observe then the wonderful works of God.

I have declared, and have spoken; they are multiplied beyond number. There is a number, there are some over and above the number. There is a

fixed number that belongs to that heavenly Jerusalem. For the Lord knoweth them that are His; the Christians that fear Him, the Christians that believe, the Christians that keep the commandments, that walk in God's ways, that keep themselves from sins; that if they fall confess: they belong to the number. But are they the only ones? There are also some beyond the number. For even if they be but a few, (a few in comparison of the numbers of the larger majority,) with how great numbers are our Churches filled, crowded up to the very walls; to what a degree do they annoy each other by the pressure, and almost choke each other by their overflowing numbers. Again, out of these very same persons, when there is a public spectacle, there are numbers flocking to the amphitheatre; these are over and above the number. But it is for this reason that we say this, that they may be in the number. Not being present, they do not hear this from us; but when ye have gone from hence, let them hear it from you. I have declared, he says, and have spoken. It is Christ Who speaks. He hath declared it, in His own Person, as our Head. He hath Himself declared it by His members. He Himself hath sent those who should declare it; He Himself hath sent the Apostles. Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. How great the number of believers that are gathered together; how great the multitudes that flock together; many of them truly converted, many but in appearance: and those who are truly converted are the minority; those who are so but in appearance are the majority: because they are multiplied beyond the number.

11. I have declared, and have spoken: they are multiplied beyond number. (Ver. 6.) Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire. These are the wonderful works of God; these are the thoughts of God, to which no man's thoughts are like; that the lover of sight-seeing may be weaned from curiosity: and with us may seek after those more excellent, those more profitable things, in which, when he shall have attained unto them, he will rejoice; and will rejoice in such a manner as not to fear lest the person, on whom he sets his heart, should be conquered; for he sets his heart on the charioteer, who being beaten in the race, he is himself subjected to insults. When the charioteer wins, it is he himself who is invested with the dress of honour. And is the poor man who cheers him clothed also? The winner himself is clothed with the dress of honour; but instead of the man who is

beaten, the other [who cheers him] is insulted. Why do you subject yourself to censure for him, with whom you do not divide the dress of honour. On our side, in our spectacles, this is ordered differently. In that racecourse, in that spectacle, all indeed run, said the Apostle Paul, but one receiveth the prize; the rest retire defeated. And they endured unto the end in the course; but since one has received the prize, the rest who have undergone the like toil remain where they were. On our side it is not so. As many as run, run, that is, perseveringly, even unto the end, all receive the crown: and he who comes in first has to wait, that he may be crowned together with him who comes after him. Inasmuch as it is not covetousness, but charity, that sets that contest on foot; all those who run love each other; and love itself is the race which they run.

12. Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire, saith the Psalm to God. For the men of old time, when as yet the true Sacrifice, which is known to the faithful, was foreshewn in figures, used to celebrate rites that were figures of the reality that was to be hereafter; many of them understanding their meaning; but more of them in ignorance of it. For the Prophets and the holy Patriarchs understood what they were celebrating; but the rest of the “stiff-necked people” were so carnal, that what was done by them was but to symbolize the things that were to come afterwards; and it came to pass, when that first sacrifice was abolished; when the burnt-offerings of rams, of goats, and of calves, and of other victims, had been abolished, God did not desire them. Why did God not desire them? And why did He at the first desire them? Because all those things were, as it were, the words of a person making a promise; and the expressions conveying a promise, when the thing that they promise is come, are no longer uttered. It is only until he gives [what he promised], that a person is a promiser; after he has bestowed it, he alters the expression. Of the thing, which he used to say that ‘he was going to give it,’ he now does not say, ‘I will give it,’ but, ‘I have already given it,’ changing his words. Why was this word at first approved by him, and afterwards changed? Because it was a word applicable to its own proper occasion; and for that its own proper occasion was approved. It was, then, when the gift was being promised, that it was pronounced; but when the thing promised had been bestowed, the expression of a promise was given up; that of a fulfilment of a promise was substituted. Those sacrifices

then, as being but expressions of a promise, have been abrogated. What is that which has been given as its fulfilment? That Body; which ye know; which ye do not all of you know; which, of you who do know it, I pray God all may not know it unto condemnation. Observe the time when it was said; for the person is Christ our Lord, speaking at one time for His members, at another in His own person. Sacrifice and offering, said He, Thou didst not desire. What then? Are we left at this present time without a sacrifice? God forbid!

But a Body hast Thou perfected for me. It was for this reason that Thou didst not desire the others; that Thou mightest perfect this; before Thou perfectedst this, Thou didst desire the others. The fulfilment of the promise has done away with the words that express the promise. For if they still hold out a promise, that which was promised is not yet fulfilled. This was promised by certain signs; the signs that convey the promise are done away; because the Substance that was promised is come. We are in this Body. We are partakers of this Body. We know that which we ourselves receive; and ye who know it not yet, will know it bye and bye; and when ye come to know it, I pray ye may not receive it unto condemnation. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself. 'A Body' hath been 'perfected' for us; let us be made perfect in the Body.

13. Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; but a Body hast Thou perfected for me. Burnt-offerings also for sin hast Thou not required.

Ver. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come! Must we expound, Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; but a Body hast Thou perfected for me? Burnt-offerings also for sin hast Thou not required; (which things He before did require;) Then said I, Lo, I come! It is time that what was promised should come; because the signs, by means of which they were promised, have been put away. And indeed, Brethren, observe these put away; those fulfilled. Let the Jewish nation at this time shew me their priest, if they can! Where are their sacrifices? They are brought to an end; they are put away now. Should we at that time have rejected them? We do reject them now; because, if you chose to celebrate them now, it were unseasonable; unfitting to the time; incongruous. You are still making promises; I have already received! There has remained to them a certain thing for them to celebrate; that they might

not remain altogether without a sign. For Cain, the elder brother who slew his younger brother, received a sign, that no man should kill him: as it is written in Genesis, And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any one should kill him. So too does the Jewish nation remain also. All nations that are subject to the Roman law have merged in the Roman rule; they have incorporated their superstitions; and have afterwards begun to detach themselves from them, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. But that nation has remained the same as ever with her sign of circumcision, and with her sign of unleavened bread; Cain hath not been slain. He has not been slain; he bears his mark about him. He is cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive his brother's blood from his hand. For he indeed shed the blood; he did not receive it; he shed it; another earth received it; and from that earth, which opened her mouth, and received it, he has been cursed; and that earth, whose mouth received the blood, is the Church. It is from this, then, that he is cursed. And that is the blood which crieth unto Me from the earth. For it was of this earth that the Lord said, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the earth. Cries, he saith, unto Me from the earth. Cries unto the Lord! But he who shed the Blood is dumb; because he hath not drunk of It. In such a case then are they; like Cain with his mark. The sacrifices, however, which used to be performed there, have been put away; and that which remained unto them for a sign like that of Cain, hath by this time been fulfilled; and they know it not. They slay the Lamb; they eat the unleavened bread. Christ has been sacrificed for us, as our Passover. Lo, in the sacrifice of Christ, I recognise the Lamb that was slain! What of the unleavened bread? Therefore, says he, let us keep the feast; not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of wickedness, (he shews what is meant by old; it is stale flour; it is sour,) but in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. They have continued in the shade; they cannot abide the Sun of Glory. We are already in the light of day. We have the Body of Christ, we have the Blood of Christ. If we have a new life, let us sing a new song, even a hymn unto our God. Burnt offerings for sin Thou didst not desire. Then said I, Lo, I come!

14. In the head of the Book it is written of me, that (ver. 8.) I should fulfil Thy will: O my God, I am willing, and Thy Law is within my heart. Behold! He turns His regards to His members. Behold! He hath Himself

fulfilled the will of the Father. But in what beginning of a Book is it written of Him? Perhaps in the beginning of this Book of Psalms. For why should we seek far for it, or examine into other books for it? Behold! it is written in the beginning of this Book of Psalms! Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly; nor stood in the way of sinners; nor sat in the seat of scorers. But His will is in the Law of the Lord; that is, ‘O my God, I am willing,’ ‘and Thy Law is within my heart;’ that is the same as, And in His Law doth he meditate day and night.

15. Ver. 9. I have well declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation. He now addresses His members. He is exhorting them to do what He has already done. He has declared; let us declare also. He has suffered; let us “suffer with Him.” He has been glorified; we shall be “glorified with Him.” I have declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation. How great an one is that? In all the world. How great is it? Even among all nations. Why among all nations? Because He is the Seed of Abraham, in Whom all nations shall be blessed. Why among all nations? Because their sound hath gone forth into all lands.

In the great congregation. Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that Thou knowest. My lips speak; I will not refrain them from speaking. My lips indeed sound audibly in the ears of men; but Thou knowest mine heart. I will not refrain my lips, O Lord; that Thou knowest. It is one thing that man heareth; another that God knoweth. That the ‘declaring’ of it should not be confined to the lips alone, and that it might not be said of us, Whatsoever things they say unto you, do; but do not after their works; or lest it should be said to the people, “praising God with their lips, but not with their heart,” This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; do thou make audible confession with thy lips; draw nigh with thine heart also. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. In case like unto which that thief was found, who, hanging on the Cross with the Lord, did on the Cross acknowledge the Lord. Others had refused to acknowledge Him while working miracles; this man acknowledged Him when hanging on the Cross. That thief had every other member pierced through; his hands were fastened by the nails; his feet were pierced also; his whole body was

fastened to the tree; the body was not disengaged in its other members; the heart and the tongue were disengaged; with the heart he believed; with the tongue he made confession. Remember me, O Lord, he said, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. He hoped for the coming of his salvation at a time far remote; he was content to receive it after a long delay; his hope rested on an object far remote. The day, however, was not postponed! His words were, Remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. The answer was, This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise. Paradise hath happy trees! This day hast thou been with Me on the Tree of the Cross. This day shalt thou be with Me on the Tree of Salvation.

16. Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. In order that he may not believe in heart indeed, and through fear refrain his lips from professing what he has believed. For there are Christians, there are some have faith in their heart, and yet among the Pagans, malicious, treacherously flattering, mean, faithless, foolish insulters, if they are attacked on the score of being Christians, still have faith in their heart, and fear to confess it by their lips; they refrain their lips from uttering what they have within, what they know to be true. But the Lord reproves these persons; Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father; that is, 'I will not acknowledge him; because he was ashamed to confess Me before men, I will not confess him before My Father.' Let then the lips utter what the heart holds; this is prescribed against fear. Let the heart really hold what the lips utter; this is prescribed against hypocrisy. For sometimes there is fear, and you dare not say what you know to be true, what you believe. Sometimes hypocrisy; you say, and do not in reality believe in your heart. Let your lips agree with your heart. While you are seeking peace from God, be at peace with yourself; let there be no disagreement between your lips and your heart. Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. How saith he? What doth the Lord know? Inwardly in the heart, where man seeth not. Therefore he said also, I have believed. Lo! the heart holds, it already holds that which God may see. Let him not refrain his lips. He doth not refrain them. For what saith he? Therefore have I spoken. And because he spoke that which he believed, inquiring what he should render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward him; he adds, I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the

Lord. He shrunk not back through fear of the Lord's words, Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of? For he confesses by the lips what he held in his heart; he attained even unto grace to suffer. And because he attained unto the grace to suffer, what harm did the enemy do? For in sooth right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. By those very deaths, for which the heathen madly raged, we are this day refreshed. We are celebrating the Martyrs' anniversary; we are setting before us the Martyrs' examples; we are "considering their faith;" the manner in which they were discovered; dragged forth, and stood before their judges. Knit together in the bond of unity in the Catholic Church, without aught of hypocrisy they confessed Christ: they, as being the members, desired to follow the Head, Which had gone before them! But who were they that desired this? Those who were patient in tortures; faithful in confession; truthful in their words. For they launched against the faces of those who were questioning them, the arrows of God; and they wounded them unto resentment; many they wounded too unto salvation. All these things we set before ourselves, and we are gazing upon them, and praying that we may imitate them. These are our Christian spectacles; on these God looks down from on high; to these He encourages us; for these He aids us; for these contests He sets prizes before us, and bestows them. Lo! I have not refrained my lips. See thou fear not, and so refrain thy lips. O Lord, Thou knowest; that that is really in the heart, which is uttered by the lips.

17. Ver. 10. I have not hid my righteousness within my heart. What is meant by my righteousness? My faith. For, the just shall live by faith. As suppose the persecutor under threat of punishment, as they were once allowed to do, puts you to the question, 'What art thou? Pagan or Christian?' 'A Christian.' That is his righteousness. He believeth; he lives by faith. He doth not hide his righteousness within his heart. He has not said in his heart, 'I do indeed believe in Christ; but I will not tell what I believe to this persecutor, who is raging against me, and threatening me. My God knoweth that inwardly, within my heart, I do believe. He knoweth that I renounce Him not.' Lo! you say that you have this inwardly within your heart! What have you upon your lips? 'I am not a Christian.' Your lips bear witness against your heart. I have not hid my righteousness within my heart.

18. I have declared Thy Truth and Thy Salvation. I have declared Thy Christ. This is the meaning of, I have declared Thy Truth and Thy Salvation. How is Thy Truth Christ? I am the Truth. How is Christ His Salvation? Simeon recognised the infant in His Mother's hands in the Temple, and said, For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation. The old man recognised the little child; the old man having himself become a little child in that infant, having been renewed by faith. For he had received an oracle from God; and it said this, 'The Lord had said unto him, that he was not to depart out of this life, until he had seen the Salvation of God. This Salvation of God it is a good thing to have shewn unto men; but let them cry, Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy Salvation. But the Salvation of God is among all nations. For after he had said in a certain place, God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. That Thy way may be known upon earth, he adds, Thy saving health [is] among all nations. First he says, That Thy way be known upon earth; and he goes on to say, Thy Salvation is among all nations. As if it were said unto him, "What way is that which thou wouldest fain know? Men come themselves to the way. For does the way ever come to men? Our Way did come unto men; found them wandering from the Way; called them to Itself when walking without It. Walk in Me, It saith, and ye shall not go astray. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Lest you should say, Where is God's Way? To what country shall I go? What mountain shall I ascend? What plain shall I enquire after? 'Enquirest thou after God's Way?' is the answer. The Salvation of of God is God's Way; and it is in every place, because, Thy Salvation is among all nations. I have declared Thy Truth, and Thy Salvation.

19. I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation. Let us be there; let us also be numbered among the members of this Body: let us not keep back the mercy of the Lord, and the Truth of the Lord. Wouldest thou hear what the mercy of the Lord is? Depart from thy sins; He will forgive thy sins. Wouldest thou hear what the truth of the Lord is? Hold fast righteousness. Thy righteousness shall receive a crown? For mercy is announced to you now; Truth is to be shewn unto thee hereafter. For God is not merciful in such a way as not to be just, nor just in such a way as not to be merciful. Does that mercy seem to thee an

inconsiderable one? He will not impute unto thee all thy former sins: thou hast lived ill up to this present day; thou art still living; this day live well; then thou wilt not conceal this mercy. If this is meant by mercy, what is meant by truth? Before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; He shall set the sheep on His right hand, the goats on His left. What awaits the sheep? Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. What is the doom of the goats? Go into everlasting fire. There there is no place for repentance. Because thou didst despise the mercy of God, thou shalt feel His Truth. If however thou hast not despised His mercy, thou shalt rejoice in His Truth.

20. Ver. 11. Remove not Thou Thy mercies far from me, O Lord. He is turning his attention to the wounded members. Because I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation, from the Unity of the Universal Church, look Thou on Thy afflicted members, look on those who are guilty of sins of omission, and on those who are guilty of sins of commission: and withhold not Thou Thy mercies. Thy mercy and Thy Truth have continually preserved me. I should not dare to turn from my evil way, were I not assured of remission; I could not endure so as to persevere, if I were not assured of the fulfilment of Thy promise. Thy mercy and Thy Truth have continually preserved me. I perceive that Thou art good; I perceive that Thou art just. I love Thee in that Thou art good; I fear Thee in that Thou art just. Love and fear effectually induce me; because Thy mercy and Thy Truth have alway preserved me. Why is it they that preserve one? and why is the eye not to be turned away from them? Even because,

Ver. 12. Innumerable evils have compassed me about. Who can number sins? Who can count his own sins, and those of others? A burden under which he was groaning, who said, Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults; and from the faults of others, spare Thou Thy servant, O Lord. Our own are too little; those of others are added to the burden. I fear for myself; I fear for a virtuous brother, I have to bear with a wicked brother; and under such burthen what shall we be, if God's mercy were to fail? But Thou, Lord, remove not afar off. Be Thou near unto us! To whom is the Lord near? Even

unto them that are of a broken heart. He is far from the proud: He is near to the humble. For though the Lord is high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly. But let not those that are proud think themselves to be unobserved: for the things that are high, He beholdeth afar off. He beheld afar off the Pharisee, who boasted himself; He was near at hand to succour the Publican, who made confession. The one extolled his own merits; and concealed his wounds; the other boasted not of his merits, but laid bare his wounds. He came to the Physician; he knew that he was sick; and that he required to be made whole; he dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven: he smote upon his breast. He spared not himself, that God might spare him; he acknowledged himself guilty, that God might ignore the charge against him. He punished himself, that God might free him from punishment. Such expressions are there here; let us religiously hear, let us religiously love them: let us say these things with our hearts, with our tongues, with our very inmost marrow. Let no one think himself to be righteous: he who thus speaks, “lives;” and, O that he may live! He lives up to this time in this world; he lives up to this time, still, with death, he lives: and even if the Spirit is life because of righteousness, yet is the body nevertheless dead because of sin. And the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. It belongs to thee then to cry, it belongs to thee to groan: it belongs to thee to confess thy sin: not to exalt thyself, not to boast thyself, nor to glory in thine own deserts. For even if thou hast any thing that thou mayest rejoice in, what is there that thou hast not received? (Ver. 12.) For innumerable evils have compassed me about.

21. Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I could not see. There is a something for us to see; what prevents us so that we see it not? Is it not iniquity? From beholding this [natural] light your eye is prevented perhaps by some humour penetrating into it; perhaps by smoke, or dust, or by something else that has been thrown into it: and you have not been able to raise your wounded eye to contemplate this light of day. What then? Will you be able to lift up your wounded heart unto God? Must it not be first healed, in order that thou mayest see? Do you not shew your pride, when you say, “First let me see, and then I will believe? Who is there who says this? For who that would fain see, says, ‘Let me see, and then I will

believe?’ I am about to manifest the Light unto thee; or rather the Light Itself would fain manifest Itself to thee! To whom? It cannot manifest Itself to the blind. He does not see. Whence is it that he seeth not? It is that the eye is clogged by the multitude of sins. For what does he say? Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I could not see. Let his iniquities then be put away; let his sins be loosed; let the weight be removed from off the eye; let that which is wounded be healed; let the stinging ointment (as it were) of the Commandment be applied. First accomplish what is prescribed to thee: heal thine heart; make thine heart clean. “Love thine enemy.” “And who loves his enemy?” This is the prescription of your physician; it is bitter, but it is for your health. “What would you have me do to you?” (he says.) “You are so distressed in order to be healed.” And he says more than this: “once healed, it will not be difficult for you; once healed, you will experience delight in loving your enemy; do but endeavour in order that you may be healed. In tribulations, in distresses, in trials be strong; endure to the end; it is the hand of a physician, not of an assassin.” “See,” (says he,) “having embraced the commandments, and held fast the faith, I will, as you bid me, first heal my heart; when healed, what shall I see? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” “This” (says he) “I cannot do now; mine iniquities have taken hold of me, so that I could not see.”

22. They are more than the hairs of my head. He subjects the number of the hairs of his head to calculation. Who is there can calculate the number of the hairs of his head? Much less can he tell the number of his sins, which exceed the number of the hairs of his head. They seem to be minute; but they are many in number. You have guarded against great ones; you do not now commit adultery, or murder; you do not plunder the property of others; you do not blaspheme; and do not bear false witness; those are the weightier kind of sins. You have guarded against great sins, what are you doing about your smaller ones? You have cast off the weight; beware lest the sand overwhelm you. They are more in number than the hairs of my head.

23. And my heart hath forsaken me. What wonder if thine heart is forsaken by thy God, when it is even forsaken by itself? What is meant by “faileth me,” “forsaketh me?” Is not capable of knowing itself. He means this; My heart hath forsaken me. I would fain see God with mine heart; and cannot

from the multitude of my sins: that is not enough; mine heart does not even know itself. For no one thoroughly knows himself: let no one presume upon his own state. Was Peter able to comprehend with his own heart the state of his own heart, who said, I will be with Thee even unto death? There was a false presumption in the heart; there was lurking in that heart at the same time a real fear: and the heart was not able to comprehend the state of the heart. Its state was unknown to the sick heart itself: it was manifest to the physician. That which was foretold of him was fulfilled. God knew that in him which he knew not in himself: because his heart had forsaken him, his heart was unknown to his heart. And mine heart hath forsaken me. What then? What do we say? What do we cry?

Ver. 13. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me. As if he were saying, ‘If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.’ Be pleased to deliver me. O Lord, look upon me to help me. Look, that is, on the penitent members, members that lie in pain, members that are writhing under the instruments of the surgeon; but still in hope. O Lord, look upon me to help me.

24. Ver. 14. Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it. For in a certain passage he makes an accusation, and says, I looked upon my right hand, and beheld; and there was no man who sought after my soul; that is, there was no man to imitate Mine example. Christ in His Passion is the Speaker. I looked on my right hand, (that is, not on the ungodly Jews, but on Mine own right hand, the Apostles,) and there was no man who sought after My soul. So thoroughly was there no man to seek after My soul, that he who had presumed on his own strength, denied My soul. But because a man’s soul is sought after in two ways, either in order that you may enjoy his society; or that you may persecute him; therefore he here speaks of others, whom he would have confounded and ashamed, who are seeking after his soul. But lest you should understand it in the same way as when he complains of some who did not seek after his soul, He adds, to destroy it; that is, they seek after my soul in order to my death. Let them be ashamed and confounded. And, in truth, many “sought after His soul,” and were ashamed and confounded: they sought after His soul; and (as it seemed to them) they “took it away.” But it was He Who had power to lay it down, and power to take it again. Therefore they

triumphed when He laid it down; they were confounded when He took it again. Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek after my soul to take it away.

25. Let them be turned backward and put to shame that wish me evil. Turned backwards. Let us not take this in a bad sense. He wishes them well; and it is His voice, Who said from the Cross, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Wherefore then doth he say to them, that they should return backwards? Because they who before were proud, so that they fell, are now become humble, so that they may rise again. For when they are before, they are wishing to take precedence of their Lord; to be better than He; but if they go behind Him, they acknowledge Him to be better than they; they acknowledge that He ought to go before; that He should precede, they follow. Thence He thus rebukes Peter giving Him evil counsel. For the Lord, when about to suffer for our salvation, also foretold what was to happen concerning that Passion itself; and Peter says, Be it far from Thee, “God forbid it!” “This shall not be!” He would fain have gone before his Lord; would have given counsel to his Master! But the Lord, that He might make him not go before Him, but follow after Him, says, Get thee behind, Satan! It is for this reason He said Satan, because thou art seeking to go before Him, Whom thou oughtest to follow; but if thou art behind, if thou follow Him, thou wilt henceforth not be Satan. What then? Upon this Rock I will build My Church.

26. Let them be turned backward, and put to shame, that wish me evil. They are evil-wishers, who even when they “give good words,” do nevertheless, as far as depends on their hearts, curse. You say to some one, “Be a Christian;” [he says,] “Aye, do you be a Christian! You!” He spoke of a good thing; but it is not what he said, but with what mind he said it, that is taken into the account; even as it was accounted to the Jews, when that man who was “born blind” was made to see. When they were assailing him with insults, and pressing him hard, he said to them, Will ye also be His disciples? Then they cursed him. This is what the Evangelist says; they cursed him, and said, “Be thou His disciple!” Though they cursed, the Lord blessed! He fulfilled what they said; still He recompensed to them the evil which they had spoken. Let them be turned backwards, and put to shame,

who wish me evil. But there are others also who are not good either, who wish us good things, who are also to be guarded against. For just as the others speak evil, while they speak of what is good in us, but with a malicious disposition, so are there those who speak of what is evil in us, but with a good intention. I mean this. He who says to thee, "Be you a Christian!" speaks of your good qualities, but with a bad intention; but he who says to you, "There is no man better than yourself," if he says that in speaking of bad actions, (seeing that The wicked is praised in his own heart's desires, and he who doeth unrighteously is blessed,) he is speaking of your evil in terms of praise; just as the other spoke of your good qualities, and spoke evil of them; so he speaks of your bad qualities, and speaks well of them. But beware of both the one and the other description of enemy; and shun them. The one is raging against you, the other fawning upon you: the one employs reviling, the other praise; but the one is an enemy in his reviling, the other is insidious and designing in his praise. Beware of both of them; pray for protection against both. For he who prayed, Let them be turned backward, and put to shame, who wish me evil, thought of another class, who are treacherously wishing one evil, and "giving us good words" falsely.

Ver. 15. Let them speedily bear away their own confusion, that say unto me, Well done! Well done! They praise you without reason. 'A great man! A good man! A man of education and of learning; but why a Christian? They praise those things in you which you should wish not to be praised; they find fault with that at which you rejoice. But if perhaps you say, "What is it you praise in me, O man?" That I am a virtuous man? A just man? If you think this, Christ made me this; praise Him. But the other says, "Be it far from you. Do yourself no wrong! You yourself made yourself such." Let them be confounded who say unto me, Well done! Well done! And what follows?

Ver. 16. Let all those that seek Thee, O Lord, rejoice and be glad. Those who seek not me, but Thee; who say not to me, Well done! Well done! but see me glory in Thee, if I have any thing whereof to glory; for he who glories, let him glory in the Lord. Let all those who seek Thee, Lord, rejoice and be glad.

And say continually, The Lord be magnified. For even if the sinner becometh righteous, thou shouldest give the glory to Him, Who justifieth the ungodly. Whether therefore it be a sinner, let Him be praised, Who calls him to forgiveness; or one already walking in the way of righteousness, let Him be praised, Who calls him to receive the crown! Let the Name of the Lord be magnified continually by such as love Thy salvation.

Ver. 17. But I. I for whom they were seeking evil, I whose life they were seeking, that they might take it away. But turn thee to another description of persons. But I to whom they said, “Well done! Well done!” I am poor and needy. There is nothing in me that may be praised as mine own. Let Him rend my sackcloth in sunder, and cover me with His robe. For, Now I live, not I myself; but Christ liveth in me. If it is Christ that liveth in thee, and all that thou hast is Christ’s, and all that thou art to have hereafter is Christ’s also; what art thou in thyself? I am poor and needy. Now I am not rich, because I am not proud. He was rich who said, Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are; but the publican was poor, who said, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner! The one was belching from his fulness; the other from want was crying piteously, I am poor and needy! And what wouldest thou do, O poor and needy man? Beg at God’s door; Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee.—As for me, I am poor and needy.

Yet the Lord careth for me. Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass. What canst thou effect for thyself by taking care? what canst thou provide for thyself? Let Him Who made thee care for thee. He Who cared for thee before thou wert, how shall He fail to have a care of thee, now that thou art what He would have thee be? For now thou art a believer, now thou art walking in the “way of righteousness.” Shall not He have a care for thee, Who maketh His sun rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust? Shall He neglect, desert, forsake thee, now that thou art a just man, and alive by faith? Nay even here He cherishes thee, even here He assists thee, even here furnishes thee with what is necessary for thee, and taketh away whatever is injurious. By “giving” He comforteth thee, that thou mayest be able to endure unto the end; by “taking away” He chastens thee, that thou mayest not be cast away. The Lord careth for thee. Be not thou careful about thyself. He bears thee Who created thee! Do not

thou choose to fall out of the hands of thy Maker; thou wilt be broken, if thou fallest out of thy Maker's hand. But it is a virtuous will that enables thee to continue in the hand of thy Maker. Say, "My God hath willed it so! He will sustain me; He will hold me fast!" Cast thyself upon Him; think not that He is avoid, so that thou wouldest fall headlong. Think not so in thyself. He hath said, I fill heaven and earth also. In no place is He wanting to thee. Be not thou wanting to Him; to thyself. The Lord careth for me.

Ver. 17. Thou art my Help, and my Deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. He is calling upon God, imploring Him, fearing lest he should fall away: Make no tarrying. What is meant by "make no tarrying." We lately read concerning the days of tribulation; Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. The members of Christ—the Body of Christ extended every where—are asking of God, as one single person, one single poor man, and beggar! For He too was poor, Who though He was rich, yet became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich. It is He that maketh rich those who are the true poor; and maketh poor those who are falsely rich. He crieth unto Him; From the end of the earth I cried unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. There will come days of tribulations, and of greater tribulations; they will come even as the Scripture speaks: and as days advance, so are tribulations increased also. Let no one promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. My brethren, consider, I pray you, whether our Scriptures have failed in any point; if they have said any thing, and the event has proved other than they said: it needs must be that even unto the end all things must in like manner come to pass, even as they have said. In this world Scripture doth not promise us ought but tribulations, distresses, difficulties, increase of sorrow, abundance of temptations. Let us prepare ourselves earnestly against these things, that we may not faint through want of preparation. You heard it said just now, Woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck. They are with child, who are big with hope; they are giving suck, (i.e. feeding their babes at their breast,) who have already obtained what they desired. For the woman with child is big with a son, in hope; she doth not yet see her son. She who is now giving suck, is embracing what she hoped for. Let us then suppose a case in point, by way of illustration. That villa of my neighbour's is a handsome one! O that it were mine! O that I could join it to my own; and

that I could make this estate and that but one! Avarice too has a love of unity. The quality it loves is good; but it knows not in what object that quality should rightly be loved. See he covets his neighbour's villa; but that neighbour is a rich, not a needy man; a man of consideration also, and of influence too; a man perhaps the effects of whose power you would have reason to fear, rather than to have any hopes of his property. The heart having no hope doth not conceive any wish. The soul doth not become pregnant. But if there be near a poor neighbour, who is either in necessity, so that he may possibly sell it, or against whom means of pressure may be employed, so that he may be compelled to sell, you fix your eye upon it; you hope for the villa; the soul conceives, is impregnated with the hope; the hope that you will be able to obtain the little villa, and the property of your poor neighbour. And when that poor man is reduced to difficulties, he comes to his richer neighbour, the man to whom he is perhaps in the habit of paying court, to whom he usually gives place, and rises up at his approach, and salutes him by bowing the head. 'Give me money,' he says, 'I am in difficulties, I am pressed by my creditor.' And the other answers, 'I have not now the money by me.' If he would sell the land, he would have it. We recognise this picture; such (persons) once were among us, may they be so no longer! It is not the case with us that we were alive yesterday, and to-day are not; there is yet room for amendment. Not as yet has that separation of the one class to the right hand, the other to the left, taken place. We are not yet in hell, where that rich man was, thirsting and longing for a "drop of water." Let us hear, let us amend ourselves, while we are yet alive! Let us not set our hopes on others' possessions, and conceiving the hope, become pregnant with it: let us not attain to them either, and coming to possess them embrace them, as mothers their children. For woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days. We must change the heart, we must "lift up our hearts:" we must not in heart dwell here; it is an unwholesome region; let it suffice us, that in the flesh we must dwell here. Let not that come to pass which need not. Let "the evil of the day" be sufficient for it. In heart let us dwell above. If ye be risen again with Christ, (saith he to the faithful, to them that are now receiving the Lord's Body and Blood,) If ye are risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: seek those things which are above, not those on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

For that which is promised you doth not yet appear; and yet it is already “prepared” for you, but you see it not. You would fain conceive a hope; conceive it from this quarter. Be that thy hope. Then will the birth be certain, not abortive, nor thy offspring short-lived: what thou bringest forth thou shalt embrace for eternity. For thus it is said by Isaiah, We have been with child, we have brought forth the Spirit of salvation. It is therefore yet in reserve; it is not yet given, but it is as yet to be given. How great gifts, brethren, have been given already! As the Scriptures say; Who can number them? There it is written concerning the existence of the Church; and we see that the Church does exist. There it is written concerning idols, that they shall cease; and we see that they are not. There it is written that the Jews were to lose the kingdom; and we see that the fact is so. There it is written concerning the heretics, that they should exist; and we see that it is so. There it is written also concerning the Day of Judgment; there it is written concerning the rewards of the good, and the punishment of the bad. In all things we have found God faithful. Will He fail and deceive us in the last? The Lord will care for me, Thou art my help and my Deliverer! Make no tarrying, O my God. ‘Unless those days should be shortened, no flesh could endure unto the end. But for the elect’s sake they shall be shortened.’ Those days will be days of tribulation; but they will not be so long as they are expected to be. They will soon pass away. The rest that is to come will not pass away. Although even a long duration of evil would be worth enduring, for a blessing of infinite duration.

PSALM 41

To the People, on the Feast of the Martyrs.

The solemn day of the Martyrs hath dawned; therefore to the glory of the Passion of Christ, the Captain of Martyrs, Who spared not Himself, ordering His soldiers to the fight; but first fought, first conquered, that their fighting He might encourage by His example, and aid with His majesty, and crown with His promise: let us hear somewhat from this Psalm pertaining to His Passion. I commend unto you oftentimes, nor grieve I to repeat, what for you is useful to retain, that our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh often of Himself, that is, in His own Person, Which is our Head; often in the person of His Body, which are we and His Church; but so that the words sound as from the mouth of one, that we may understand the Head and the Body to consist together in the unity of integrity, and not be separated the one from the other; as in that marriage whereof it is said, They two shall be one flesh. If then we acknowledge two in one flesh, let us acknowledge two in one voice. First, that which responding to the reader we have sung, though it be from the middle of the Psalm, from that I will take the beginning of this Sermon.

Ver. 5. Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. This is the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ: but see if herein are not understood the members also. This was spoken also when our Lord Himself walked in the flesh here on earth. For when they saw the multitude following His authority; His divinity, and majesty set forth by miracles; when this saw the Jews, of whom the Lord Himself put forth a similitude, that they said, This is the heir, come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours; they spoke one to another, that is among themselves, whence is that word of Caiaphas, the high priest, Perceive ye [that a great multitude followeth Him]; behold the world is gone after Him. If we let Him thus alone, the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. It is

expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. But the words of him, not knowing what he said, hath the Evangelist explained to us, saying, This spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation. Yet they, when they saw the people go after Him, said, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish; that is, when we have slain Him, then shall His Name be no more in the earth, nor shall He seduce any, being dead; but by that very slaying of Him shall men understand, that He was but a man whom they followed, that there was in Him no hope of salvation, and shall desert His Name, and it shall no more be. He died, and His Name perished not, but His Name was sown as seed: He died, but He was a grain, which dying, the corn immediately sprang up. When glorified then was our Lord Jesus Christ, began they much more, and much more numerously to trust in Him; then began His members to hear what the Head had heard. Now then our Lord Jesus Christ being in heaven set down, and Himself in us labouring on earth, still spake His enemies, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. For hence stirred up the devil persecutions in the Church to destroy the Name of Christ. Unless haply ye think, brethren, that those Pagans, when they raged against Christians, said not this among themselves, ‘to blot out the Name of Christ from the earth.’ That Christ might die again, not in the Head, but in His Body, were slain also the Martyrs. To the multiplying of the Church availed the Holy Blood poured forth, to help Its seminating came also the death of the Martyrs. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. More and more were the Christians multiplied, nor was it fulfilled which spake the enemies, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Even now also is it spoken. Down sit the Pagans, and compute them the years, they hear their fanatics saying, A time shall come when Christians shall be none, and those idols must be worshipped as before they were worshipped: still say they, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Twice conquered, now the third time be wise! Christ died, His Name has not perished: the Martyrs died, multiplied more is the Church, groweth through all nations the Name of Christ. He Who foretold of His own Death, and of His Resurrection, He Who foretold of His Martyrs’ death, and of their crown, He Himself foretold of His Church things yet to come, if truth He spake twice, has He the third time lied? Vain then is what ye believe against Him; better is it that ye believe in

Him, that ye may understand upon the needy and poor One; that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich. But now because He became poor He is contemned, and, say they, He was but man. What was He? He died, He was crucified; He is a Man ye worship, in a Man ye have hope, a dead Man ye adore. Thou art deceived, Understand upon the needy and poor One, that through His poverty thou mayest be made rich. What is, Understand upon the needy and poor One? To accept Christ Himself, needy and poor, saying in another Psalm, I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon Me. What is it to Understand upon the needy and poor One? That He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and was found in fashion as a man; that He was rich with God, poor with us; rich in heaven, poor in earth; rich being God, poor being Man. Does this then disturb thee, that thou seest a man, that thou lookest upon flesh, that thou beholdest death, that thou deridest a cross? Doth this disturb thee? Understand upon the needy and poor One. What is this? Understand, that where is exposed to thee infirmity, therein lieth hid divinity. Rich was He, because so He is; poor was He, because so but now wast thou. But yet is His poverty our riches; even as His infirmity is our strength; as His foolishness is our wisdom; as His mortality is our immortality. What the poor is, consider; Him measure not by others' poverty. To fill the poor came He, Who became poor: wherefore open the bosom of faith, receive thou the poor One, lest poor thou remain.

2. Ver. 1. Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One: in the evil day shall the Lord deliver Him. For the evil day will come: will thou, nill thou, come it will: the Day of Judgment will come upon thee, an evil day if thou understand not the needy and poor. For what now thou wilt not believe, shall be made manifest in the end. But neither shalt thou escape, when it shall be made manifest, because thou believest not, when it is kept secret. Invited art thou, what thou seest not to believe, lest when thou see, thou be put to the blush. Understand then upon the needy and poor One, that is, Christ: understand in Him the hidden riches, Whom poor thou seest. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For thereby in the evil day shall He deliver thee, in that He is God: but in that He is man, and that which in Him is human hath raised to life, and changed

for the better, He hath lifted (thee) to heaven. But He Who is God, Who would have one person in man and with man, could neither decrease nor increase, neither die nor rise again. He died out of man's infirmity, but God dieth not. In that the Word of God dieth not, wonder not, since neither dieth the soul of the Martyr. Heard we not but now the Lord Himself saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul? Did then, the Martyrs dying, the Martyrs' souls not die, and Christ dying, should the Word die? Surely the Word of God is much greater than the soul of man; for the soul of man was made by God; and if it was made by God, by the Word was it made; for all things were made by Him. Therefore neither dieth the Word, since even the soul made by the Word dieth not. But as we rightly say, Such a man died, though his soul dieth not; so we rightly say, Christ died, though His Divinity dieth not. Wherefore died? Because needy and poor. Let not His death offend thee, and avert thee from beholding His Divinity. Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. Consider also the poor, the needy, the hungry and thirsty, the naked, the sick, the prisoners; understand also upon such poor, for if upon such thou understand, thou understandest upon Him Who said, I was an hungred, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, naked, sick, in prison; so in the evil day shall the Lord deliver thee.

3. And see thy blessedness. The Lord preserve him. The Prophet wisheth well to him that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. That well-wishing is a promise. Secure may they wait, who this do. The Lord preserve him, and make him alive. What is preserve him, and make him alive? To what pertaineth, make him alive? To the future life. For he is made alive who was dead. But can a dead man understand upon the needy and poor? Nay, but that making alive He promiseth to us, whereof saith the Apostle, The body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if He who raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. This then is the making alive which is promised to him that understandeth upon the needy and poor. But because, saith the Apostle to Timothy, Having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come; lest they should think who understand upon the needy and poor, that they should be received indeed into heaven, but

neglected on earth, and should not hope but for that which shall be to eternity, but in that which is at present, should think that God careth not for His Saints and faithful ones; therefore, when he had said what most chiefly we ought to expect, The Lord preserve him, and make him alive, He looked back to this life, and bless him, saith he, upon earth. Raise then thine eyes to these promises with Christian faith: God deserteth thee not on earth, and He promiseth somewhat in heaven. For many evil Christians, inspectors of Calendars, and inquirers and observers of times and days, when therein they have begun to be reprov'd by us, or by some good and better Christians, asking why they do these things, answer, These things are necessary for this present time; but we are Christians for the sake of life eternal; therefore believe we in Christ that He may give us life eternal; for this life temporal in which we live, pertaineth not to His regard. Remains only that they should briefly say this, that for life eternal God, and for this life present the devil, be worshipped. To these answereth Christ Himself, Ye cannot serve two masters. And One thou worshippest for what thou expectest in heaven, and another thou worshippest for what thou expectest on earth. How much better to worship One, Who made both Heaven and earth. He Who cared that earth should be, doth He neglect His own image on earth? Therefore, The Lord preserve him, and make him alive, that understandeth upon the needy and poor: moreover, though He make him alive to eternity, bless him upon earth.

4. Ver. 2. And deliver him not into the hand of his enemy. The enemy is the devil. Let none think of a man his enemy, when he hears these words. Haply one thought of his neighbour, of him who had a suit with him in court, of him who would take from him his own possession, of him who would force him to sell to him his house. Think not this; but that enemy think of, of whom said the Lord, An enemy hath done this. For He it is who suggests that for things earthly he be worshipped, for overthrow the Christian Name this enemy cannot. For he hath seen himself conquered by the fame and praises of Christ, he hath seen, whereas he slew Christ's Martyrs, that they are crowned, he triumphed over. He hath begun to be unable to persuade men that Christ is nought; and because by reviling Christ, he now with difficulty deceives, by lauding Christ, he endeavours to deceive. Before this what said he? Whom worship ye? A Jew, dead, crucified, a man of no

moment, who could not even from himself drive away death. When after His Name he saw running the whole human race, saw that in the Name of the Crucified temples are thrown down, idols are broken, sacrifices abolished; and that all these things predicted in the Prophets are considered by men, by men with wonder astonished, and closing now their hearts against the reviling of Christ; he clothes himself with praise of Christ, and begins to deter from the faith in another manner. Great is the law of Christ, powerful is that law, divine, ineffable! but who fulfilleth it? In the name of our Saviour, tread upon the lion and the dragon. By reviling openly roared the lion; by lauding craftily lurks the dragon. Let them come to the faith, who doubted; and not say, Who fulfilleth it? If on their own strength they presume, they will not fulfil it. Presuming on the grace of God let them believe, presuming (on it) let them come; to be aided come, not to be judged. So live all the faithful in the Name of Christ, each one in his degree fulfilling the commands of Christ, whether married, or celibates and virgins, they live as much as God granteth them to live; neither presume they in their own strength, but know that in Him they ought to glory. For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Say not to me, Who fulfilleth it? He in me fulfilleth it, Who to the poor came rich: poor indeed to the poor, but to the empty full. This thinking, whoso understandeth upon the needy and poor, and despiseth not the poverty of Christ, he understandeth the riches of Christ, he is blessed upon earth, and is not delivered into the hand of his enemy, of him that would persuade him that God be worshipped for things heavenly, the devil be worshipped for things earthly. And deliver him not into the hand of his enemy.

5. Ver. 3. The Lord help him. But when? Haply in heaven, haply in the life eternal, that so it remain to worship the devil for earthly needs, for the necessities of this life. Far be it! Thou hast promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. He came unto thee on earth, by Whom were made heaven and earth. Consider then what He saith, The Lord help him, on his bed of pain. The bed of pain is the infirmity of the flesh; lest thou shouldest say, I cannot hold, and carry, and tie up my flesh; thou art aided that thou mayest. The Lord help thee on thy bed of pain. Thy bed did carry thee, thou carriedst not thy bed, but wast a paralytic inwardly; He cometh

Who saith to thee, Take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house. The Lord help him on his bed of pain. Then to the Lord Himself He turneth, as though it were asked, Why then, since the Lord helpeth us, suffer we such great ills in this life, such great scandals, such great labours, such disquiet from the flesh and the world? He turneth to God, and as though explaining to us the counsel of His healing, He saith, Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. What is, Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. By the bed is understood any thing earthly. Every soul that is infirm in this life seeketh for itself somewhat whereon to rest, because intensity of labour, and of the soul extended toward God, it can hardly endure perpetually, somewhat it seeketh on earth whereon to rest, and in a manner with a kind of pausing to recline, as are those things which innocent ones love. For neither of the desires of the wicked must we now speak, as that many rest in theatres, many rest in the Circus, in the Amphitheatre, many rest in gambling, many in luxury of taverns, many in lust of adultery, many in violence of rapine, many in guile and treachery of frauds, in all these do men rest. What is rest? Delight in them. But remove we all these; come we to the innocent man; He resteth in his house, his family, his wife, his children; in his poverty, his little farm, his orchard planted with his own hand, in some building fabricated with his own study; in these rest the innocent. But yet God willing us not to have love but of life eternal, even with these, though innocent delights, mixeth bitterness, that even in these we may suffer tribulation, and so He turneth all our bed in our infirmity. Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. Let him not then complain, when in these things which he hath innocently, he suffereth some tribulations. He is taught to love the better, by the bitterness of the worse; lest going a traveller to his country, he choose the inn instead of his own home. Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity.

6. But why this? Because He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Why this? Because to men sinning was it said, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. Therefore because all these chastisements, in which all our bed is turned in our infirmity, man ought to acknowledge that he suffers for sin; let him turn himself, and say what follows; I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. O Lord, by tribulations do Thou exercise me; to be scourged Thou judgest every son whom Thou wilt

receive, Who sparedst not even the Only-Begotten. He indeed without sin was scourged; but I say, Be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. If He was lanced, Who rottenness had none, if He, our very Medicine, refused not the medicinal fire; ought we to bear impatiently the Physician burning and cutting, that is, by every tribulation exercising us, and from sin healing us? Wholly let us commit ourselves to the Physician's hand, for He errs not, to cut the sound for the rotten: He knoweth whereon He looketh, He knoweth what is vicious, because Himself made our nature; what Himself created, what by our lust hath been added, He discerneth. He knoweth that to man sound He gave commandment, lest he should fall into sickness; that He spake in Paradise. Eat this, eat not that. Man sound heard not the Physician's commandment, that he might not fall; let him hear it even sick, that he may rise again. I said, Lord, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. In my acts, in my sins, I accuse not fortune; I say not, This did fate for me; I say not, an adulterer Venus made me, and a robber Mars made me, a miser Saturn made me. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. Said Christ this? This said our Head, without sin? This said He, Who restored that which He took not away? Said He, the only free among the dead? For free was He among the dead, because without sin: for whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. This then said He Himself? Yea, Himself by His Members: for the voice of His Members is the voice of Himself, and the voice of our Head is our own voice. For we were in Him when He said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. For neither feared He to die, Who had come to die. Nor refused He to die, Who had power to lay down His life, and had power to take it again: but this spake the Members for the Head, this spake the Head for the Members. In Him then we find our own voice, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. For in Him were we, when He said, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? For in that Psalm, in the head whereof is this verse, it is said next following, The words of my sins. Whose sins in Him, but that our old man is crucified in Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin? Unto Him and in Him let us say, I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

7. Ver. 5. Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Of this we have already spoken, and from this began; and other things to say, need not to repeat, what by so recent a discourse has been impressed on your ears and hearts.

8. Ver. 6. And entered in to see. What Christ suffered, that suffereth also the Church; what the Head suffered, that suffer also the Members. For the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. If, said He, they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household.

And entered in to see. Even Judas was with our Head, to our Head he entered in to see; that is, to spy out: not to have whereon He might believe, but to find what he might betray. Lo, he entered in to see, and this is set forth in our Head for an example. What of those Members after the assumption of our Head? Saith not the Apostle Paul, And that because of false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty. These also then entered in to see. For they are hypocrites, evil pretenders, joining themselves to us with feigned charity, catching at every movement, every word of the Saints, seeking snares against all. And what befalleth them? See what followeth, Their heart speaketh vain things: that is, they speak as with feigned love; vain is that which they speak, true is it not, solid is it not. And because they seek to find matter for an accusation, what saith He? They have gathered iniquity to themselves. For enemies prepared with calumnies, to themselves seem as great, because they have whereof to accuse. They gather iniquity to themselves. To themselves, saith He, not to Me. As Judas to himself, not to Christ; so the pretenders of the Church to themselves, not to us: for of them is it said also elsewhere, Iniquity hath lied to itself. They have gathered iniquity to themselves. And because they entered in to see, they went abroad and told it. He who entered in to see, went abroad and told it. Would that he were within and spake truth; and not going abroad to speak falsely. A betrayer and persecutor is he, going abroad he telleth. If to Christ's Members thou belongest, come within, cling to the Head. Endure the tares if thou art wheat, endure the chaff if thou art grain. Endure the bad fish within the net if thou art a good

fish. Wherefore before the time of winnowing dost thou fly away? Wherefore before the time of harvest, dost thou root up the corn also with thyself? Wherefore before thou art come to the shore, hast thou broken the nets? They go abroad, and tell it.

9. Ver. 7. All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing. Against Me all unto the same thing. How much better with me unto the same thing, than against me unto the same thing. What is, Against me unto the same thing? With one counsel, with one conspiring. Christ then speaketh unto thee, Ye consent against Me, consent ye to Me: why against Me? wherefore not with Me. That same thing if ye had always had, ye had not divided you into schisms. For, saith the Apostle, I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you. All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing: against Me do they devise evil to Me. To themselves rather, for they have gathered iniquity to themselves: but therefore to Me, because by their intention they are to be weighed: for not because to do nothing was in their power, to do nothing was in their will. For the devil lusted to extinguish Christ, and Judas would slay Christ; yet Christ slain and rising again, we are made alive, but to the devil and to Judas is rendered the reward of their evil will, not of our salvation. For that ye may know that by the intention is every one to be weighed for retribution either of reward or punishment, we find men that have spoken good to another, and such good as we wish for, and yet are called evil speakers. When the blind man of old, now enlightened both in body and heart, convicted the Jews, seeing in body, blind in heart; for to them said he now seeing, Will ye also be His disciples? Then, saith the Gospel, they reviled him, and said, Thou art His disciple. For all of us come this to pass, which they said evil speaking! Evil speaking was that called, from the malevolent error of the speakers, not from any evil in the words. The intention wherewith they spake, not what they spake, did He consider, Who related that they spake evil of Him, Against Me they devised evil to Me. And what evil to Christ, to the Martyrs what evil? All hath God turned to good.

10. Ver. 8. An ungodly word do they set forth against Me. What sort of ungodly word? Listen to the Head Itself. Come, let us kill Him, and the

inheritance shall be ours. Fools! How shall the inheritance be yours? Because ye killed Him? Lo! ye even killed Him; yet shall not the inheritance be yours. Shall not He that sleepeth add this also, that He rise again? When ye exulted that ye had slain Him, He slept; for He saith in another Psalm, I slept. They raged and would slay Me; I slept. If I had not willed, I had not even slept. I slept, because I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. I laid Me down and slept, and rose up again. Rage then the Jews; be the earth given into the hands of the wicked, be the flesh left to the hands of persecutors, let them on wood suspend it, with nails transfix it, with a spear pierce it. Shall He that sleepeth, not add this, that He rise up again? Wherefore slept He? Because Adam is the figure of Him that was to come. And Adam slept, when out of his side was made Eve. Adam in the figure of Christ, Eve in the figure of the Church; whence she was called the mother of all living. When was Eve created? While Adam slept. When out of Christ's side flowed the Sacraments of the Church? While He slept upon the Cross. Shall He that sleepeth not add this also, that He rise again?

11. And whereby slept He? By him who entered in to see, and gathered iniquity to himself For, (ver. 9.) The man of My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread, hath enlarged his heel against Me: hath raised up his foot against Me: would trample upon Me. Who is this man of His peace? Judas. And in him did Christ trust, that He said, in whom I trusted? Did He not know him from the beginning? Did He not before he was born know that he would be? Had He not said to all His disciples, I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? How then trusted He in him, but that He is in His Members, and that because many faithful trusted in Judas, the Lord transferred this to Himself? For when Judas was seen, by many who trusted in Christ, to walk among the twelve disciples, some trusted in him, that he was such as were the rest: but because Christ was in His Members so trusting, as He is in them hungering and thirsting; as He said, I was an hungred, so said He, I trusted. Further, if we too so say to Him, Lord, when trustedst Thou? as it was said to Him, Lord, when wast Thou an hungred? as then He said to us, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me; so can He say, When one of these least of mine trusted in him, I trusted. In whom trusted? The man of

My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread. How shewed He him in His Passion? By the words of His prophecy: by the sop He marked Him out, that it might appear said of him, Which did eat of My bread. Again, when he came to betray Him, He granted him a kiss, that it might appear said of him, The man of My peace.

12. Ver. 10. But Thou, O Lord, be merciful unto Me. This is the person of a servant, this is the person of the needy and poor. For, Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. Be merciful unto Me, and raise Me up, and I will requite them. See, as it was spoken, so is it done. For the Jews slew Christ, lest they should lose their place. Christ slain, they lost their place. Rooted out of the kingdom were they, dispersed were they. He, raised up, requited them tribulation, He requited them unto admonition, not yet unto condemnation. For the city wherein the people raged, as a ramping and a roaring lion, crying out, Crucify Him, Crucify Him, the Jews rooted out therefrom, hath now Christians, by not one Jew is inhabited. There is planted the Church of Christ, whence were rooted out the thorns of the synagogue. For truly this fire blazed as the fire of thorns. But the Lord was as a green tree. This said Himself, when certain women mourned Christ as dying; Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. From this predicting, Raise Thou Me up, and I shall reward them. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry? When can a green tree be consumed by the fire of thorns? For they blazed as fire among thorns. Fire consumeth thorns, but whatsoever green tree it is applied to, is not easily kindled, for the moistness of the wood resists a flame slow and feeble, yet sufficient to consume thorns. And raise Me up, and I will requite them. Think not however, brethren, the Son less powerful than ye think the Father, because of that which He said, raise Me up, as if He could not raise up Himself. For that He raised up, which had power to die; that in the Flesh died, the Flesh was raised up. Yet lest ye think that God the Father of Christ could raise up Christ, that is, the Flesh of His Son, and that Christ Himself, though He be the Word equal with the Father, could not raise up His own Flesh; hear out of the Gospel, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But, said the Evangelist, (lest even after this we should doubt,) He spake of the temple of His Body. Raise Me up, and I will requite them.

13. Ver. 11. By this I know that Thou favourest Me, that Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me. Because the Jews did triumph, when they saw Christ crucified; they thought that they had fulfilled their will to do Him hurt: the fruits of their cruelty they saw in effect, Christ hanging on the Cross: they shook their heads, saying, If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross. He came not down, Who could; His Potency He shewed not, but patience taught. For if, on their saying these things, He had come down from the Cross, He would have seemed as it were to yield to them insulting, and not being able to endure reproach, would have been believed conquered: more firm remained He upon the Cross, than they insulting; fixed was He, they wavering. For therefore shook they their heads, because to the true Head they adhered not. He taught us plainly patience. For mightier is that which He did, Who would not do what the Jews challenged. For much mightier is it to rise from the sepulchre, than to come down from the Cross. That Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me. They triumphed then at that time. Christ rose again, Christ was glorified. Now see they in His Name the human race converted: now let them insult, now shake the head: rather now let them fix the head, or if they shake the head, in wonder and admiration let them shake. For now say they, Can this indeed be He of Whom spake Moses and the Prophets? For of Him they said, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. With His stripes we are healed. For we see that being Crucified He draweth after Him the human race; and without reason said our fathers, Let us kill Him, lest the world go after Him. Haply it had not gone after Him, if He had not been killed. By this I know that Thou favourest Me, that Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me.

14. Ver. 12. But as for Me, Thou upholdest Me, because of Mine innocence. Truly innocence; integrity without sin, requiting without debt, scourging without desert. Thou upholdest Me because of Mine innocence, and hast made Me strong in Thy sight for ever. Thou hast made Me strong for ever, Thou madest Me weak for a time: Thou hast made Me strong in Thy sight, Thou madest Me weak in sight of men. What then? Praise to Him, glory to Him. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He is the God of Israel, our God, the God of Jacob, the God of the younger son, the God of the younger people. Let none say, Of the Jews said He this, I am not Israel; rather the

Jews are not Israel. For the elder son, he is the elder people reprobated; the younger, the people beloved. The elder shall serve the younger: now is it fulfilled: now, brethren, the Jews serve us, they are as our satchellers, we studying, they carry our books. Hear wherein the Jews serve us, and not without reason. Cain, the elder brother, who killed the younger brother, received a mark, that he might not be slain; that is, that the people might remain for ever. With them are the Law and the Prophets, in which Law, and in which Prophets, Christ is preached. When we have to do with Pagans, and shew this coming to pass in the Church of Christ, which before was predicted of the Name of Christ, of the Head and Body of Christ, lest they think that we have forged these predictions, and from things which have happened, as though they were future, had made them up, we bring forth the books of the Jews. The Jews forsooth are our enemies, from an enemy's books convince we the adversary. All then hath the Lord disposed, all hath He ordained for our salvation. He predicted before us, He hath fulfilled in this our time, and what He hath not yet fulfilled, He is fulfilling. We have Him so a Requirer, that we may trust Him a Debtor, trust that what He hath not yet given, He will give; and what He then had not given, He hath given since. If any would prove where they be written, let him read Moses and the Prophets. If any enemy clamour and say, 'Ye for yourselves have forged prophecies;' be the books of the Jews brought forth, because the elder shall serve the younger. Therein let them read those predictions, which now we see fulfilled; and let us all say, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, and all the people shall say, So be it, So be it.

PSALM 42

Long since has our spirit been longing to rejoice with you in God's Word; and to salute you in Him, Who is our Help and our Salvation. Hear therefore by us that which the Lord gives; and rejoice with us in Him, in His Word, His Truth, and His Love. For we have undertaken the exposition of a Psalm corresponding to your own longings, on which we propose to speak to you. For the Psalm itself begins with a certain pious longing; and he who sings so, says,

Ver 1. Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. Who is it then that saith this? It is ourselves, if we be but willing! And why ask, who it is other than thyself, when it is in thy power to be the thing which thou art asking about? It is not however one individual, but it is One Body; but Christ's Body is the Church. Such longing indeed is not found in all who enter the Church: let all however who have tasted the sweetness of the Lord, and who own in Christ that for which they have a relish, think that they are not the only ones; but that there are such seeds scattered throughout the field of the Lord, this whole earth: and that there is a certain Christian unity, whose voice thus speaks, Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. And indeed it is not ill understood as the cry of those, who being as yet Catechumens, are hastening to the grace of the holy Font. On which account too this Psalm is ordinarily chanted on those occasions, that they may long for the Fountain of remission of sins, even as the hart for the water-brooks. Let this be allowed; and this meaning retain its place in the Church; a place both truthful and sanctioned by usage. Nevertheless, it appears to me, my brethren, that such a longing is not fully satisfied even in the faithful in Baptism: but that haply, if they know where they are sojourning, and whither they have to remove from hence, their longing is kindled in even greater intensity.

2. The title then of it is, On the end: a Psalm for understanding for the sons of Korah. We have met with the sons of Korah in other titles of Psalms: and remember to have discussed and stated already the meaning of this name. Yet we must even now take notice of this title in such a way, that what we have said already should be no prejudice against our saying it again: for all were not present in every place where we said it. Now Korah may have been, as indeed he was, a certain definite person; and have had sons, who might be called the sons of Korah; let us however search for the secret of which this is the sacrament, that this name may bring to light the mystery, with which it is pregnant. For there is some great mystery in the matter that the name of sons of Korah is given to Christians. Why “sons of Korah?” They are sons of the bridegroom, sons of Christ. Why then does Korah stand for Christ? Because “Korah” is equivalent to “Calvaria.” This is still more abstruse. I was asking why Korah stands for Christ; still more anxious am I to enquire, why Christ is thought to be connected with Calvaria. Why, does it not at once occur to you that He was crucified on Calvary? Unquestionably it does. Therefore, the sons of the bridegroom, the sons of His Passion, the sons redeemed by His Blood, the sons of His Cross, who bear on their forehead that which His enemies erected on Calvary, are called the sons of Korah; to them is this Psalm sung as a Psalm for understanding. Let then our understanding be roused: and if the Psalm be sung to us, let us follow it with our understanding. What is it we are to understand? For what understanding is this Psalm sung? I venture to speak. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made. Come, my brethren, catch my eagerness; share with me in this my longing: let us both love, let us both be inflamed with this thirst, let us both hasten to the well of understanding. Let us then long for it as the hart for the brook; having taken that fountain, which those yet to be baptized long for, in order to the remission of their sins, and having been already baptized, let us long for that fountain whereof another Scripture saith, For with Thee is the fountain of life. For He is both the Fountain and the Light; for it is In Thy Light that we shall see light. If He is both the Fountain and the Light, with good reason is He the understanding also, because He both filleth the soul that thirsteth for knowledge; and every one who hath “understanding,” is enlightened by a certain light; not a corporeal, not a carnal one, not an outward, but an

inward light! There is then, brethren, a certain light within, not possessed by those who understand not. Whence moreover, those who long after this “fountain of life,” and who draw somewhat from it, are addressed by the Apostle beseeching them and saying, That ye walk not as the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened: being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. If then they are darkened in their understanding, i.e. are darkened, because they understand not, therefore those who “understand” are enlightened. Run to the brooks; long after the water-brooks. With God is the fountain of Life; a fountain that shall never be dried up: in His Light is a Light that shall never be darkened. Long thou for this light: for a certain fountain, a certain light, such as thy bodily eyes know not; a light to see which the inward eye must be prepared; a fountain, to drink of which the inward thirst is to be kindled. Run to the fountain; long for the fountain; but do it not any how, be not satisfied with running like any ordinary animal; run thou like the hart. What is meant by like the hart? Let there be no sloth in thy running; run with all thy might: long for the fountain with all thy might. For we find in “the hart” an emblem of swiftness.

3. But perhaps Scripture meant us to consider in the stag not this point only, but another also. Hear what else there is in the hart. It destroys serpents, and after the killing of serpents, it is inflamed with thirst yet more violent; having destroyed serpents, it runs to the water-brooks, with thirst more keen than before. The serpents are thy vices, destroy the serpents of iniquity; then wilt thou long yet more for the Fountain of Truth. Perhaps avarice whispers in thine ear some dark counsel, hisses against the word of God, hisses against the commandment of God. And since it is said to thee, “Disregard this or that thing,” if thou prefer working iniquity to despising some temporal good, thou chooseth to be bitten by a serpent, rather than destroy it. Whilst therefore thou art yet indulgent to thy vice, thy covetousness or thy appetite, when am I to find in thee a longing such as this, that might make thee run to the water-brooks? When art thou to desire the fountain of Wisdom, whilst thou art yet labouring in the venom of iniquity? Destroy in thyself whatever is contrary to the truth, and when thou hast seen thyself to be comparatively free from irrational passions, be not

contented to stay where thou art, as if there were nothing farther for thee to long for. For there is yet somewhat to which thou mayest raise thyself; even if thou hast already achieved that triumph within, that there is no longer within thee a foe to hinder and to thwart thee. For perhaps if thou art the hart, thou wilt already say to me, ‘God knows that I am no longer covetous, that I no longer set my heart on the property of any man; that I am not inflamed by the passion of unlawful love; that I do not pine away with hatred or ill-will against any man: and as to all other things of this description, thou wilt say, ‘I am free from them,’ and perhaps thou wouldest fain know wherein thou mayest find pleasure. Long for the water-brooks; God hath wherewith to refresh thee, and to satisfy thee when thou comest to Him, athirst, like the swift-footed hart, after the destruction of the serpents.

4. There is another point to be observed in the hart. It is reported of stags, (and it has been seen by some persons; for any thing of the kind would never be recorded, had it not been seen before;) it is reported of them then I repeat, that when they either wander in the herds, or when they are swimming to reach some other parts of the earth, that they support the burdens of their heads on each other, in such a manner as that one takes the lead, and others follow, resting their heads upon him, as again, others who follow do upon them, and others in succession to the very end of the herd; but the one who took the lead in bearing the burden of their heads, when tired, returns to the rear, and rests himself after his fatigue by supporting his head just as did the others; by thus supporting what is burdensome, each in turn, they both accomplish their journey, and do not abandon each other. Are they not a kind of harts that the Apostle addresses, saying, Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ?

5. Such a hart then, being yet in a state of “faith” only, not yet in “sight” of what he believes, wishing for the understanding of that which he loves, has to bear with adversaries, who are not harts, who have their understanding darkened, in a state of spiritual darkness, blinded by the greediness of their vices; who mock the man who believes, and cannot shew them that in which he believes, saying, Where is thy God? Let us hear then how that hart meets these words, that we ourselves may do so also, if we can. He first expressed his thirst, Like as the hart (he says) longs for the water-brooks, so

longs my soul after Thee, O God. What if it is for the sake of bathing there, that the hart longs for the water-brooks? Do we not know then whether it is for the sake of bathing, or of drinking there, that he longs for them? Hear what follows, and do not ask.

Ver. 2. My soul is athirst for the living God. What I am saying, that as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so longs my soul after Thee, O God, means this, My soul is athirst for the living God. For what is it athirst? When shall I come and appear before God? This it is for which I am athirst, to ‘come and to appear before Him.’ I am athirst in my pilgrimage, in my running; I shall be filled on my arrival. But When shall I come? And this, which is soon in the sight of God, is late to our longing. When shall I come and appear before God? This too proceeds from that longing, of which in another place comes that cry, One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. Wherefore so? That I may behold (he saith) the beauty of the Lord. When shall I come and appear before the Lord?

6. Meanwhile, whilst I am training myself, whilst I am on my course, on my way, before I come and appear.

Ver. 3. My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me, Where is thy God? My tears (he saith) have been not bitterness, but my bread. Those very tears were sweet unto me: being athirst for that fountain, inasmuch as I was not as yet able to drink of it, I have eagerly made my tears my meat. For he said not, My tears became my drink, lest he should seem to have longed for them, as for “the water-brooks:” but, still retaining that thirst wherewith I burn, and by which I am hurried away towards the water-brooks, My tears became my meat, whilst I am not yet there. And assuredly he does but the more thirst for the water-brooks from making his tears his meat. For it is by day and night both, that my tears have been my bread. That food, which is called bread, men eat in the day-time, while at night they sleep; but the bread of tears is eaten day and night; whether by day and night you understand ‘always,’ or take “day” for the prosperity of this world, “night” on the other hand for the adversity of this life. Whether then my lot is cast in the prosperity, or in the adversity of this world, I still pour forth the tears that flow from my “longing,” I cease not

from the craving of my longings. And when well off in this world, it is still but ill with me, until I appear before God! Why then dost thou bid me rejoice in the day, as it were, if any prosperity of this life smiles upon me? Is it not deceptive? Is it not frail, and fading, and mortal? Is it not fugitive, temporary, transitory? Has it not more deceit in it than delight? Why then should not my tears become my bread even in it, since even when the prosperity of the world is beaming around us, so long as we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord. And they daily say unto me, Where is thy God? For if a Pagan should say this to me, I cannot retort it upon him, saying, "Where is thine?" inasmuch as he points with his finger to some stone, and says, "Lo, there is my God!" When I have laughed at the stone, and he who pointed to it has been put to the blush, he raises his eyes from the stone, looks up to heaven, and perhaps says, pointing his finger to the Sun, "Behold there my God! Where, I pray, is your God?" He has found something to point out to the eyes of the flesh; whereas I, on my part, not that I have not a God to shew to him, cannot shew him what he has no eyes to see. For he indeed could point out to my bodily eyes his God, the Sun; but what eyes hath he to which I might point out the Creator of the Sun?

7. However day by day hearing, "Where is thy God?" and having been "feeding on my tears" from day to day, I have been meditating night and day on what I heard, "Where is thy God?" nay, I have myself also sought to find my God, that if I could I might not believe only, but might "see" also somewhat. For I see the things which my God hath made, but my God Himself, Who made these things, I do not see. But since I am longing like the hart for the water-brooks, and it is with Him that the fountain of life is, and the Psalm is written, for the sons of Korah for understanding, and since the invisible things of God are seen by being understood by the things made, what shall I do that I may find my God? I will consider the earth. The earth was 'made.' Great is the beauty of the earth, but it hath a Creator. Great the marvels in the seeds, and things that generate them: but they have all of them a Maker, I point to the greatness of the circling sea: I am struck with astonishment, and with wonder; I look for the Maker, I raise my eyes to Heaven, and to the beauty of the stars; I behold with wonder the brightness of the sun, sufficing to the bringing forth of the day, the moon cheering the darkness of the night. Wondrous indeed are these things,

worthy of our praise, nay rather of our awe. For these things are no longer terrestrial, but they are heavenly. Yet is not my thirst stayed even there; I admire these, and I praise these; I thirst for Him Who made them. I turn my thoughts to myself, and I enquire who I am myself, I who am carrying on this enquiry! I find myself to have body and soul, the one for me to govern, the other for me to be governed by; I find the body serves, the soul commands. I discern the soul to be something better than the body: I see that “self,” that carries on the investigation into such things as these, to be not a body, but spirit: and yet I know that all these things which I surveyed, I surveyed through the medium of the body. I was praising the earth: it was by the eyes I had the knowledge of it. I was praising the sea: it was by the eyes I had the knowledge of it; I was praising the heavens, the stars, the sun, and moon; it was by the eyes I came to know them. The eyes are members of the body, they are the windows of the mind: the being who sees by them is within; when he is absent, being called away by some thought or other, their opening avails not. It is not by these eyes that my God, Who made these things, is to be looked for. Possibly there may be something that the mind can see by itself, whether it be something that I cannot discern by the eyes, (as I do light and colours;) by the ears, as music and sound; by the nostrils, as the fragrance of odours; by the tongue and palate like flavours; nor by every part of the body throughout, as I do hardness and softness; heat and cold; roughness and smoothness; or whether it be something that I behold with the inward eye. What is meant by “behold with the inward eye?” It is something which is neither colour, nor sound, nor smell, nor flavour; heat nor cold; hardness nor softness. Let me be told else, what colour Wisdom hath? When we think of “righteousness,” and joy inwardly in that thought, in its beauty what sound reaches our ears? What of the nature of vapour rises to the nostrils? What is carried to the lips? What is there that we can handle, and that so gives us pleasure? It is within, and at the same time it is beautiful; it is praised, and at the same time it is seen: and, even if these eyes are in darkness, the mind rejoices in its light. What was that which Tobias saw, when, blind himself, he gave advice, for the regulation of his life, to his son who had the use of his eyes? There is then something which the mind, the lord, the governor, the inhabitant of the body, sees by itself; discerns not by the bodily eyes; not by the ear, or nostrils, or palate, or by the touch of the body, but by itself; and in any case,

what it discerns by itself is more excellent than what is discerned through its servant. Assuredly it is; for by itself it discerns itself; and in order to know itself, the mind beholds itself, and yet does not require the help of the bodily eyes in order to behold itself: indeed it rather abstracts itself from all the bodily senses, as interrupting, and confounding it with their din, in order to see itself in itself; to know itself as mirrored in itself. “But is God then any thing of the same nature as the soul?” God cannot, it is true, be seen except by the mind; but yet He cannot be seen as the mind can. For this mind of ours seeks to find something that is God, about which they who say, Where is thy God? may not insult us. It seeks to find a Truth not subject to change, a Substance not capable of failing. The mind itself is not of this nature: it is capable of progress, and of decay; of knowledge, and of ignorance; of remembering or forgetting; at one moment it wishes for this thing, at another it does not wish for it. That mutability is not incident to God. Were I to say God is susceptible of change, they will insult over me, who say, Where is thy God?

8. Having therefore sought to find my God in visible and corporeal things, and found Him not, having sought to find His substance in myself, (as if He were of the same nature as myself,) and found Him not, I perceive my God to be something higher than my soul. Therefore that I might attain unto Him,

Ver. 4. I thought on these things, and poured out my soul above myself. When would my soul attain to that object of its search, which is “above my soul,” if my soul were not to pour itself out above itself? For were it to rest in itself, it would not see any thing else beyond itself; and in seeing itself, would not, for all that, see God. Let then my insulting enemies now say, Where is thy God? aye, let them say it! I, so long as I do not see, so long as my happiness is postponed, make my tears my bread day and night. Let them still say, Where is thy God? I seek my God in every corporeal nature, terrestrial or celestial, and find Him not: I seek His Substance in my own soul, and I find it not, yet still I have thought on these things, and wishing to see the invisible things of my God, being understood by the things made, I have poured forth my soul above myself, and there remains no longer any being for me to attain to, save my God. For it is there is the “house of my

God.” His dwelling-place is above my soul; from thence He beholds me; from thence He created me; from thence He directs me and provides for me; from thence He appeals to me, and calls me, and directs me; leads me in the way, and to the end of my way.

9. For He Who has His House very high in secret place, hath even on earth a tabernacle. His tabernacle on earth is the Church, which is yet on her pilgrimage. But it is here that He is to be sought: for it is in “the tabernacle” that we find the Way, by which we arrive at the House. For when I was pouring out my soul above myself, in order to reach my God, why did I do so?

For I will go into the place of Thy Tabernacle. For I should be in error were I to seek for my God without the place of His tabernacle. For I will go into the place of Thy wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God.

I will go, he says, into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God! For there are already many things that I admire in “the tabernacle.” See how great wonders I admire in the tabernacle! For God’s tabernacle on earth is the faithful; I admire in them the obedience of even their bodily members: that in them, Sin does not reign so that they should obey its lusts; neither do they yield their members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but unto the living God in good works. I admire the sight of the bodily members warring in the service of the soul that serves God. I contemplate the soul itself obeying God; scrupulously measuring the works of its free agency: restraining its passions, dispelling ignorance, putting forth its energies in enduring every thing laborious and painful, extending justice and charity to others. I admire also the presence of those virtues in the soul, but I am walking in the place of the tabernacle, still I leave even these behind; and wonderful though the tabernacle be, yet when I come to the house of God, I am even struck dumb with astonishment. Of that house he speaks in another Psalm, after he had put a certain abstruse and difficult question to himself, (viz. why it is that it generally goes well with the wicked on earth, and ill with the good?) saying, I thought to know this; it is too painful for me, until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand of the last things. For it is there, in the sanctuary of God, in the house of God, is the fountain of understanding.

There he understood of the last things; and solved the question concerning the prosperity of the unrighteous, and the sufferings of the righteous. How does he solve it? Why, that the wicked, when reprieved here, are reserved for punishments without end; and the good when they suffer here, are being tried in order that they may in the end obtain the inheritance. And it was in the sanctuary of God that he understood this, and understood of the last things. It was going up to “the tabernacle,” that he arrived at “the house of God.” Yet it was thus, that whilst admiring the members of the tabernacle, he was led on even to the house of God: by following the leadings of a certain delight, a certain inward spiritual joy, when there came from the house of God a sweet sound, as from some instrument, and he, whilst walking in the tabernacle, having caught a certain sound of spiritual music, led on by its sweetness, and following the guidance of the sound, abstracting his attention from all noise of flesh and blood, made his way on even to the house of God. For he tells us of his progress, and of his guidance thither; as if we had been saying, “You are admiring the tabernacle here on earth; how came you to the sanctuary of the house of God?” he says,

In the voice of joy and praise; the sound of keeping holiday. Here, when men keep festival simply for their own indulgence, it is their custom to place musical instruments, or to station a chorus of singers, before their houses, or any kind of music that serves and allures to wantonness. And when these are heard, what do we passers by say? ‘What is going on here?’ And we are told in answer, that it is some festival. ‘It is a birthday that is being celebrated,’ (say they,) ‘there is a marriage here;’ that those songs may not appear out of place, but the luxurious indulgence may be excused by the festive occasion. In the “house of God” there is a never-ending festival: for there it is not an occasion celebrated once, and then to pass away. The angelic choir makes an eternal “holiday:” the presence of God’s face, joy that never fails. This is a “holiday” of such a kind, as neither to be opened by any dawn, nor terminated by any evening. From that everlasting perpetual festivity, a certain sweet and melodious strain strikes on the ears of the heart, provided only the world do not drown the sounds. As he walks in this tabernacle, and contemplates God’s wonderful works for the

redemption of the faithful, the sound of that festivity charms his ears, and bears the hart away to the water-brooks.

10. But seeing, brethren, so long as we are at home in this body, we are absent from the Lord; and the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things; even though we have some way or other dispersed the clouds, by walking as longing leads us on, and for a brief while have come within reach of that sound, so that by an effort we may catch something from that house of God, yet through the burden, so to speak, of our infirmity, we sink back to our usual level, and relapse to our ordinary state. And just as there we found cause for rejoicing, so here there will not be wanting an occasion for sorrow. For that hart that made tears its bread day and night, borne along by longing to the water-brooks, (that is, to the spiritual delights of God,) pouring forth his soul above himself, that he may attain to what is above his own soul, walking towards the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God, and led on by the sweetness of that inward spiritual sound to feel contempt for all outward things, and be borne on to things spiritual, is but a mortal man still; is still groaning here, still bearing about the frailty of flesh, still in peril in the midst of the offences of this world. He therefore glances back to himself, as if he were coming from that world; and says to himself, now placed in the midst of these sorrows, comparing these with the things, to see which he had entered in there, and after seeing which he had come forth from thence;

Ver. 5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? Lo, we have just now been gladdened by certain inward delights: with the mind's eye we have been able to behold, though but with a momentary glance, something not susceptible of change: why dost thou still disquiet me, why art thou still cast down? For thou dost not doubt of thy God. For now thou art not without somewhat to say to thyself, in answer to those who say, Where is thy God? I have now had the perception of something that is unchangeable; why dost thou disquiet me still?

Hope in God. Just as if his soul was silently replying to him, "Why do I disquiet thee, but because I am not yet there, where that delight is, to which I was, as it were, rapt for a moment? Am I already drinking from this

fountain with nothing to fear? Have I no longer any stumbling-blocks to dread? Have I no longer any thing to care for, as if all my passions were conquered and thoroughly subdued? Is not my foe, the devil, on the watch against me? Is he not daily spreading for me the snares of his deceptions? Wouldest thou have me not “disquiet thee,” placed as I am yet in the world, and “absent” from the house of my God?” Still Hope in God, is his answer to the soul that disquiets him, and would fain account for her disquiet from the evils with which this world abounds. In the mean while dwell in hope: for hope that is seen is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

11. Hope in God. Why “hope?”

For I will confess unto Him. What wilt thou “confess?”

My God is the saving health of my countenance. My “health” (my salvation) cannot be from myself; this it is that I will say, that I will “confess.” It is my God that is the saving health of my countenance. For to account for his fears, in the midst of those things, which he now knows, having come after a sort to the understanding of them, he has been looking behind him again in anxiety, lest the enemy be stealing upon him: he cannot yet say, “I am made whole every whit.” For having but the first-fruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. When that health (that salvation) is perfected in us, then shall we be living in the house of God for ever, and praising for ever Him to Whom it was said, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be praising Thee world without end. This is not so yet, because the salvation which is promised, is not as yet in being; but it is in hope that I confess unto God, and say, My God is the saving health of my countenance. For it is in hope that we are saved; but hope that is seen, is not hope. Persevere then that thou mayest attain; persevere until salvation come. Hear thy God Himself speaking to thee from within, Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and let thy heart be strengthened; wait, I say, on the Lord: for he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. Why, then, art thou cast down, O my soul? and why dost thou disquiet me? Hope in God: for I will confess unto Him. My confession is this: My God is the saving health of my countenance.

12. Ver. 6. My soul is disquieted on account of myself. Is it disquieted on account of God? It is on my own account it is disquieted. By the Unchangeable it was revived; it is by the changeable it is disquieted. I know that the righteousness of God remaineth; whether my own will remain steadfast, I know not. For I am alarmed by the Apostle's saying, Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Therefore since there is no soundness in me for myself, there is no hope either for me of myself. My soul is disquieted on account of myself. Wouldest thou have it not disquieted? Let it not rest on thine own self; and say, Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul. Hear the meaning of this more plainly. Found not thy hopes on thyself; but on thy God. For if thou retest thy hopes on thyself, thy soul is disquieted on account of thyself; for it has not yet found any thing that should make it secure about thee. Since then my soul is disquieted on account of myself, what remains but humility? but that the soul should not presume on her own merits? What remains but that she should make herself the very meanest of all things, that she should humble herself, that she may deserve to be exalted; that she give herself credit for nothing, that what is good for her, may by Him be given to her. Therefore, because my soul is disquieted on account of myself, and since it is pride that causes this "disquiet,"

Therefore I remember Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and from the little hill of Hermon. From whence did I remember thee? From the little hill, and from the land of Jordan. Perhaps from Baptism, where the remission of sins is given. For no one runs to the remission of sins, except he who is dissatisfied with himself; no one runs to the remission of sins, but he who confesses himself a sinner; no one confesses himself a sinner, except by humbling himself before God. Therefore it is from the land of Jordan I have remembered thee, and from the hill; observe, not of the great hill, that thou mayest make of the little hill a great one: for whoso exalteth himself shall be abased, and whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted. If you would also ask the meanings of the names, Jordan means "their descent." Descend then, that thou mayest be lifted up: be not lifted up, lest thou be cast down. And the little hill of Hermon. Hermon means "anathematizing." Anathematize thyself, by being displeased with thyself; for if thou art pleased with thyself, God will be displeased with thee.

Because then God gives us all good things, because He Himself is good, not because we are worthy of it; because He is merciful, not because we have in any thing deserved it; it is from the land of Jordan, and from Hermon, that I remember thee. And because he so remembers with humility he shall earn his exaltation to fruition, for he is not “exalted” in himself, who “glories in the Lord.”

13. Ver. 7. Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts. I may perhaps finish the Psalm, aided as I am by your attention, whose fervour I perceive. As for your fatigue in hearing, I am not greatly solicitous, since you see me also, who speak, toiling in the heat of these exertions. Assuredly it is from your seeing me labouring, that you labour with me: for I am labouring not for myself, but for you. Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts. It was God Whom he addressed, Who remembered him from the land of Jordan and Hermon. It was in wonder and admiration he spake this; Abyss calleth unto abyss with the voice of Thy water-spouts. What abyss is this that calls, and to what other abyss? Justly, because the understanding spoken of is an “abyss.” For an abyss is a depth that cannot be reached or comprehended; and it is principally applied to a great body of water. For there is a ‘depth,’ a ‘profound,’ the bottom of which cannot be reached by sounding. Furthermore, it is said in a certain passage, Thy judgments are a mighty abyss, Scripture meaning to suggest that the judgments of God are incomprehensible. What then is the abyss that calls, and to what other “abyss” does it call? If by “abyss” we understand a great depth, is not man’s heart, do you not suppose, an abyss? For what is there more profound than that “abyss?” Men may speak, may be seen by the operations of their members, may be heard speaking in conversation: but whose thought is penetrated, whose heart seen into? What he is inwardly engaged on, what he is inwardly capable of, what he is inwardly doing, or what purposing, what he is inwardly wishing to happen, or not to happen, who shall comprehend? I think an ‘abyss,’ may not unreasonably be understood of man, of whom it is said elsewhere, Man shall come to a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. If man then is an ‘abyss,’ in what way doth ‘abyss’ call on ‘abyss?’ Does man call on man as God is called upon? No, but “calls on” is equivalent to “calls to him.” For it was said of a certain person, he calls on death; that is, lives in such a way as to be inviting death;

for there is no man at all who puts up a prayer, and calls expressly on death: but men by evil-living invite death. Deep calls on deep, then, is, ‘man calls to man.’ Thus is it wisdom is learnt, and thus faith, when man calls to man. The holy preachers of God’s word call on the “deep:” are they not themselves a deep also? That you may know that they also are a deep, the Apostle says, It is a very small thing that I be judged of you or of man’s judgment. Nay, how profound a deep he is, hear yet farther. Yea, I judge not mine own self. Do not you believe that there is in man a “deep” so profound as not to be seen through by him in whom it is? How profound a depth of infirmity lay concealed in Peter, when he knew not what was passing in himself, and rashly promised to die either with or for his Lord! How profound was the abyss; yet was that abyss bare to the eyes of God! For that which he knew not of within himself, Christ forewarned him of. Every man then, though holy, though righteous, though advancing in many things, is still a deep; and he is calling on “a deep,” when he is announcing any point of faith, any point of the truth, for the sake of eternal life. But it is then that the “deep” is useful to the deep called upon, when it is done with the voice of Thy water-spouts. Deep calls to deep: man wins his fellow-man, but not with his own voice, but with the voice of Thy water-spouts.

14. Hear another interpretation. Deep calleth to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts. I, who tremble all over, when my soul was disquieted on account of myself, feared greatly on account of Thy judgments. For under this mortal flesh, subject to suffering and sin, full of troubles and of offences, obnoxious to solicitations of passion, there is a certain sentence of condemnation from Thy judgment; for Thou hast said to the sinner, Thou shalt surely die, and, In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread. This is the first deep of Thy judgments. But if men have lived ill here, deep calleth unto deep, in that they pass from punishment to punishment, and from darkness to darkness, and from deep to deep, and from suffering to suffering, and from the fires of passion to the flames of hell. It was this then, perhaps, that this man feared, when he said, My soul is disquieted on account of myself; therefore have I remembered Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and from Hermon. I am bound to be humble. For I am horribly afraid of Thy judgments; intensely do I fear Thy judgments. Therefore is my soul disquieted on account of myself. And what judgments

of thine are they that I have feared? Are those judgments slight ones? They are great ones, severe, hard to bear; but would they were all. Deep calls to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts, in that Thou threatenest, Thou sayest, that there is another condemnation in store even after those sufferings. Deep calls on deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts. Whither then shall I go from Thy presence? And whither shall I flee from Thy Spirit? seeing that deep calls to deep, and after those sufferings severer ones are to be dreaded.

15. All Thy overhangings and Thy waves are come upon me. The “waves” in what I already feel, the overhangings in that Thou denouncest. All my sufferings are Thy waves; all Thy denouncements of judgments are Thy overhangings. In the waves that deep “calleth;” in the overhangings is the other “deep” which it “calls to.” In this that I suffer are all Thy waves; in the severer punishment that Thou threatenest, all Thy overhangings are come upon me. For He Who threatens does not let His judgments fall upon us, but keeps them suspended over us. But inasmuch as Thou sittest at liberty, I have thus spoken unto my soul. Hope in God: for I will confess unto Him. My God is the saving health of my countenance. The more numerous my sufferings, the sweeter will be Thy mercy.

16. Therefore follows; The Lord will commend His loving-kindness in the day-time; and in the night-time will He declare it. In tribulation no man has leisure to hear: attend, when it is well with you; hear, when it is well with you; learn, when you are in tranquillity, the discipline of wisdom, and store up the word of God as you do food. For in tribulation every one must be profited by what he heard in the time of security. For in prosperity God commends to thee His mercy, in case thou serve Him faithfully, for He frees thee from tribulation; but it is in the night only that He declares His mercy to thee, which He commended to thee by day. When tribulation shall actually come, He will not leave thee destitute of His help; He will shew thee that which He commended to thee in the day-time is true. For it is written in a certain passage, The mercy of the Lord is seasonable in the time of affliction, as clouds of rain in the time of drought. The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night will He declare it. He does not shew that He is thine Helper, unless tribulation

come, from whence thou must be rescued by Him, Who promised it to thee in the day-time. Therefore we are warned to be like “the ant.” For just as worldly prosperity is signified by the day, adversity by the night, so again in another way worldly prosperity is expressed by “the summer,” adversity by the winter. And what is it that the ant does? She lays by in summer what will be useful to her in winter. Whilst therefore it is summer, whilst it is well with you, whilst you are in tranquillity, hear the word of the Lord. For how can it be that in the midst of these tempests of the world, you should pass through the whole of that sea, without suffering? How could it happen? To what mortal’s lot has it fallen? If even it has been the lot of any, that very calm is more to be dreaded. The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night-time will He declare it.

17. What shouldest thou do then in this pilgrimage? What shouldest thou do?

Ver. 8. There is with me prayer unto the God of my life. This I make my business here; I who am the “hart thirsting and longing for the water-brooks,” calling to mind the sweetness of that strain, by which I was led on through the tabernacle even to the house of God; whilst this corruptible body presseth down the soul, there is yet with me prayer unto the God of my life. For in order to making supplication unto God, I have not to buy ought from places beyond the sea; or in order that He may hear me, have I to sail to bring from a distance frankincense and perfumes, or have I to bring “calf or ram from the flock.” There is with me prayer to the God of my life. I have within a victim to sacrifice; I have within an incense to place on the altar; I have within a sacrifice wherewith to propitiate my God. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit. What sacrifice of a troubled spirit I have within, hear.

Ver. 9. I will say unto God, Thou art my lifter up. Why hast Thou forgotten me? For I am suffering here, even as if Thou hadst forgotten me. But Thou art trying me, and I know that Thou dost but put off, not take utterly from me, what Thou hast promised me. But yet, Why hast Thou forgotten me? So cried our Head also, as if speaking in our name. My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? I will say unto God, Thou art my lifter up; why hast Thou forgotten me?

18. Why hast Thou rejected me? Rejected me, that is to say, from that height of the apprehension of the unchangeable Truth. Why hast Thou rejected me? Why, when already longing for those things, have I been cast down to these, by the weight and burden of my iniquity? This same voice in another passage said, I said in my trance, (i.e. in my rapture, when he had seen some great thing or other,) I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. For he compared these things, in which he found himself, to those, toward which he had been raised; and saw himself cast out far “from the sight of God’s eyes,” as he speaks even here, Why hast Thou rejected me?

Ver. 9, 10. Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones? Even he, my tempter, the devil; while offences are every where on the increase, because of the abundance of which the love of many is waxing cold. When we see the strong members of the Church generally giving way to the causes of offence, does not Christ’s body say, The enemy breaketh my bones? For it is the strong members that are “the bones;” and sometimes even those that are strong sink under their temptations. For whosoever of the body of Christ considers this, does he not exclaim, with the voice of Christ’s Body, Why hast Thou rejected me? Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones.

You may see not my flesh merely, but even my “bones.” To see those who were thought to have some stability, giving way under temptations, so that the rest of the weak brethren despair when they see those who are strong succumbing; how great, my brethren, are the dangers!

19. They who trouble me cast me in the teeth. Again that voice!

Ver. 10. While they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? And it is principally in the temptations of the Church they say this, Where is thy God? How much was this cast in the teeth of the Martyrs! Those men so patient and courageous for the name of Christ, how often was it said to them, Where is your God? “Let Him deliver you, if He can.” For men saw their torments outwardly; they did not inwardly behold their crowns! They who trouble me cast me in the teeth, while they say daily unto me, Where is

thy God? And on this account, seeing my soul is disquieted on account of myself, what else should I say unto it, than those words;

Ver. 11. Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me? And, as it seems to answer, “Wouldest thou not have me disquiet thee, placed as I am here in so great evils? Wouldest thou have me not disquiet thee, panting as I am after what is good, thirsting and labouring as I am for it?” What should I say, but,

Ver. 11. Hope thou in God; for I will yet confess unto Him. He states the very words of that confession; he repeats the grounds on which he fortifies his hope. He is the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM 43

This Psalm is a short one; it satisfies the mental cravings of the hearers, without imposing too severe a trial on the hunger of those fasting. Let our soul feed upon it: our soul, which he who sings in this Psalm, speaks of as cast down; cast down, I suppose, either in consequence of some fast, or rather in consequence of some hunger he was in. For fasting is a voluntary act; being an hungered is an involuntary thing. That which is an hungered, is the Church, is the Body of Christ: and that Man who is extended throughout the whole world, of which the Head is above, the limbs below: it is His voice that ought by this time to be perfectly known, and perfectly familiar, to us, in all the Psalms; now chanting joyously, now sorrowing; now rejoicing in hope, now sighing at its actual state, even as if it were our own. We need not then dwell long on pointing out to you, who is the speaker here: let each one of us be a member of Christ's Body; and he will be speaker here.

2. You know, however, that all those who are growing better, and who are sighing after that celestial city, who are aware of their state of pilgrimage here, who hold fast the way, who in their longings have grounded firmly before them the hope of that most unchangeable land, as their anchor; you know, I say, that this class of men, this good seed, this grain of Christ's sowing, has to groan in the midst of tares, and that too till the coming of the season of harvest, that is, (as Truth itself, which cannot be deceived, expounds it,) to the end of the world. Groaning therefore in the midst of the tares, (that is, the wicked, the deceitful, and the seducers, or those, whose minds are disturbed by anger, or poisoned by treachery,) reflecting that they are thrown together with them in one field, (as it were,) which extends throughout the world, that they receive one and the same rain, that they are fanned by the same breezes, that they are nourished together with themselves in the midst of troubles, that they share together with

themselves those common bounties of God, granted to the evil and the good in common by Him Who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; the seed of Abraham, the holy seed then, seeing how great things they have in common with the wicked, from whom they are some time or other to be separated, as to be born in a similar manner, to share the same human condition, to bear together with them mortal bodies, to share with them the use of light, and water, and earth's fruits, and the several instances of worldly prosperity or adversity, famine or plenty, war or peace, health or sickness; seeing, I say, how great things they have in common with the wicked, with whom, however, they have not the same cause in common, they break forth into this exclamation;

Ver. 1. Judge me, O Lord, and separate my cause from the ungodly nation. "Judge me, O God," he cries; I do not dread Thy judgment, because I know Thy mercy. Judge me, O God, and separate my cause from the ungodly nation. Now, meanwhile, in this state of pilgrimage, Thou dost not yet separate my place, because I am to live together with the tares even to the time of the harvest: Thou dost not as yet separate my rain from theirs; my light from theirs: separate my cause. Let a difference be made between him who believes in Thee, and him who believes not in Thee. Our infirmity is the same; but our consciences not the same: our sufferings the same; but our longings not the same. The desire of the ungodly shall perish, but as to the desire of the righteous, we might well doubt, if He were not sure Who promised. The object of our desires is He Himself, Who promiseth: He will give us Himself, because He has already given Himself to us; He will give Himself in His immortality to us then immortal, even because He gave Himself in His mortality to us when mortal. Judge me, O God, and separate my cause from an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man! i.e. from the ungodly nation; from man, i.e. from a certain class of men: for such an one is a man; and such a one is a man, and the one shall be taken and the other left.

3. And since patience is needful in order to endure, until the harvest, a certain distinction without separation, if we may so speak; (for they are together with us, and therefore not yet separated; the tares however being

still tares, and the corn still corn, and therefore they are already distinct;) since then a kind of strength is needful, which must be implored of Him, Who bids us to be strong, and without Whose making us strong, we should not be what He bids us to be; of Him, Who said, He that endures unto the end shall be saved, lest the soul's powers should be impaired in consequence of her ascribing any strength to herself, he subjoins immediately,

Ver. 2. For Thou, O God, art my strength: why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning, while the enemy harasseth me? I go "mourning:" the enemy is harassing me with daily temptations; inspiring either some unlawful love, or some ungrounded cause of fear; and the soul, that fights against both of them, though not taken prisoner by them, yet being in danger from them, is contracted with sorrow, and says unto God. Why?

Let her then ask of Him, and hear Why? For she is in the Psalm enquiring the cause of her dejection; saying, Why hast Thou cast me off? and why go I mourning? Let her hear from Isaiah; let the lesson which has just been read, suggest itself to her. The spirit shall go forth from me, and every breath have I made. For iniquity have I a little afflicted him; I hid my face from him, and he departed from me sorrowful in the ways of his heart. Why then didst thou ask, Why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning? Thou hast heard, it was for iniquity. Iniquity is the cause of thy mourning; let "Righteousness" be the cause of thy rejoicing! Thou wouldest sin; and yet thou wouldest fain not suffer; so that it was too little for thee to be thyself unrighteous, without also wishing Him to be unrighteous, in that thou wouldest fain not be punished by Him. Consider a speech of a better kind in another Psalm. It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy righteousnesses. By being lifted up, I had learned my own iniquities; let me by being "humbled," learn Thy righteousnesses. Why go I mourning, while the enemy harasses me? Thou complainest of the enemy. It is true he does harass thee; but it was thou didst give place to him. And even now there is a course open to thee; choose the course of prudence; admit thy King, shut the tyrant out.

4. But in order that she may do this, hear what she says, what she supplicates, what she prays for. Pray thou for what thou hearest; pray for it

when thou hearest it; let these words be the voice of us all. (Ver. 3.) O send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. They have led me, and brought me on unto Thy holy hill, and into Thy Tabernacles. For that very Light and Truth are indeed two in name; the reality expressed is but One. For what else is the “Light” of God, except the “Truth” of God? Or what else is the “Truth” of God, except the “Light” of God? And the one Person of Christ is both of these. I am the Light of the world: he that believeth on Me, shall not walk in darkness. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is Himself the Light: He is Himself the Truth. Let Him come then and rescue us, and separate at once our cause from the ungodly nation; let Him deliver us from the deceitful and unjust man, let Him separate the wheat from the tares, for at the time of harvest He will Himself send His Angels, that they may gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and cast them into flaming fire, while they gather together the corn into the garner. He will send out His Light, and His Truth; for that they have already “brought us and led us to His holy hill, and into His Tabernacles.” We possess the “earnest;” we hope for the prize. His holy Hill is His holy Church. It is that mountain, which, according to Daniel’s vision, grew from a very small “stone,” till it crushed the kingdoms of the earth; and grew to such a size, that it “filled the face of the earth.” This is the “hill,” from which he tells us that his prayer was heard, who says, I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Let no one of those that are without that mountain, hope to be heard unto eternal life. For many are heard in their prayers for many things. Let them not congratulate themselves on being heard; the devils were heard in their prayer, that they might be sent into the swine. Let us desire to be heard unto eternal life, by reason of our longing, through which we say, Send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. That is a “Light,” which requires the eye of the heart. For Blessed (He saith) are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. We are now on His Hill, that is, in His Church, and in His Tabernacle. The tabernacle is for persons sojourning; the house, for those dwelling in one community. The tabernacle is also for those who are both from home, and also in a state of warfare. When thou hearest of a tabernacle, form a notion of a war; guard against an enemy. But what shall the house be? Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be always praising Thee.

5. Now then that we have been led on even to the Tabernacle, and are placed on His holy Hill, what hope do we carry with us?

Ver. 4. Then will I go in unto the Altar of God. For there is a certain invisible Altar on high, which the unrighteous man approaches not. To that Altar he alone draws nigh, who draws nigh to this one without cause to fear. There he shall find his Life, who in this one separates his cause. And I will go in unto the Altar of God. From His holy Hill, and from His Tabernacle, from His Holy Church, I will go in unto the Altar of God on High. What manner of Sacrifice is there? He himself who goeth in is taken for a burnt-offering. I will go in unto the Altar of God. What is the meaning of what he says, the Altar of my God?

Unto God, Who makes glad my youth. Youth signifies newness: just as if he said, Unto God, Who makes glad my newness. It is He Who makes glad my newness, Who hath filled my old estate with mourning. For now I go mourning in oldness, then shall I stand, exulting in newness!

Yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God. What is the meaning of “praising on the harp,” and praising on the psaltery? For he does not always do so with the harp, nor always with the psaltery. These two instruments of the musicians have each a distinct meaning of their own, worthy of our consideration and notice. They are both borne in the hands, and played by the touch; and they stand for certain bodily works of ours. Both are good, if one knows how to play the psaltery, or to play the harp. But since the psaltery is that instrument which has the shell, (i.e. that drum, that hollow piece of wood, by straining on which the chords resound,) on the upper part of it, whereas the harp has that same concave sounding board on the lower part, there is to be a distinction made between our works, when they are upon the harp, when on the psaltery: both however are acceptable to God, and grateful to His ear. When we do any thing according to God’s Commandments, obeying His commands and hearkening to Him, that we may fulfil His injunctions, when we are active and not passive, it is the psaltery that is playing. For so also do the Angels: for they have nothing to suffer. But when we suffer any thing of tribulation, of trials, of offences on this earth, (as we suffer only from the inferior part of ourselves; i.e. from the fact that we are mortal, that we owe somewhat of tribulation to our

original cause, and also from the fact of our suffering much from those who are not “above;”) this is the harp. For there rises a sweet strain from that part of us which is “below:” we suffer, and we strike the psaltery, or shall I rather say we sing and we strike the harp. When the Apostle was saying that he evangelized and preached the Gospel throughout the whole world according to the commandment of God; because he said that he had received that Gospel not of men or by man, but by Jesus Christ, the sound of the strings came from the top: but when he said, We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, it was the harp sounding from the bottom, but still sounding sweetly. For all patience is pleasing to God. If however you fail in tribulations, you have broken the harp. Why then did he just now say, I will praise Thee on the harp? On account of what he had said before, Why go I mourning, while the enemy afflicts me? For he was suffering something from affliction from below: and yet even in that he wished to approve himself unto God, and longed to return thanks unto God, preserving a good courage in his tribulations, and because he could not be free from tribulation, it was patience that God required of him. Upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God!

6. And again, in order that he may draw the sound from that sounding-board below, he addresses his soul: (ver. 5.) Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, (he says,) and why dost thou disquiet me? I am in tribulations, in weariness, in mourning, Why dost thou disquiet me, O my soul? Who is the speaker, to whom is he speaking? That it is the soul to which he is speaking, every body knows: for it is obvious: the appeal is addressed to it directly: Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? The question is as to the speaker. It is not the flesh addressing the soul, surely, since the flesh cannot speak without the soul. For it is more appropriate for the soul to address the flesh, than for the flesh to address the soul. But, as he said not, Why art thou sorrowful, O my flesh; (for perhaps if it was the flesh that he was addressing, he would not say, Why art thou sorrowful? but “why art thou in pain?” For sorrow is the name for pain of mind; whereas the trouble that is felt in the body, may indeed be called “pain;” but not “sorrow.” The soul, however, is generally made sorrowful by the “pain” of the body. But still there is a difference between what is made “sorrowful,”

and that which feels pain. For it is the flesh that feels pain; the soul that is made “sorrowful;” and this text is plain, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul;) therefore it is not the soul that addresses the flesh; for he said not, Why art thou sorrowful, O my flesh? nor is it the flesh addressing the soul; forasmuch as it is absurd for the inferior part to be addressing the superior. We perceive then that we have a certain part, in which is the image of God; viz. the mind and reason. It was that same mind that prayed for God’s Light; and God’s Truth. It is the same mind by which we apprehend right and wrong: it is by the same that we discern truth from falsehood. It is this same that we call understanding; which understanding, indeed, is wanting to the brutes. And this “understanding” whoever neglects in himself, and holds it in less account than the other parts of his nature, and casts it off, just as if he had it not, is addressed in the Psalm, Be ye not as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding. It is our understanding then that is addressing our soul. The latter is withered away from tribulations, worn out in anguish, made sorrowful in temptations, fainting in toils. The mind, catching a glimpse of Truth above, would fain rouse her spirits, and she says, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?

7. Consider whether this is not the exclamation of the Apostle; in that his conflict, prefiguring in his person certain others—perhaps ourselves—and saying, I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members; that is, certain motions of the flesh. And in a kind of struggle, and almost despair, he supplicates for the grace of God. O wretched man that I am! Who shall free me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Such persons, so struggling, our Lord Himself also condescended to prefigure, when he said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. For did He not know to what end He had come into the world? Did He dread His Passion, Who had said, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from Me; but I lay it down of Myself, and I take it again. But He Who said, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death, prefigured in His own Person certain of His own members. For in general the understanding believes correctly, and knows well too, that man will be, according to his “faith,” in Abraham’s bosom. It believes this; and yet when the point of death, as it were, is come, it is disturbed through its close relation, so to

speaking, with this world; it lifts up its ears to catch that voice of God within; it hears from within an intellectual music. For a certain sound from above so strikes in silence, not on the ears, but on the mind, that whosoever hears that melody is filled with loathing of corporeal sounds, and the whole of this human life is to it but a kind of din, interrupting the hearing of a certain strain from above, passing sweet, incomparable, and ineffable. And, in truth, when such a result follows from any passion, man suffers violence while he addresses his soul, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? Is it, haply, because it is hard to find a life of purity, when He is the Judge, Who knows how to judge with clear and thorough sight—because though our life is now commendable among men, so that men cannot find what they can with justice censure, there is a balance that proceedeth from His eyes, there is a standard proceeding from Him, that squares by no deceitful rule; and God finds in man certain things to censure, which men did not see to be worthy of censure, nor the very person within himself who is to be judged—is it, I say, from fear of these things that the soul is disquieted? and that the mind addresses her, as if she said, Why dost thou fear because of thy sins, in that thou canst not avoid all sin? Hope in the Lord: for I will confess unto Him. Some things are cured by immediate address: the rest are purged away by faithful confession. Yes! fear indeed, if thou callest thyself righteous; if thou hast not those words from another Psalm, Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: ‘Why not enter into judgment with Thy servant?’ I stand in need of Thy mercy: for if Thou shewest judgment without mercy, whither must I go? If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall abide it? Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. Therefore, if in Thy sight no man living shall be justified, (for how justly soever any one who lives here liveth, woe unto him, if God “enter into judgment” with him. For by another Prophet He thus chideth in the same manner the proud and presumptuous: Wherefore would ye plead with Me in judgment? Ye all have forsaken Me, saith the Lord;) therefore, I say, seek not to plead with Him; do thy endeavour to be righteous; and how much soever thou art so, own thyself a sinner: ever hope but for mercy; and secure in this confession, address the soul that is disquieting thee, and raising tumults to disturb thee: Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me? Perhaps thou wouldest fain have rested thy hopes

upon thyself? Hope in the Lord: not in thyself. For what art thou in thyself, and what art thou of thyself? Let Him be the principle of health in thee, Who submitted to wounds for thy sake! Hope, he says, in the Lord; for I will confess unto Him. What wilt thou confess unto Him? My God is the saving health of my countenance. Thou art the saving health of my countenance; Thou shalt heal me! I call upon Thee as being sick; I own Thee to be the Physician: I do not boast myself to be whole; as it is said in another Psalm, I have said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

8. These expressions, brethren, are safe ones: but yet be watchful in good works. Touch “the psaltery,” by obeying the Commandments; touch the harp, by patiently enduring your sufferings. You have heard from Isaiah, Break thy bread to the hungry; think not that fasting by itself is sufficient. Fasting chasteneth thine own self: it does not refresh others. Thy distress will profit thee, if thou affordest comfort to others. See, thou hast denied thyself; to whom wilt thou give that of which thou hast deprived thyself? Where wilt thou bestow what thou hast denied thyself? How many poor may be filled by the breakfast we have this day given up? Fast in such a way that thou mayest rejoice, that thou hast breakfasted, while another has been eating; fast on account of thy prayers, that thou mayest be heard in them. For He says in that passage, Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Here I am, provided thou wilt with cheerful mind break thy bread to the hungry. For generally this is done by men reluctantly and with murmurs, to rid themselves of the wearisome importunity of the beggar, not to refresh the bowels of him that is needy. But it is a cheerful giver that God loves. If thou givest thy bread reluctantly, thou hast lost both the bread, and the merit of the action. Do it then from the heart: that He Who seeth in secret, may say, whilst thou art yet speaking, Here I am. How speedily are the prayers of those received, who work righteousness! And this is man’s righteousness in this life, fasting, alms, and prayer. Wouldest thou have thy prayer fly upward to God? Make for it those two wings of alms and fasting. Such may God’s Light and God’s Truth find us, that He may find us without cause for fear, when He comes to free us from death, Who has already come to undergo death for us. Amen.

PSALM 44

1. This Psalm is addressed “to the sons of Korah,” as its title shews. Now Korah is equivalent to the word “calvitium,” or “baldness;” and we find in the Gospel that our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified in the place of a skull. It is clear then that this Psalm is sung to the “sons of His Passion.” Now we have on this point a most certain and most evident testimony from the Apostle Paul; because that at the time when the Church was suffering under the persecutions of the Gentiles, he quoted from hence a verse, to insert by way of consolation, and encouragement to patience. For it is here that is said, which he inserted in his Epistle, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Let us then hear in this Psalm the voice of the Martyrs; and see how good is the cause which the voice of the Martyrs pleads, saying, For Thy sake, &c. For on this account the Lord also added the words for righteousness sake, while saying, Blessed are they that suffer for righteousness; viz. lest any one suffering persecution should expect glory from the punishment itself, without having a good cause. And hence exhorting His disciples, He says, Blessed are ye, when men shall say, or do such and such things unto you for my sake. Hence then the words, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long.

2. But it is a counsel of God of great depth, and one requiring great consideration, what was the reason that after He had led our fathers, the Patriarchs, and the whole of that people Israel, out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and after He had drowned in the sea their enemies when pursuing them, had led them through opposing nations, and having completely subdued their enemies, planted themselves in the land of promise, and, with very small numbers on their side, won great victories over a vast multitude of the enemy; why it should afterwards have seemed good to Him to “turn His face,” as it were, from His people, so that His saints must be exposed to the sweeping overthrow of slaughter and of death, and no man resisted, no

man defended them, no man rescued them; as if God had “turned His face” from their groanings; as if He had forgotten them; as if He was not Himself their God, Who with a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm, and power made manifest, forced (as I said) from Egypt our fathers, (i.e. that people,) and having conquered and expelled the Heathen from their own land, settled them in the sovereignty; all persons marvelling that a great multitude had been repeatedly conquered by a few. This then it is that begins to be sung in this Psalm, in the groaning of confession. For it was not without reason that those things actually took place; but in order that it might be understood why they took place. Now that they did actually take place, we know: why they took place, is a deeper question for us. The title then is not simply To the sons of Korah, but, For understanding to the sons of Korah. This is the case also with that Psalm, the first verse of which the Lord Himself uttered on the Cross: My God, My God, look upon Me; why hast Thou forsaken Me? For ‘transferring us in a figure’ to what He was saying, and to His own Body, (for we are also His Body, and He is our Head,) He uttered from the Cross not His own cry, but ours. For God never forsook Him: nor did He Himself ever depart from the Father; but it was in behalf of us that He spake this: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? For there follows, Far from My health are the words of My offences: and it shews, in whose person He said this; for sin could not be found in Him. I will cry unto Thee in the day-time, and Thou wilt not hear; and in the night-season, (assuredly we must understand, Thou wilt not hear;) but he added, and not for foolishness unto me, that is, this very thing that ‘Thou wilt not hearken unto me,’ is not for foolishness unto me, but for understanding. What means, wilt not hear me for understanding? This means, “Thou wilt not hear me” unto temporal things, that I may understand that it is things eternal that should be desired of Thee! God then does not forsake, and when He seems to forsake, He is taking from thee what thou didst wrongly long for, and teaching thee what thou oughtest rightly to long for. For if God were always to shew favour unto us in these present prosperities, that every thing should abound unto us, and that in this time of our mortality we should suffer no distress, or difficulties, we could not but say that these are the highest blessings that God bestows on His servants, and we should not desire any greater ones of Him. Now it is for this reason that He mingles the bitterness of tribulations with this life’s hurtful sweetness, that another,

which is wholesomer, might be sought after. This is the meaning of A Psalm for understanding for the sons of Korah. Let us at least hear the Psalm, and there rather see this truth.

3. Ver. 1. O God, we have heard with our ears; our fathers have told us the work that Thou didst in their days, and in the days of old. Wondering wherefore, in these days, He has seemingly forsaken those, whom it was His will to exercise in sufferings, they recall the past events which they have heard of from their fathers; as if they said, It is not of these things that we suffer, that our fathers told us! For in that other Psalm also, He said this, Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. But I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them; have I then hoped, and hast Thou “forsaken” me? And have I believed upon Thee in vain? And is it in vain that my name has been written in Thy Book, and Thy name has been inscribed on me? What our fathers told us was this:

Ver. 2. Thy hand destroyed the nations; and Thou plantedst them: Thou didst weaken the peoples, and cast them out. That is to say; ‘Thou didst drive out “the peoples” from their own land, that Thou mightest bring them in, and plant them; and mightest by Thy mercy stablish their kingdom.’ These are the things that we heard from our fathers.

4. But perhaps it was because they were brave, were men of battle, were invincible, were well-disciplined, and warlike, that they could do these things. Far from it. This is not what our fathers told us; this is not what is contained in Scripture. But what does it say, but what follows?

Ver. 3. For they gat not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance. Thy right hand is Thy Power: Thine arm is Thy Son Himself. And the light of Thy countenance. What means this, but that Thou wert present with them, in miracles of such a sort that Thy presence was perceived. For when God’s presence with us appears by any miracle, do we see His face with our own eyes? No. It is by the effect of the miracle He intimates to man His presence. In fact, what do all persons say, who express wonder at facts of this description? “I saw God present.” But Thy

right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance; because Thou pleasedst in them: i.e. didst so deal with them, that Thou wert well-pleasing in them: that whoso considered how they were being dealt with, might say, that God is with them of a truth; and it is God that moves them.

5. ‘What? Was He then other than now He is?’ Away with the supposition. For what follows?

Ver. 4. Thou art Thyself my King and my God. Thou art Thyself; for Thou art not changed. I see that the times are changed; but the Creator of times is unchanged. Thou art Thyself my King and my God. Thou art wont to guide me: to govern me, to save me.

Thou Who commandest salvation unto Jacob. What is, Thou Who commandest? Even though in Thine own proper Substance and Nature, in which Thou art whatsoever Thou art, Thou wast hid from them; and though Thou didst not converse with the fathers in that which Thou art in Thyself, so that they could see Thee face to face, yet by any created being whatsoever Thou commandest salvation unto Israel. For that sight of Thee face to face is reserved for those set free in the Resurrection. And the very “fathers” of the New Testament too, although they saw Thy mysteries revealed, although they preached the secret things so revealed to them, nevertheless said that they themselves saw but in a glass, darkly, but that seeing face to face is reserved to a future time, when what the Apostle himself speaks of shall have come. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. It is against that time then that vision face to face is reserved for you, of which John also speaks: Beloved, we are now the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Although then at that time our fathers saw Thee not as Thou art, face to face, although that vision is reserved against the resurrection, yet, even though they were Angels who presented themselves, it is Thou, Who commandest salvation unto Jacob. Thou art not only present by Thine own Self; but by whatsoever created being Thou didst appear, it is Thou that dost command by them, that which Thou doest by Thine own Self in order to the salvation of Thy servants: but that which they do whom Thou commandest

it, is done to procure the salvation of Thy servants. Since then Thou art Thyself my King and my God, and Thou commandest salvation unto Jacob, wherefore are we suffering these things?

6. But perhaps it is only what is past that has been described to us: but nothing of the kind is to be hoped for by us for the future. Nay indeed, it is still to be hoped for.

Ver. 5. Through Thee will we winnow away our enemies. Our fathers then have declared to us a work that Thou didst “in their days, and in the days of old,” that Thy hand destroyed the Gentiles: that Thou “didst cast out the peoples; and didst plant them.” Such was the past; but what is to be hereafter? Through Thee we shall winnow away our enemies. A time will come, when all the enemies of Christians will be winnowed away like chaff, be blown like dust, and be cast off from the earth. If then both the past has been described to us to have been such, and the future foretold to be of the same description, why do we suffer in the midst of the present state of things; except it be in order to the understanding of the sons of Korah? Through Thee will we winnow away our enemies: and through Thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. Thus much of the future.

7. Ver. 6. I will not trust in my bow, even as our fathers did not in their sword. Neither shall my sword help me.

8. Ver. 7. For Thou hast saved us from our enemies. This too is spoken of the future under the figure of the past. But this is the reason that it is spoken of as if it were past, that it is as certain as if it were past. Give heed, wherefore many things are expressed by the Prophets as if they were past; whereas it is things future, not past facts that are the subject of prophecy. For the future Passion of our Lord Himself was foretold: and yet it says, They pierced My hands and My feet. They told all My bones; not, ‘They shall pierce,’ and ‘shall tell.’ They looked and stared upon Me; not ‘They shall look and stare upon Me.’ They parted My garments among them. It does not say, ‘They shall part’ them. All these things are expressed as if they were past, although they were yet to come: because to God things to come also are as certain as if they were past. For to us what is past is certain; what is to come uncertain. For we know a certain thing to have

happened, and it is impossible that what has once happened should not have happened. Suppose a Prophet, to whom the future is as certain as the past is to you: and as certain as it is to you that what you remember to have happened cannot possibly not have happened, so certain is it to him, that what he knows to be about to come to pass, cannot possibly fail to come to pass. It is for this reason, in consequence of their certainty, that those things which are yet future, are spoken of as if past. This it is then that we hope. For it is, Thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

9. Ver. 8. In God will we boast all the day long. Observe how he intermingles words expressive of a future time, that you may perceive that what was spoken of before as in past time was foretold of future times. In God will we boast all day long; and in Thy name will we confess for ever. What is, We shall boast? What, We shall confess? That Thou hast saved us from our enemies; that Thou art to give us an everlasting kingdom: that, in us are to be fulfilled the words, Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be always praising Thee.

10. Since then we have the certainty that these things are to be hereafter, and since we have heard from our fathers that those we spoke of were in time past, what is our state at present?

Ver. 9. But now Thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame. Thou hast “put us to shame” not before our own consciences, but in the sight of men. For there was a time when Christians were persecuted; when in every place they were outcasts, when in every place it used to be said, “He is a Christian!” as if it conveyed an insult and reproach. Where then is He, “our God, our King,” Who commands salvation unto Jacob? Where is He, Who did all those works, which our fathers have told us? Where is He, Who is hereafter to do all those things, which He revealed unto us by His Spirit? Is He changed? No. These things are done in order to understanding, for the sons of Korah. For we ought to understand something of the reason, why He has willed we should suffer all these things in the mean time. What “all things?” But now Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame: and goest not forth, O God, in our powers. We go forth to meet our enemies, and Thou goest not forth with us. We see them: they are very strong, and we are without

strength. Where is that might of Thine? Where Thy right hand, and Thy power? Where the sea dried up, and the Egyptian pursuers overwhelmed with the waves? Where Amalek's resistance subdued by the sign of the Cross? And Thou, O God, goest not forth in our powers.

11. Ver. 10. Thou hast turned us away backward in presence of our enemies, so that they are, as it were, before; we, behind; they are counted as conquerors, we as conquered. And they which hate us spoiled for themselves. What did they "spoil" but ourselves?

12. Ver. 11. Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the nations. We have been devoured by the nations. Those persons are meant, who, through their sufferings, have by process of assimilation, become part of the body of the Gentile world. For the Church mourns over them, as over members of her body, that have been devoured.

13. Ver. 12. Thou hast sold Thy people for no price. For we see whom Thou hast made over; what Thou hast received, we have not seen. And there was no multitude in their jubilees. For when the Christians were flying before the pursuit of enemies, who were idolaters, were there then held any congregations and jubilees to the honour of God? Were those Hymns chanted in concert from the Churches of God, that are wont to be sung in concert in time of peace, and to be sounded in a sweet accord of the brotherhood in the ears of God? And there was no multitude in their jubilees.

14. Ver. 13, 14. Thou madest us a reproach to our neighbours; a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us. Thou madest us a similitude among the Heathen. What is meant by a similitude? It is when men in imprecating a curse make a "similitude" of his name whom they detest. "So mayest thou die;" "So mayest thou be punished?" What a number of such reproaches were then uttered! "So mayest thou be crucified!" Even in the present day there are not wanting enemies of Christ, (those very Jews themselves,) against whom whensoever we defend Christ, they say unto us, "So mayest thou die as He did." For they would not have inflicted that kind of death had they not an intense horror of dying by such a death: or had they been able to comprehend what mystery was contained in it. When the

ointment is applied to the eyes of the blind man, he does not see the eye-salve in the physician's hand. For the very Cross was made for the benefit even of the persecutors themselves. Hereby they were healed afterwards; and they believed in Him whom they themselves had slain. Thou madest us a similitude among the heathen; a shaking of the head among the peoples, a shaking of the head by way of insult. They spake with their lips, they shook the head. This they did to the Lord: this to all His Saints also, whom they were able to pursue, to lay hold of, to mock, to betray, to afflict, and to slay.

15. Ver. 15, 16. My shame is continually before me; and the confusion of my face has covered me. For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth: that is to say, from the voice of them that insult over me, and who make it a charge against me that I worship Thee, that I confess Thee! and who make it a charge against me that I bear that name, by which all charges against me shall be blotted out. For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth, that is, of him that speaketh against me. By reason of the enemy and the persecutor. And what is the understanding conveyed here? Those things which are told us of the time past, will not be done in our case: those which are hoped for, as to be hereafter, are not as yet manifest. Those which are past, as the leading out of Thy people with great glory from Egypt; its deliverance from its persecutors; the guiding of it through the nations, the placing of it in the kingdom, whence the nations had been expelled. What are those to be hereafter? The leading of the people out of this Egypt of the world, when Christ, our "leader" shall appear in His glory: the placing of the Saints at His right hand; of the wicked at His left; the condemnation of the wicked with the devil to eternal punishment; the receiving of a kingdom from Christ with the Saints to last for ever. These are the things that are yet to be: the former are what are past. In the interval, what is to be our lot? Tribulations! "Why so?" That it may be seen with respect to the soul that worships God, to what extent it worships God; that it may be seen whether it worships Him freely, from Whom it received salvation freely. For should God say unto thee, What didst thou give Me, that I might create thee? Assuredly if thou deservedst aught of Me after thou wast made, thou hadst not deserved aught of Me before I made thee. What are we to say to Him, Who first created us freely, because He Himself is good, not because we have deserved any thing

whatsoever. In the next place, what are we to say of our restoration, our second birth itself? That our deserts obtained for us the sending to us of that eternal salvation from the Lord? God forbid! If our deserts were at all accounted of, His coming would be but to our condemnation! He came not to examine into our deserts, but for the remission of our sins. Thou wert not in being, and thou wert created! What hast thou given unto God? Thou wert wicked, and thou wert redeemed! What hast Thou given unto God? What is there that thou hast not received from Him freely? With reason is it named “grace,” because it is bestowed (“gratis,” i.e.) freely. What is required of thee then is this, that thou too shouldest worship Him freely; not because He gives thee things temporal, but because He holds out to thee things eternal.

16. But beware, lest thou think of those eternal things themselves otherwise (than as they are:) and lest, understanding those things eternal in a carnal sense, thou shouldest nevertheless not be serving God “freely.” For, if thou worshippest God because He gives thee an estate, dost thou mean to forego His service because He takes thine estate from thee? But perhaps thou sayest, “I will serve God because He will give me an estate, though not a temporal one! Nevertheless, thou still bearest a corrupt mind; for thou dost not yet serve Him with a pure love; thou art still seeking a reward. For thou wouldest fain possess, in the world to come, the things which thou must of necessity leave behind thee here, thou wouldest fain change thy carnal pleasure, not cut it off entirely. We do not commend the fasting of the man, who reserves his appetite for a luxurious dinner. For sometimes men are invited to a great feast, and as they wish to come to it with an appetite, they fast. But is not such fasting as this to be attributed rather to luxury than to self-denial? Do not therefore hope to have such things given to thee by God, as He calls upon thee to despise even here. For such were the things hoped for by the Jews: therefore they were confounded by that question. For they too hope for a Resurrection; but they hope to arise to such bodily pleasures as they love here. When therefore the question was put to them by the Sadducees, who do not believe in a Resurrection, as to that woman who married the seven brothers in succession, whose wife of them she should be in the Resurrection? they were at a loss, and could not answer. But when it was proposed to our Lord, because the Resurrection promised to us is not

one in which pleasures of this sort are to be renewed, but one in which we are to find everlasting delight from the fruition of God Himself, the Lord answered and said, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God: for in the Resurrection they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage; for neither can they die any more, i.e. there is no looking for a successor, where there is none to make a decease. And what then will there be there? but they shall be equal (saith He) unto the Angels of God. Unless perhaps you suppose that the Angels delight in the daily banquet, and the wine with which you intoxicate yourself, or perhaps believe that the Angels have wives. Nothing of all this is to be found among the Angels. Whence do the Angels derive their joy, save from that source, of Which the Lord saith, "Know ye not that their Angels do alway behold the Father's face?" If then the Angels' joy is derived from the "face of the Father," prepare thou thyself for such pleasure, or for any pleasure thou canst find superior to that of seeing God's face. Woe to that love of thine, if thou canst conceive any thing more beautiful than Him, from Whom is all Beauty, to keep thee back from deserving to think of Him. The Lord was incarnate, and appeared unto men as a Man. 'In what fashion did He appear?' I have said already; He appeared "unto men, and as a Man." What great thing did He appear? Flesh unto flesh! What great thing did He appear, of Whom it was said, We beheld Him, and He had no form nor comeliness? Who was it that had no form nor comeliness? He of Whom it was also said, Thou art fair before the children of men. As Man, He had no form nor comeliness; but He was fair, in that wherein He was before the sons of men. Thence it is that shewing that form of the flesh, out of His own form, to the eyes of the beholders, what saith He? He that loveth Me keepeth My Commandments; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father: and I will love him, and manifest Myself unto him. Himself, Whom they saw already, He promised that He would manifest unto them. But what means this? It is even as if He said, "Ye see the form of a servant; the form of God is concealed. I employ the former to win you: the latter I reserve for you: with the former I nourish you while yet 'babes;' with the latter I feed you when full grown." In order then that this faith of ours, whereby we are made clean, may be prepared for things invisible, is the cause that all these things have been done for understanding unto the sons of Korah, so that the saints should be stripped of their property, should be stripped even of temporal life itself, in order

that they might not worship the Everlasting Himself with a view to these self-same temporal things; but out of a pure love of Him should endure patiently all these things that they are suffering for a time.

17. Because then “the sons of Korah” have understood this, what do they say?

Ver. 17. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee. What is meant by, have not forgotten Thee? Neither have we behaved ourselves frowardly in Thy covenant.

Ver. 18. Our heart has not turned back; and Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way. See here is understanding, in that “our heart has not gone back;” that we have not “forgotten Thee, have not behaved frowardly in Thy covenant;” placed as we are in great tribulations, and persecutions of the Gentiles. Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way. Our goings were in the pleasures of the world; our goings were in the midst of temporal prosperities. Thou hast taken our goings out of Thy way; and hast shewn us how strait and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life. And Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way. What is meant by, “hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way?” It is as if He said, “Ye are placed in the midst of tribulation; ye are suffering many things; ye have already lost many things that ye loved in this life: but I have not abandoned you on the way, the narrow way that I am teaching you. Ye were seeking broad ways. What do I tell you? This is the way we go to everlasting life: by the way ye wish to walk, ye are going to death. How broad and wide is the road that leads to destruction: and how many there be that find it! How strait and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and how few there be that walk therein. Who are the few? They who patiently endure tribulations, patiently endure temptations; who in all these troubles do not fall away: who do not rejoice in the word for a season only; and in the time of tribulation fade away, as on the sun’s arising; but who have the root of “love,” according to what we have lately heard read in the Gospel. Have thou then, I say, the root of charity, that when the sun has arisen, it may not scorch thee, but may nourish thee. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee, and behaved frowardly in Thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back. But

because we do all this in the midst of tribulations, now walking in the “strait road,” Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way.

18. Ver. 18, 19. For Thou hast brought us low in the place of infirmity: therefore Thou wilt exalt us in the place of strength. And the shadow of death has covered us. For this mortality of ours is but the shadow of death. The true death is condemnation with the devil.

19. Ver. 19, 20, 21. If we have forgotten the Name of our God. Here is the understanding of the sons of Korah. And stretched out our hands to a strange God. Shall not God search this out? For He knoweth the secrets of the heart. He “knows,” and yet He “searches them out?” If He knows the secrets of the heart, what do the words, Shall not God search it out, do there? He “knows” it in Himself; He “searches it out” for our sakes. For it is for this reason God sometimes searches a thing out; and speaks of that becoming known to Himself, which He is Himself making known to thee. He is speaking of His own work, not of His knowledge. We commonly say, “A gladsome day,” when it is fine. Yet is it the day itself that experiences delight? No: we speak of the day as gladsome, because it fills us with delight. And we speak of a sullen sky. Not that there is any such feeling in the clouds, but because men are affected with sullenness at the sight of such an appearance of the skies, it is called sullen for this reason, that it makes us sullen. So also God is said to know when He causes us to know. God says to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God. Did He then not know it before then? But Abraham did not know himself till then: for it was in that very trial he came to know himself. For in general a man thinks that he can do what he cannot; or that he cannot do what he can do. The questioning comes upon him through a divine dispensation; and by that examination he is made acquainted with himself: and God is said to know that which He had caused him to know. Did Peter know himself, when he said to the Physician, I will be with Thee even unto death? The Physician had felt his pulse, and knew what was going on within His patient’s soul: the patient knew it not. The crisis of trial came; and the Physician approved the correctness of His opinion: the sick man gave up his presumption. Thus God at once “knows” it and “searches it out.” ‘He knows it already. Why does He “search it out?” ’ For thy sake: that thou mayest come to know

thine own self, and mayest return thanks to Him that made thee. Shall not God search it out?

21. Ver. 21. For He knoweth the secrets of the heart. What secrets?

Ver. 22. For, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. For you may see a man being put to death; you do not know why he is being put to death. God knoweth this. The thing in itself is hid. But some one will say to me, "See, he is detained in prison for the name of Christ, he is a confessor for the name of Christ." Why do not heretics also confess the name of Christ, and yet they do not die for His sake? Nay more; let me say it, in the Catholic Church itself, do you think there either are, or have been wanting persons such as would suffer for the sake of glory among men? Were there no such persons, the Apostle would not say, Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. He knew therefore that these might be some persons, who did this not from "charity," but out of vainglory. It is therefore hid from us; God alone sees this; we cannot see it. He alone can judge of this, who knoweth the secrets of the heart. For, for Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. I have already mentioned that from hence the Apostle Paul had borrowed a text for the encouragement of the Martyrs: that they might not "faint in the tribulations" undergone by them for the name of Christ.

22. Ver. 23. Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? Who is addressed, and who is the speaker? Would not he be more correctly said to "sleep" and slumber, who speaks such words as these? Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? He replies to you, I know what I am saying: I know that He that keepeth Israel doth not sleep: but yet the Martyrs cry, Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? O Lord Jesus, Thou wast slain; Thou didst "sleep" in Thy Passion; to us Thou hast now "awaked" from sleep. For we know that Thou hast now "awaked" again. To what purpose hast Thou awaked and risen again? The Gentiles that persecute us, think Thee to be dead; do not believe Thee to have risen again. Arise Thou then to them also! Why sleepest Thou, though not to us, yet to them? For if they already believed Thee to have risen again, could they persecute us who believe in Thee? But why do they persecute? "Destroy, slay so and so, whoever have believed in Thee, such

an one, who died an ill death!” As yet to them “Thou sleepest;” arise to them, that they may perceive that Thou hast “awaked” again; and may be at rest. Lastly, it has come to pass, while the Martyrs die, and say these things; while they sleep, and “awaken” Christ, truly dead in their sleepings, Christ has, in a certain sense, risen again in the Gentiles; i.e. it becomes believed, that He has risen again; so by degrees they themselves, becoming converted to Christ by believing, collected a numerous body: such as the persecutors dreaded; and the persecutions have come to an end. Why? Because Christ hath risen again in the Gentiles, Who before was “asleep” to them, as not believing. Arise, and cast us not off for ever!

23. Ver. 24. Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face: as if Thou wert not present; as if Thou hadst forgotten us?

And forgettest our misery and trouble?

24. Ver. 25. For our soul is bowed down to the dust. Where is it bowed down? To the dust: i.e. “dust” persecutes us. They persecute us, of whom Thou hast said, The ungodly are not so; but are like the dust, which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth. Our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly hath cleaved to the earth. He seems to me to have expressed the punishment of the extreme of humiliation, in which, when any one prostrates himself, “his belly cleaveth to the earth.” For whosoever is humbled so as to be on his knees, has yet a lower degree of humiliation to which he can come: but he who is so humbled, that his belly cleaveth to the ground, there is no farther humiliation for him. Should one wish to do still farther, it will, after that point, be not bowing him down, but crushing him. Perhaps then he may have meant this; We are bowed down very low in this dust; there is no farther point to which humiliation can go. Humiliation has now reached its highest point: let mercy then come also.

25. Or does the Church, brethren, in these words, perchance, lament over those, whom their persecutors persuaded to impiety; so that they who endured unto the end, say, Our soul is bowed down to the dust; i.e. in the hands of this “dust;” in the hands of the ungodly and the persecutors? Our soul is bowed down to the dust; to such a degree, that we called on Thee, that Thou wouldest give us help out of our tribulation. But our belly has

cleaved unto the ground; means to say, “our belly” hath consented to the ungodliness of this dust: for this is the meaning of hath cleaved. For if, when you are inflamed with love and charity, you rightly say unto God, My soul cleaveth to Thee; and, It is good for me to cleave unto God: and it is when your will coincides with God’s will, that you cleave unto God; it is said, not without reason, of the ‘belly’ spoken of above, that it hath cleaved unto the earth; but that those are signified, who, not being able to endure persecution, have consented unto the ungodly; for in so doing they have cleaved unto the earth. But why were they called “the belly,” except because they are carnal; so that the face of the Church is in the Saints, in them that are spiritual; the belly of the Church in the carnal ones. Therefore the face of the Church is displayed to view: the belly is hid, as being more weak and feeble. This is intimated by the Scripture in a certain passage, where some one says, that he “received a book; and that book (he says) was sweet in my mouth; but in my belly it was bitter.” What is meant by this, but that the highest precepts, which those who are spiritual can bear, those who are carnal cannot bear? And that by the very things, in which those who are spiritual take delight, those who are carnal are made sorrowful? What is it, my brethren, that this book contains? Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor. How sweet is this in the mouth of the Church! It is done by all them that are spiritual. But say this to any carnal person whatsoever, “Do this,” he is more likely to depart from thee sorrowful, (as did that rich man from our Lord,) than to practise what has been commanded him. But why did he go away sorrowful, except that that book is sweet in the mouth, and in the belly bitter? Thou hast given some sum of gold and silver; thou comest to such a point, that unless thou lose it, thou art perhaps under the necessity of committing some sin; perhaps must do some wrong to the Church; art constrained to blaspheme. Placed then as thou art in a strait, between the loss of money, or the loss of righteousness, thou art warned. Prefer to lose thy money, that thou lose not righteousness; thou, however, to whom righteousness is not sweet in the mouth; but who art still weak among those members, which are such as the Church reckons to be the belly; being filled with sorrow, sometimes chooseth rather to forfeit somewhat of thy righteousness, than to forfeit one sesterce of thy money, and layest thyself under a heavier loss, while, to fill thy purse, thou makest

thy heart empty. Perhaps then it was of these persons it was said, Our belly cleaveth to the earth.

26. Ver. 26. Arise, O Lord, help us. And indeed, dearly beloved, He has “arisen and helped” us. For when He awaked (i.e. when He arose again, and became known to the Gentiles) on the cessation of persecutions, even those who had cleaved to the earth were raised up from the earth, and on performing penance, have been restored to Christ’s body, feeble and imperfect though they were: so that in them was fulfilled the text, ‘Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect; and in Thy book shall they all be written.’ Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy Name’s sake; that is to say, freely; for Thy Name’s sake, not for the sake of my merits: because Thou hast vouchsafed to do it, not because I am worthy that Thou shouldest do it unto me. For this very thing, that we have not forgotten Thee; that our heart hath not gone back; that we have not stretched out our hands to any strange god; how should we have been able to achieve, except with Thy help? How should we have strength for it, except through Thy appealing to us within, exhorting us, and not forsaking us? Whether then we suffer in tribulations, or rejoice in prosperities, redeem Thou us, not for our merits, but for Thy Name’s sake.

PSALM 45

This Psalm, even as we ourselves have been singing with gladness together with you, we would beg you in like manner to consider with attention together with us. For it is sung of the sacred Marriage-feast; of the Bridegroom and the Bride; of the King and His people; of the Saviour and those who are to be saved. He who comes to the marriage-feast with the wedding-garment, seeking not his own glory, but that of the Bridegroom, does not merely listen with pleasure, (as men are wont to do, who are seeking after a spectacle, not exhibiting a reality,) but also calls upon his own heart not to be idle there; but to shoot forth, and to break out; to grow, to go on to maturity, to be accepted. For it is our duty to be such to whom this Psalm is sung, the “sons of Korah;” as the title of the Psalm hath it. For these were certain real persons; nevertheless, every title in the sacred writings conveys some hidden meaning; and requires not only a hearer, but one to understand it also. For we enquire as to the force of the Hebrew word, what is meant by “Korah;” and (as the explanations of all the words used in Scripture have it) the answer reported to us is, that the sons of Korah is equivalent to the sons of the bald-head. This name let us not take in a ludicrous sense, lest haply we should prove ourselves to have but the “understanding of children”—such children as we read of in the Book of Kings, as insulting the holy Prophet Elisha, and crying after him, Go up, thou bald-head; go up, thou bald-head. For those children so foolishly loquacious, and cursing to their own ruin, were devoured by wild beasts that came out of the wood. This is written; and we have reminded you where it is written; let those who remember it recal it to their minds; those who remember it not, read it; those who have not read it, take it on faith. That thing then which that past event signified of times to come, ought not to overtake us. For in those children are typified foolish men, having the “understanding” of ignorance, such as the Apostle would fain have us not be, where he says, Be ye not children in understanding. And because the

Lord had exhorted us to the imitation of children, (when he placed a little one before Him, and said, “unless one shall be as this child, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,”) even in that very passage the cautious Apostle, whilst he would have us not be of the understanding of children, yet on the other hand calls us to the imitation of children. Be not children (says he) in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, that in understanding ye may be full-grown. Let him who delights to imitate the child, delight not in its ignorance, but in its innocence. Now it was from ignorance, that those children insulted that bald-headed Saint of God, and cried after him, Bald-head! Bald-head! It came to pass that they were devoured by wild beasts; and they prefigured those men who with equal childishness of “understanding,” made a mock of a certain Bald-headed One, (“bald-headed” as having been crucified in the place of a skull. These then were possessed by a sort of wild beasts; i.e. by demons; the devil and his angels, who work in the children of disobedience. Such children as these were those who stood before the hallowed Cross, and wagged their heads, and said, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. His sons are we, in that we are the “children of the Bridegroom;” and it is to us that this Psalm is addressed, whose title has the words, For the sons of Korah, for the things that shall be changed.

2. Why need I explain what is meant by, for the things that shall be changed? Every one who is himself changed, recognises the meaning of this. Let him who hears this, for the things that shall be changed, consider what was before, and what is now. And first let him see the world itself to be changed, lately worshipping idols, now worshipping God; lately serving things that they themselves made, now serving Him by Whom they themselves were made. Observe at what time the words, “for the things that shall be changed,” were said. Already, by this time the Pagans that are left are in dread of the “changed” state of things: and those who will not suffer themselves to be “changed” see the Churches full; the temples deserted; see crowds here, and there solitude! They marvel at the things so changed; let them read that they were foretold; let them lend their ears to Him Who promised it; let them believe Him Who fulfils that promise. But each one of us, brethren, also, undergoes a change from “the old” to “the new man:” from an infidel to a believer: from a thief to a giver of alms: from an

adulterer to a man of chastity; from an evil-doer to a doer of good. To us then be sung the words, for the things that shall be changed; and so let the description of Him by Whom they were changed, begin.

3. For it goes on, For the things that shall be changed, to the sons of Korah for understanding; a song for the beloved. For that beloved One was seen by His persecutors, but yet not for “understanding.” For had they known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory. In order to this “understanding,” other eyes were required by Him when He said, He that seeth Me, seeth My Father also. Let the Psalm then now sound of Him, let us rejoice in the marriage-feast, and we shall be with those of whom the marriage is made, who are invited to the marriage; and the very persons invited are the Bride herself. For the Church is “the Bride;” Christ the Bridegroom. There are commonly spoken by Scholars certain verses to Bridegrooms and Brides, called “Epithalamia.” Whatever is sung there, is sung in honour of the Bride and Bridegroom. Is there then no Bridechamber in that marriage-feast, to which we are invited? Whence then does another Psalm say, He hath set up His tabernacle in the Sun; and He is even as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber. The nuptial union is that of the Word, and the flesh. The Bridechamber of this union, the Virgin’s womb. For the flesh itself was united to the Word: whence also it is said, Henceforth they are not twain, but one flesh. The Church was assumed unto Him out of the human race: so that the Flesh itself, being united to the Word, might be the Head of the Church: and the rest who believe, members of that Head. For would you see who is come to the marriage? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Let the bride rejoice, as being the object of the love of God. When was she beloved by Him? While she was as yet loathsome. For, All, says the Apostle, have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. And again, For Christ died for the ungodly. She was loved, while yet loathsome, that she might not remain loathsome. In truth, however, it was not in her loathsomeness she was loved; because her loathsomeness itself was not loved: for if it was this that He loved, He would retain this. He did away loathsomeness: He formed beauty! What was she when He came to her, and what has He made her now! Let Him now Himself come in the words of Prophecy; yea, let the Bridegroom Himself now come forth unto us; let us

love Him; or rather, let us not love Him, if we find any thing in Him that is not fair. Lo, He Himself found many things that were loathsome, and has loved us; let us not love Him, if we find any thing that is not fair in Him. For as for the very circumstance that He assumed flesh, so that it was even said of Him, We beheld Him, and He had no form nor comeliness, if you consider the mercy, through which He became Man, even in that also He is “beautiful.” but the Prophet was supporting the character of the Jews, when he said, We beheld Him, and He had no form nor comeliness. Why was it so? Because not (viewed) in understanding. But to those who understand the words, And the Word was made flesh, His “beauty” is wonderful. But God forbid that I should glory, (said one of the friends of the bridegroom,) save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough for thee not to be ashamed of it, unless thou makest thy boast of it also. Wherefore then had He no form nor comeliness? Because Christ crucified is both to the Jews a stumbling-block; and to the Greeks foolishness. But wherefore had He comeliness even upon the Cross? Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. To us, however, now that we are believers, let the Bridegroom, wheresoever He is, appear beautiful. He is “beautiful” as God, the Word with God; beautiful in the womb of the Virgin, where without losing His Divinity, He assumed the Manhood: Beautiful when born, the Infant Word: for when He was as yet but an Infant, whilst He was hanging at the breast, and was yet borne in arms, the Heavens spoke; the Angels gave forth praises; a Star directed the wise men; He was adored in the manger, He that is the food of gentle ones. He then is “beautiful” in Heaven, beautiful on earth; beautiful in the womb; beautiful in His parents’ hands: beautiful in His miracles; beautiful under the scourge: beautiful when inviting to life; beautiful also when not regarding death: beautiful in “laying down His life;” beautiful in “taking it again:” beautiful on the Cross; beautiful in the Sepulchre; beautiful in Heaven. Listen then to the song unto “understanding;” and let not the weakness of the flesh turn away your eyes from the splendour of His beauty! The highest beauty, the real beauty, is that of righteousness: there where you find Him unrighteous, you will see Him not beautiful. If He is righteous every whit, He is also “beautiful” every whit. Let Him then come to us to be beheld by the eyes of our minds; as He is described by a certain Prophet who is celebrating His praises, Lo! he begins:

4. Ver. 1. Mine heart hath uttered a good word. Who is the speaker? The Father, or the Prophet? For some understand it to be the Person of the Father, which says, Mine heart hath uttered a good word, intimating to us a certain unspeakable generation. Lest you should haply think something to have been taken unto Him, out of which God should beget the Son, (just as man takes something to himself out of which he begets children, that is to say, an union of marriage, without which man cannot beget offspring,) lest then you should think that God stood in need of any nuptial union, to beget “the Son,” he says, Mine heart hath uttered a good word. This very day, thine heart, O man, begets a counsel, and requires no wife: by the counsel, so born of thine heart, thou buildest something or other, and before that building subsists, the design subsists; and that which thou art about to produce, exists already in that by which thou art going to produce it; and thou praisest the fabric that as yet is not existing, not yet in the visible form of a building, but on the projecting of a design: nor does any one else praise thy design, unless either thou shewest it to him, or he sees what thou hast done. If then by the Word all things were made, and the Word is of God, consider the fabric reared by the Word, and learn from that building to admire His counsels! What manner of Word is that, by Which heaven and earth were made; and all the splendor of the heavens; all the fertility of the earth; the expanse of the sea; the wide diffusion of air; the brightness of the constellations; the light of sun and moon? These are visible things: rise above these also; think of the Angels, Principalities, Thrones, Dominions, and Powers. All were made by Him. How then were these good things made? Because there was “uttered forth a good Word,” by which they were to be made. Hence it is, a good Word. The Word Himself was addressed as Good Master: and the Word Himself made answer, Why askest thou Me of the Good? There is none good, save One, that is, God. Good Master, was what was said to Him: and He says, Why askest thou Me of the good? adding also, There is none good, save One, that is, God. How then is He Himself good, except that He is God? But not only is He Good, but He is also One God with the Father. For in saying, There is none good, save One, that is, God, He did not separate Himself from God, but declared His Oneness with Him. Mine heart hath uttered a good word. This may have been spoken by God the Father of His Good Word, Who is our “Good,” and

the Worker of our good, by means of which “good” alone we ourselves can be in any way good.

5. It proceeds; I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Is the Father still speaking? If the Father is still speaking, let us enquire how this also can be understood by us, consistently with the true Catholic Faith, I speak of the things that I have made unto the King. For if it is the Father speaking of His own works to His Son, our “King,” what works is the Father to speak of to the Son, seeing that all the Father’s works were made by the Son’s agency? Or, in the words, I speak of My works unto the King, does the word, I speak, itself signify the generation of the Son? I fear whether this can ever be made intelligible to those slow of comprehension: I will nevertheless say it. Let those who can follow me, do so: lest if it were left unsaid, even those who can follow should not be able. We have read where it is said in another Psalm, God hath spoken once. So often has He spoken by the Prophets, so often by the Apostles, and in these days by His Saints, and does He say, God has spoken once? How can He have spoken but once, except with reference to His Word? But as the Mine heart hath uttered a good Word, was understood by us in the other clause of the generation of the Son, it seems that a kind of repetition is made in the following sentence, so that the Mine heart hath uttered a good Word, which had been already said, is repeated in what He is now saying, I speak. For what does “I speak” mean? ‘I utter a Word.’ And whence but from His heart, from His very inmost, does God utter the Word? You yourself do not speak any thing but what you bring forth from your “heart,” this word of yours which sounds once and passes away, is brought forth from no other place: and do you wonder that God speaks in this manner? But God’s ‘speaking’ is eternal. You are speaking something at the present moment, because you were silent before: or, look you, you have not yet brought forth your word; but when you have begun to bring it forth, you as it were ‘break silence;’ and bring into being a word, that did not exist before. It was not so God begat the “Word.” God’s ‘speaking’ is without beginning, and without end: and yet the “Word” He utters is but “One.” Let Him utter another, if what He has spoken shall have passed away. But since He by Whom it is uttered abideth, and That which is uttered abideth; and is uttered but once, and has no end, that very ‘once’ too is said without beginning, and there is

no second speaking, because that which is said once, does not pass away. The words, Mine heart hath uttered a good Word, then, are the same thing with, I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Why then, I speak of the things which I have made? Because in the Word Itself are all the works of God. For whatever God designed to make in the creation already existed in “the Word;” and would not exist in the reality, had it not existed in the Word, just as with you the thing would not exist in the building, had it not existed in your design: even as it is said in the Gospel; That which was made in Him was life. That which was made then was in existence; but it had its existence in the Word: and all the works of God existed there, and yet were not as yet works. “The Word” however already was, and this Word was God, and was with God: and was the Son of God, and One God with the Father. I speak of the things I have made unto the King. Let him hear Him “speaking,” who apprehends “the Word:” and let him see together with the Father the Everlasting Word; in Whom exist even those things that are yet to come: in Whom even those things that are past have not passed away. These “works” of God are in the Word, as in the Word, as in the Only-Begotten, as in the “Word of God.”

6. What follows then? My tongue is the pen of a writer writing rapidly. What likeness, my brethren, what likeness, I ask, has the “tongue” of God with a transcriber’s pen? What resemblance has the rock to Christ? What likeness does the “lamb” bear to our Saviour, or what “the lion” to the strength of the Only-Begotten? Yet such comparisons have been made; and were they not made, we should not be formed to a certain extent by these visible things to the knowledge of the “Invisible One.” So then with this mean simile of the pen; let us not compare it to His excellent greatness, so let us not reject it with contempt. For I ask, why He compares His tongue to the pen of a writer writing rapidly? But how swiftly soever the transcriber writes, still it is not comparable to that swiftness of which another Psalm says, His word runneth very swiftly. But it appears to me, (if human understanding may presume so far,) that this too may be understood as spoken in the Person of the Father; My tongue is the pen of a writer. Inasmuch as what is spoken by the tongue, sounds once and passes away, what is written, remains; seeing then that God uttereth “a Word,” and the Word which is uttered does not sound once and pass away, but is uttered

and yet continues, God chose rather to compare this to words written than to sounds. But what He added, saying, of one writing swiftly, stimulates the mind unto understanding. Let it however not slothfully rest here, thinking of transcribers, or thinking of some kind of quick shorthand writers: if it be this it sees in the passage, it will be resting there. Let it think swiftly what is the meaning of that word swiftly. The swiftly of God is such that nothing exceeds in swiftness. For in writings letter is written after letter; syllable after syllable; word after word: nor do we pass to the second except when the first is written out. But there nothing can exceed the swiftness, where there are not several words; and yet there is not any thing omitted; since in the One are contained all things.

7. Lo! now then that Word, so uttered, Eternal, the Co-eternal Offspring of the Eternal, will come as “the Bridegroom;” (ver. 2.) Fairer than the children of men. “Than the children of men.” I ask, why not than the Angels also? Why did he say, than the children of men, except because He was Man? Lest you should think the Man Christ to be any ordinary man, he says, Fairer than the children of men. Even though Himself ‘Man,’ He is fairer than the children of men; though among the children of men, “fairer than the children of men: though of the children of men, fairer than the children of men. Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips. ‘The Law was given by Moses. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.’ Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips. Was it through my deserts that I was helped; because I delight in the Law of God after the inner man? But, there is another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips. He came unto us with the word of grace, with the kiss of grace. What is there more sweet than that grace? To what purport is that grace? Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. If He were to come as a severe Judge, and not to bring that “grace,” which is “shed abroad on His lips,” who could have any hope of salvation? Who could help fearing for himself what was the sinner’s due? He, coming with “grace,” did not exact what was due, but paid that which He did not owe. For was not the forfeit of “death” due from the sinner? Or was there any thing but

punishment “due” to you, being a sinner? He has remitted thy debt, and He has paid that which He did not owe. Marvellous “grace!” Wherefore grace? Because it is given gratis, freely. For this reason it is in your power to acknowledge the free gift, not to recompense it. He sought to find what reward to render, and said, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? And he seemed to have found something, I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord. Is this the recompense that thou renderest? that thou “takest the cup of salvation, and callest upon the name of the Lord?” Who gave thee that very cup of salvation? He continued the acknowledgment of the free grace, for as to the rendering a recompense for it, he was at a loss. Find something to give unto God, that thou hast not received from Him: and thou wilt have rendered a return for that free grace. But beware, lest whilst thou seekest something that thou didst not receive from God, to render unto Him, thou find it indeed; but only thine own sin! This it is true thou didst not receive from Him, but thou oughtest not to give to Him either. This the Jews gave unto Him, They rewarded Him evil for good; they received rain from Him, and they rendered unto Him not fruit; but the thorns of suffering. Whatsoever good thing then in thyself thou wouldest offer unto God, thou findest thyself to have received from Him only. There is the grace that is “shed abroad on His lips;” He made thee; made thee of His free grace: for there was nothing for Him to reward, before He had made thee. Thou wert lost: He sought thee, and having found thee, restored thee. He did not impute to thee the past. He promised thee the future. Verily, grace is shed abroad on Thy lips! Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever. A difficulty is started how this, therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever, can be understood to be still spoken by God the Father. It seems that it may with more propriety be understood of the person of the Prophet. And sudden and perfectly abrupt changes of person are found in the sacred writings: indeed the divine pages, if any one takes notice, are full of them. Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue. And immediately follows, What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be added unto thee against the false tongue. There is a different person in this verse from that in the former: in the one, that of a person asking, in the other, of one bringing, succour. Sharp arrows of the mighty One, with consuming coals of fire. There is one person that says, “What shall be given or added unto thee,” and in what

follows another is introduced, Woe is me that my sojourn is remote. So frequent a change of persons in a few verses is a hint for our understanding; He does not point out the place where the change is made: we are not told, ‘God spake this, and man this;’ but it is from the words themselves we are made to understand what relates to man, what to God. Now it was man that said, My heart hath uttered a good word. It was a man that said it; it was the writer of the Psalm that said; but he said it speaking in the person of God. He begins to speak in his own person also. Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever. For God hath said, Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips, addressing Him, Whom He had made fair before the children of men; even the Man Whom the Eternal had begotten before all things; God, co-eternal with Himself. The Prophet then is filled with a certain unspeakable joy; and considering what God the Father hath revealed of His Son to man, that he could also speak those former words in the Person of God, says, therefore hath God blessed Thee for ever. Wherefore? On account of that grace. For to what does that grace tend? To the “kingdom of heaven.” For the First Testament had promised the earth; and the reward, or the promise, to those under the Law was different from that under Grace: “the land of Canaan” to Jews under the Law, “the kingdom of heaven” to Christians under Grace. That kingdom, then, that belonged to those under the Law, that land, has passed away. The kingdom of heaven, that belongs to those under Grace, does not pass away. God hath blessed thee, not for a time, but for ever.

9. There have not been wanting those, who preferred understanding all the preceding passage also of the Prophet’s own person; and would have even this verse, Mine heart hath uttered forth a good word, understood as spoken by the Prophet, supposed to be uttering a hymn. (For whoever utters a hymn to God, his heart is, as it were, “uttering forth a good word,” just as his heart who blasphemes God, is uttering forth an evil word.) So that even by what follows, I speak of the things which I have made unto the King, he meant to express that man’s chief work was but to praise God. To Him it belongs to satisfy thee, by His beauty; to thee to praise Him with thanksgiving. If thy “works” be not the praise of God, thou art beginning to love thine own self; thou wilt belong to the number of those of whom the Apostle says, Men shall be lovers of their own selves. Be dissatisfied with thyself; find satisfaction in Him Who made thee: in that thou art dissatisfied

with that in thine own self, which thou thyself hast made. Be then thy “work” the praise of God; let thine heart utter forth a good word. Tell then of thy works unto the King, for it is the King Himself that hath made thee to tell of them; and He it is Who gave thee what thou mightest offer to Him. Render to Him of His own; be not willing, having received the share of thine inheritance, to ‘go afar off, and riotously squander it on harlots; and feed the swine.’ Remember this passage of the Gospel. But to us also apply the words, He was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found.

10. My tongue is the pen of a writer writing quickly. There have been persons who have understood the Prophet to have been describing in this manner what he was writing; and therefore to have compared his tongue to the pen of a writer writing quickly: but that he chose to express himself in the words writing quickly, to signify, that he was writing of things which were to come “quickly;” that writing quickly should be understood to be equivalent to “writing things that are quick;” i.e. writing things that would not long tarry. For God did not tarry long to manifest Christ. How quickly is that perceived to have rolled by, which is acknowledged to be already past! Call to mind the generations before thee; thou wilt find that the making of Adam is but a thing of yesterday. So do we read that all things have gone on from the very beginning: they were therefore done quickly. The day of Judgment also will be here quickly. Do thou anticipate its “quick” coming. It is to come “quickly;” do thou become converted yet more “quickly.” The Judge’s face will appear: but observe thou what the Prophet says, Let us come before (let us ‘prevent’) His face with confession. Grace is shed abroad on thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

11. Ver. 3. Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty. What is meant by Thy sword, but Thy word? It was by that sword He scattered His enemies; by that sword He divided the son from the father, “the daughter from the mother, the daughter-in-law from the mother-in-law.” We read these words in the Gospel, I came not to send peace, but a sword. And, in one house shall five be divided against each other; three against two, and two against three; i.e. “the father against the son, the daughter against the mother, the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law.” By what “sword,” but that which Christ brought, was this division wrought? And indeed, my

brethren, we see this exemplified daily. Some young man is minded to give himself up to God's service; his father is opposed to it; they are "divided against each other:" the one promises an earthly inheritance, the other loves an heavenly; the one promises one thing, the other prefers another. The father should not think himself wronged: God alone is preferred to him. And yet he is at strife with the son, who would fain give himself to God's service. But the spiritual sword is mightier to separate them, than the ties of carnal nature to bind them together. This happens also in the case of a mother against her daughter; still more also in that of a daughter-in-law against a mother-in-law. For sometimes in one house mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are found orthodox and heretical respectively. And where that sword is forcibly felt, we do not dread the repetition of Baptism. Could daughter be divided against mother; and could not daughter-in-law be divided against mother-in-law?

12. This takes place also with mankind in general, that "son is divided against father." For we were once children of the devil. It was said to us, when we were as yet unbelievers, Ye are of your father, the devil. He was not our father by begetting us; but we became his children by becoming like him. Now you see the son divided against the father. That "sword" has come; he renounces the devil; he finds another father and another mother. The former, by proposing himself for our imitation, begat us unto perdition; the two parents we have found gender unto life everlasting. "The son (then) is divided against the father." "The daughter is divided against the mother:" the laity, which came from Judaism to belief, is divided against the Synagogue. The daughter-in-law also is divided against the mother-in-law; the laity, which came from among the Gentiles, is expressed by the daughter-in-law, because Christ, the Bridegroom, is the Son of the Synagogue. For from whence, according to the flesh, was the Son of God born? From that Synagogue. Even He, Who forsook His Father and mother, and clave unto His wife, that they twain might be one flesh; according to no mere conjecture of ours, but to the attestation of the Apostle, saying, This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. For in a certain sense, He did forsake the Father; He did not indeed "forsake" Him entirely, as it were, unto actual separation from Him, but unto the assumption of human flesh. In what way did He "forsake" Him? In that,

when He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself of His glory, taking upon Him the form of a servant. In what way did He “forsake His mother” also? In forsaking the Jewish nation; that Synagogue that would still cleave to the old types. To a figurative expression of this belongs that He said, Who is My mother, or who are My brethren? For He was within, teaching; they were standing without. Consider if it is not so now with the Jews. Christ is teaching within the Church: they still stand without. What then is “the mother-in-law?” The mother of the Bridegroom. The mother of the Bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Synagogue. Her daughter-in-law, then, is the Church, which, coming from the Gentiles, did not consent to carnal circumcision, and is divided against her mother-in-law. Gird on Thy sword. It was of the mighty power of that “sword” we were speaking, when we said this.

13. Gird Thy sword upon Thee, i.e. Thy word, about Thy thigh, O most Mighty; i.e. having Thy sword girt about Thy thigh. What does he mean to express by the “thigh?” The flesh. Whence those words, A prince shall not depart from Judah; and a lawgiver from his thighs? Did not Abraham himself, (to whom was promised the seed in which “all the nations of the earth were to be blessed,”) when he sent his servant to seek and to bring home a wife for his son, being by faith fully persuaded, that in that (so to speak) contemptible seed was contained the great Name; that is, that the Son of God was to come of the seed of Abraham, out of all the children of men;) did not he, I say, cause his servant to swear unto him in this manner, saying, Put thy hand under my thigh, and so swear; as if he had said, “Put thy hand on the altar, or on the Gospel, or on the Prophet, or on any holy thing.” Put (he says) thy hand under my thigh; having full confidence, not ashamed of it as unseemly, but understanding therein a truth. Gird, therefore, thy sword about Thee, about Thy thigh, most Mighty. Most Mighty even about Thy thigh; because the weakness of God is stronger than men.

14. With Thy beauty and Thy glory. Take to Thee that righteousness, in which Thou art at all times beautiful and glorious.

Ver. 4. And speed on, and proceed prosperously, and reign. Do we not see it so? Is it not already come to pass? He has “sped on; has proceeded

prosperously, and He reigns;" all nations are subdued unto Him. What a thing was it to see that "in the Spirit," of which same thing it is now in our power to experience in the reality! At the time when these words were said, Christ did not yet "reign" thus; had not yet sped on, nor "proceeded prosperously." They were then being preached, they have now been fulfilled: in many things we have God's promise fulfilled already; in some few we have to claim its fulfilment yet. Speed on, and proceed prosperously, and reign.

15. Because of truth, meekness, and righteousness. Truth was restored unto us, when the Truth sprung out of the earth: and Righteousness looked out from heaven. Christ was presented to the expectation of mankind, that in Abraham's Seed "all nations should be blessed." The Gospel has been preached. It is the Truth. What is meant by meekness? The Martyrs have suffered; and the kingdom of God has made much progress, from thence, and advanced throughout all nations; because the Martyrs suffered, and neither "fell away," nor yet offered resistance; confessing every thing, concealing nothing; prepared for every thing, shrinking from nothing. Marvellous meekness! This did the Body of Christ, by its Head it learned. He was first led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, even so opened not His mouth; meek to that degree, that while hanging on the Cross, He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Why because of righteousness? He will come also to judge, and to render to every man according to his works. He spake the truth; He patiently endured unrighteousness: He is to bring righteousness hereafter.

And Thy right hand shall lead Thee on marvellously. We shall be guided on by His right hand: He by His own. For He is God, we mortal men. He was led on by His own right hand; i.e. by His own power. For the power which the Father hath, He hath also; the Father's immortality He hath also: He hath the Father's Divinity, the Father's Eternity, the Father's Power. Marvellously will His right hand lead Him on, performing the works of God; undergoing human sufferings, overthrowing the evil wills of men by His own goodness. Even now, He is being led on even to places where as yet He is not; and it is His own right hand that is leading Him on. For that is

leading Him thither which He has Himself bestowed upon His Saints. Thy right hand shall lead Thee on marvellously.

Ver. 5. Thine arrows are sharp, are most powerful; words that pierce the heart, that kindle love. Whence in the Song of Songs it is said, I am wounded with love. For she speaks of being “wounded with love;” that is, of being in love, of being inflamed with passion, of sighing for the Bridegroom, from Whom she received the arrow of the Word. Thine arrows are sharp, are most powerful; both piercing, and effective; sharp, most powerful.

The peoples shall fall under Thee. Who have “fallen?” They who were “wounded” have also “fallen.” We see the nations subdued unto Christ; we do not see them “fall.” He explains where they “fall,” viz. in the heart. It was there they lifted themselves up against Christ, there they fall down before Christ. Saul was a blasphemer of Christ: he was then lifted up, he prays to Christ, “he is fallen,” he is prostrate before Him: the enemy of Christ is slain, that the disciple of Christ may live! By an arrow launched from heaven, Saul, (not as yet Paul, but still Saul,) still lifted up, still not yet prostrate, is wounded in the heart: he received the arrow, he fell “in heart.” For though he fell prostrate on his face, it was not there that he fell down in heart: but it was there where he said aloud, Lord, what dost Thou bid me do? But just now thou wert going to bind the Christians, and to bring them to punishment: and now thou sayest unto Christ, What dost Thou bid me do? O arrow sharp and most mighty, by whose stroke Saul fell, so as to become Paul. As it was with him, so was it also with “the peoples;” consider the nations, observe their subjection unto Christ. The peoples (then) shall fall under Thee in the heart of the King’s enemies; that is, in the heart of Thine enemies. For it is Him that he calls King, Him that he recognises as King. The peoples shall fall under Thee in the heart of the King’s enemies.

They were “enemies” before; they have been stricken by thine arrows: they have fallen before Thee. Out of enemies they have been made friends: the enemies are dead, the friends survive. This is the meaning of, for those which shall be changed. We are seeking to understand each single word, and each separate verse; yet so far only are we to seek for their

“understanding,” as to leave no one to doubt that they are spoken of Christ. The peoples shall fall under Thee, in the heart of the King’s enemies.

17. Ver. 6. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Because God has “blessed Thee for ever,” on account of the grace poured over Thy lips. Now the throne of the Jewish Kingdom was a temporal one; belonging to those who were under the Law, not to those who were under “grace:” He came to “redeem those who were under the Law,” and to place them under ‘Grace.’ His Throne is for ever and ever. Why? for that first throne of the Kingdom was but a temporal one: whence then have we a throne for ever and ever? Because it is God’s throne. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. O divine Attribute of Eternity! for God could not have a temporal throne. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—a sceptre of direction is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom.

“The sceptre of direction” is that which directs mankind: they were before crooked, distorted; they sought to reign for themselves: they loved themselves, loved their own evil deeds: they submitted not their own will to God; but would fain have bent God’s will to conformity with their own lusts. For the sinner and the unrighteous man is generally angry with God, because it rains not! and yet would have God not be angry with himself, because he is profligate. And it is pretty much for this very reason that men daily sit, to dispute against God: “This is what He ought to have done: this He has not well done.” Thou forsooth seest what thou doest; He knows not what He does! It is thou that art crooked! His ways are right. When wilt thou make the crooked coincide with the straight? It cannot be made to coincide with it. Just as if you were to place a crooked stick on a level pavement; it does not join on to it; it does not cohere; it does not fit into the pavement. The pavement is even in every part: but that is crooked; it does not fit into that which is level. The will of God then is equal, thine own is “crooked:” it is because thou canst not be conformed unto it, that it seems “crooked” unto thee: rule thou thyself by it; seek not to bend it to thine own will: for thou canst not accomplish it; that is at all times ‘straight!’ Wouldest thou abide in Him? “Correct thou thyself;” so will the sceptre of Him Who rules thee, be unto thee “a rule of direction.” Thence is He also called King, from ruling. For that is no “ruler” that does not correct.

Hereunto is our King a King of ‘right ones.’ Just as He is a Priest (Sacerdos) by sanctifying us, so is He our King, our Ruler, by ‘ruling’ us. But what says He elsewhere? With the holy Thou wilt be holy, and with the upright man Thou wilt shew Thyself upright. With the pure Thou wilt shew Thyself pure, and with the froward Thou wilt shew Thyself froward: not that God’s ways are crooked; but that they whose ways are crooked, think His ways crooked. Does goodness please thee? God is Good. Does it displease thee? He is to thee as if unrighteous. Unto thee, God is crooked: this is the effect of thine own crookedness: for His righteousness remaineth for ever. Hear in another Psalm: How good is God unto Israel, unto such as are right in heart.

18. Ver. 6, 7. A rod of direction is the rod of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. See there “the rod of direction” described. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. Draw near to that rod; let Christ be thy King: let Him “rule” thee with that rod, not crush thee with it. For that rod is a rod of iron; an inflexible rod. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Some He rules; others He “breaks in pieces:” He ‘rules’ them that are spiritual: He breaks in pieces them that are carnal. Draw near then to that rod; what fearest thou in it? This is the whole of that rod; Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. What dost thou fear? But perhaps thou wert thyself unrighteous: for thou hearest of thy King that He hateth iniquity, and thou fearest. Thou hast what to do. What is it that He hates? “Iniquity.” Is it thee? But there is iniquity in thee. God hates it, do thou hate it too; that the same thing may be hated by you both. For so wilt thou be the friend of God, if thou hate what He hates. So wilt thou also love what He loves. Be displeased with thine own unrighteousness: take delight in that which He created. For thou art an unrighteous man. I apply to thee two words; the two words, “man,” and “unrighteous,” out of these two names one expresses thy nature, the other thy fault: the one God made for thee; the other is thine own work: love what God made: hate that which thou thyself hast made, in that He Himself hates it also. See how thou art already beginning to become united to Him, now that thou hatest what He hates. He will hereafter punish sin, for the rod of His kingdom is a rod of direction. ‘But let Him not punish sin.’ Nay, He cannot but (punish it.) Sin is to be punished; if it were not what must be

punished, it would not be sin. Anticipate Him: thou wouldest have Him not punish it; do thou punish it. For it is for this very reason that He still spares thee, still reprieves thee: still withholds His hand; still bends His bow; that is, His threatenings. Would He so loudly declare that He was about to smite thee, if He wished to smite thee? He is then holding back His hand from the punishment of thine offences; but do not thou hold back. Turn thou thyself to the punishment of thine offences: for unpunished offences cannot be: punishment therefore must be executed either by thyself, or by Him: do thou then plead guilty, that He may reprieve thee. Consider an instance in that penitential Psalm; Hide Thy face from my sins. Did he mean “from me?” No: for in another passage he says plainly, Hide not Thy face from me. Turn then Thy face from my sins. I would have Thee not see my sins. For God’s ‘seeing’ is animadverting upon. Hence too a Judge is said to ‘animadvert’ (animum advertere) on that which he punishes; i.e. to turn his mind on it, to bend it thereon, even to the punishment of it, inasmuch as he is the Judge. So too is God a Judge. Turn Thou Thy face from my sins. But thou thyself, if thou wouldest have God turn ‘His face’ from them, turn not thine own face from them. Observe how he proposes this to God in that very Psalm; I acknowledge, he says, my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. He would fain have that, which he wishes to be ever before his own eyes, not be before God’s eyes. A rod of direction is the rod of Thy kingdom. Let no one flatter himself with fond hopes of God’s mercy. His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. Do we say that God is not merciful? What can exceed His mercy, Who shews such forbearance to sinners; Who takes no account of the past in all that turn unto Him? So love thou Him for His mercy, as still to wish that He should be truthful. For mercy cannot strip Him of His attribute of justice: nor justice of that of mercy. Meanwhile during the time that He postpones thy punishment, do not thou postpone it: for a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of His kingdom.

19. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee. It was for this reason that He anointed thee, that thou mightest love righteousness, and hate iniquity. And observe in what way he expresses himself. Therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee: i.e. ‘God hath anointed Thee, O God.’ ‘God’ is ‘anointed’ by God. For in the Latin it is thought to be the same case of the noun repeated: in the Greek

however there is a most evident distinction; one being the name of the Person addressed; and one His, who makes the address, saying, "God hath anointed Thee." "O God, Thy God hath anointed Thee," just as if He were saying, Therefore hath Thy God, O God, anointed Thee. Take it in that sense, understand it in that sense; that such is the sense is most evident in the Greek. Who then is the God that is 'anointed' by God? Let the Jews tell us; these Scriptures are common to us and them. It was God, Who was anointed by God: you hear of an Anointed one; understand it to mean "Christ." For the name of 'Christ' comes from chrism; this name by which He is called "Christ" expresses "unction:" nor were kings and prophets anointed in any kingdom, in any other place, save in that kingdom where Christ was prophesied of, where He was anointed, and from whence the Name of Christ was to come. It is found no where else at all: in no one nation or kingdom. God, then, was anointed by God; with what oil was He anointed, but a spiritual one? For the visible oil is in the sign, the invisible oil is in the mystery; the spiritual oil is within. "God" then was "anointed" for us, and sent unto us; and God Himself was man, in order that He might be "anointed:" but He was man, in such a way as to be God still. He was God in such a way as not to disdain to be man. "Very man and very God;" in nothing deceitful, in nothing false, as being every where true, every where the Truth itself. God then is man; and it was for this cause that "God" was anointed, because God was Man, and became "Christ."

20. This was figured in Jacob's placing a stone at his head, and so sleeping. The patriarch Jacob had placed a stone at his head: sleeping with that stone at his head, he saw heaven opened, and a ladder from heaven to earth, and Angels ascending and descending; after this vision he awaked, anointed the stone, and departed. In that stone he understood Christ; for that reason he anointed it. Take notice what it is whereby Christ is preached. What is the meaning of that anointing of a stone, especially in the case of the Patriarchs who worshipped but One God? It was however done as a figurative act: and he departed. For he did not anoint the stone, and come to worship there constantly, and to perform sacrifice there. It was the expression of a mystery; not the commencement of sacrilege. And notice the meaning of "the stone." The Stone which the builders refused, this is become the head of the corner. Notice here a great mystery. The Stone is Christ. Peter calls

Him a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God. And the stone is set at “the head,” because Christ is the Head of the man. And “the stone” was anointed, because “Christ” was so called from His being anointed. And in the revelation of Christ, the ladder from earth to heaven is seen, or from heaven to earth, and the Angels ascending and descending. What this means, we shall see more clearly, when we have quoted the testimony from the Lord Himself in the Gospel. You know that Jacob is the same as Israel. For when he wrestled with the Angel, and “prevailed,” and had been blest by Him over Whom he prevailed, his name was changed, so that he was called “Israel; just as the people of Israel prevailed against Christ, so as to crucify Him, and nevertheless was (in those who believed in Christ) blest by Him over Whom it prevailed. But many believed not; hence the halting of Jacob. Here we have at once, blessing and halting. Blessing on those who became believers; for we know that afterwards many of that people did believe: Halting on the other hand in those who believed not. And because the greater part believed not, and but few believed, therefore that a halting might be produced, He touched the breadth of his thigh. What is meant by the breadth of the thigh? The great multitude of his descendants. Notice then that “ladder.” Our Lord says in the Gospel, (when He beheld Nathanael,) Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. For so is it said of Jacob himself, And Jacob was without guile, dwelling in an house. The Lord recalling this to mind, and seeing Nathanael a man of that people and nation to be a man without guile, Behold (He says) an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. It was on account of Jacob that He called him ‘an Israelite without guile.’ And that Nathanael says, Whence knowest Thou me? And the Lord said, When thou wert under the fig-tree I saw thee: i.e. when thou wert among that people, placed under the Law, which sheltered that People with its carnal shadows, I saw thee there. What is meant by ‘I saw thee there?’ I took compassion upon thee there. He however remembering that he had been literally also under a fig-tree, wondering, (as he believed himself to have been seen by no one, when he was there,) confesses and says, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel. Who is it that says this? He who had been told that he was an ‘Israelite indeed, and that in him there was no guile;’ and the Lord said, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, hast thou believed? Thou shalt see greater things than these. He is speaking with Jacob, with

‘Israel;’ with him who placed the stone at his head. Thou shalt see greater things than these. What ‘greater things?’ Inasmuch as “Christ” is now the Head of the man. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye shall see Heaven opened, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. May “the Angels” of God “ascend and descend” by that ladder; may that be realized in the Church! The “Angels of God” are those who preach His Truth: let them “ascend,” and see it written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Let them “descend,” and see it written, that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Let them “ascend” in order to elevate the great ones: let them “descend,” in order to nourish the little ones. Behold Paul “ascending;” Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: behold him descending; Or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. Behold him ascending; We speak wisdom among them that are perfect: behold him descending; I have fed you with milk, and not with meat. This is realized in the Church: “the Angels of God” do ascend and descend on the Son of Man: for the Son of Man is at once above, unto Whom they ascend in heart, that is to say, His Head; and the Son of Man is below, that is to say, His Body. The “members” are here: the “head” is above: we ascend to the head, we descend to the members. Christ is there, Christ is here too. For were He there only, and not here, how should we account for that speech, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? For in Heaven who could have given Him annoyance? None, not the Jews, nor Saul, nor the devil His tempter, no one could give Him annoyance there: but it was as it is with the frame of the human body, the foot being trodden upon, the tongue crieth out.

21. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee. We have been speaking of God, Who was “anointed;” i.e. of Christ. The name of Christ could not be more clearly expressed, than by His being called God the Anointed. In the same way in which He was beautiful before the children of men, so is He here anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Who then are His fellows? The children of men; for that He Himself (as the Son of Man) became partaker of their mortality in order to make them partakers of His Immortality.

22. Ver. 8. Out of Thy garments is the smell of myrrh, amber, and cassia. Out of Thy garments is perceived the smell of fragrant odours. By His garments are meant His Saints, His elect, His whole Church, which He shews forth, as His garment, so to speak; His robe without spot and wrinkle, which on account of its spots He has washed in His blood; on account of its “wrinkles” extended on His Cross. Hence the sweet savour which is signified by certain perfumes there mentioned. Hear Paul, that least of the Apostles, that hem of that garment, which the woman with the issue of blood touched, and was healed, hear him saying; We are a sweet savour of Christ, in every place, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. He did not say, ‘We are a sweet savour in them that are saved, and a foul savour in them that are lost:’ but, as far as relates to ourselves, ‘we are a sweet savour both in them that are saved, and in them that perish.’ That a man should be saved by ‘a sweet savour,’ is not improbable or incredible; but that a man should perish through a sweet savour, how is it to be accounted for? It is a thing of great force; it is a great truth: and it is so, even if it cannot be comprehended. For that you may understand that it is hard to be comprehended, he immediately added; And who is sufficient for these things? Who can understand that men perish by a sweet savour? Something however I would say on this, brethren. Behold when Paul himself was preaching the Gospel, many loved him, as the preacher of the Gospel; many envied him. They who loved him were saved by the odour of “sweet savour;” they who envied him, perished by means of that “sweet savour.” To them that perished then he was not a foul “savour,” but a “sweet savour.” For it was for this very reason they the more envied him, the more excellent that grace was which reigned in him: for no man envies him who is unhappy. He then was glorious in the preaching of God’s Word, and in regulating his life according to the rule of that rod of direction; and he was loved by those who loved Christ in him, who followed after and pursued the odour of sweet savour; who loved the friend of the Bridegroom: that is to say, by the Bride Herself, who says in the Song of Songs, We will run after the sweet savour of thy perfumes. But the others, the more they beheld him invested with the glory of the preaching of the Gospel, and of an irreproachable life, were so much the more tortured with envy, and found that sweet savour prove death to them.

23. Ver. 8. Out of Thy garments is the smell of myrrh, amber, and cassia; out of thy ivory palaces, whereby kings' daughters have made Thee glad. Choose which ever you please, "ivory" palaces, or "magnificent," or "royal" palaces, it is out of these that the kings' daughters have made Christ glad. Would you understand the spiritual sense of "ivory palaces?" Understand by them the magnificent houses, and tabernacles of God, the hearts of the Saints; and by these self-same "kings" those who rule their flesh; who bring into subjection to themselves the rebellious commonalty of human affections, who chastise the body, and reduce it to bondage: for it is from these that the daughters of kings have made Him glad. For all the souls that have been born through their preaching and evangelizing are 'daughters of kings:' and the Churches, as the daughters of Apostles, are daughters of kings. For He is "King of kings;" they themselves kings, of whom it was said, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." They preached the "Word of Truth;" and begat Churches not for themselves, but for Him. With this mystery is connected what is written in the Law. "If a man's brother die, let his brother take his wife, and raise up seed to his brother." 'Let his brother take his wife, and raise up seed to his brother.' Christ said, Say unto my brethren. In the Psalms He said, I will declare Thy name unto my brethren. Christ died, rose again, ascended, became "absent in the body." His brethren have taken His wife, to beget children, by the preaching of the Gospel, (not by themselves, but by the Gospel), for their Brother's name's sake. For in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel, (saith he,) have I begotten you. Therefore as "raising up seed to their brother," to as many as they begat, they gave the name not of 'Paulians' or 'Petrians,' but of "Christians." Observe whether that sense is not wakefully kept in these verses. For when he said, "out of the ivory palaces, he spake of mansions royal, ample, honourable, peaceful, like the heart of the Saints; he added, Whereby the kings' daughters have made Thee glad in Thine honour. They are indeed daughters of kings, daughters of thine Apostles, but still in Thine honour: for they raised up seed to their brother. Hence Paul, when he saw those whom he had raised up unto his Brother, running after his own name, exclaimed, Was Paul crucified for you? For what saith the Law: Let the son which is born bear the name of him that is dead. Let him be born to him that is dead, be called by the name of him that is dead. This precept of the Law Paul retains; those who wished

to be called by his name he checks, saying, Was Paul crucified for you? Look at Him Who is dead? Was Paul crucified for you? What then? When thou didst beget them, haply thou didst bestow thine own name upon them. No; for he says, Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? The daughters of kings have made Thee glad in Thine honour. Keep, hold fast this ‘in Thine honour.’ This is meant by having a wedding garment; seeking His honour, His glory. Understand moreover by kings’ daughters the cities, which were founded by kings, and have received the faith: and out of the ivory palaces, (palaces rich, the proud, the lifted up.) Kings’ daughters have made Thee glad in Thine honour; in that they sought not the honour of their founders, but have sought Thine honour. Shew me at Rome a temple of Romulus, held in so great honour, as I can shew you the Monument of Peter. In Peter, who is honoured, but He Who died for us? For we are followers of Christ, not followers of Peter. And even if we were born from the brother of Him that is dead, yet are we named after the name of Him Who is dead. We were begotten by the one, but begotten to the other. Behold, Rome, Carthage, and several other cities are the daughters of kings, and yet have they made glad the King in His honour: and all these make up one single Queen.

24. What a nuptial song! Behold in the midst of songs full of rejoicing, comes forth the Bride herself. For the Bridegroom was coming. It was He Who was being described: it was on Him all our attention was fixed.

Ver. 9. Upon Thy right hand did stand the Queen. She which stands on the left is no Queen. For there will be one standing on the left also, to whom it will be said, Go into everlasting fire. But she shall stand on the right hand, to whom it will be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. On Thy right hand did stand the Queen, in a vesture of gold, clothed about with divers colours. What is the vesture of this Queen? It is one both precious, and also of divers colours: it is the mysteries of doctrine in all the various tongues: one African, one Syrian, one Greek, one Hebrew, one this, and one that; it is these languages that produce the divers colours of this vesture. But just as all the divers colours of the vesture blend together in the one vesture, so do all the languages in one and the same faith. In that vesture, let there be diversity, let there be no rent. See we have “understood” the divers colours

of the diversity of tongues; and the vesture to refer to unity: but in that diversity itself, what is meant by the ‘gold?’ Wisdom itself. Let there be any diversity of tongues you please, but there is but one “gold” that is preached of: not a different gold, but a different form of that gold. For it is the same Wisdom, the same doctrine and discipline that every language preaches. In the languages there is diversity; gold in the thoughts.

25. The Prophet addresses this Queen, (for he delights in singing to her,) and moreover each one of us, provided, however, we know where we are, and endeavour to belong to that body, and do belong to it in faith and hope, being united in the membership of Christ. For it is us whom he addresses, saying, Hearken, O daughter, and behold, as being one of the Fathers, (for they are daughters of kings,) although it be a Prophet, or although it be an Apostle that is addressing her; addressing her, as a daughter, for we are accustomed to speak in this way, Our fathers the Prophets, our fathers the Apostles; if we address them as “fathers,” they may address us as children: and it is one father’s voice addressing one daughter. Hearken, O daughter, and see. Hear first; afterward see. For they came to us with the Gospel; and that has been preached to us, which as yet we do not see, and which on hearing of it we believed, which by believing it, we shall come to see: even as the Bridegroom Himself speaks in the Prophet, A people whom I have not known served me. In the hearing of me with the ear it obeyed me. What is meant by on hearing of me with the ear? That they did not see. The Jews saw Him, and crucified Him; the Gentiles saw Him not, and believed. Let the Queen who comes from the Gentiles come in “the vesture of gold, clothed with divers colours;” let her come from among the Gentiles clad in all languages, in the unity of Wisdom: let it be said unto her, Hearken, O daughter, and see. If thou wilt not hear, thou shalt not “see.” Hear that thou mayest ‘purify the heart by faith,’ as the Apostle speaks in the Acts of the Apostles; purifying their hearts by faith. For it is to this end we hearken to that we are to believe, before we “see” it, that by believing we may “purify the heart,” whereby we may be able to “see.” “Hear,” that thou mayest believe; purify the heart by faith. ‘And when I have purified the heart, what shall I see? Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Ver. 10. Hearken, O daughter, and see: and incline thine ear. It is not enough to “hearken;” hearken with humility: bow down thine ear. Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house. There was a certain ‘people,’ and a certain house of thy father, in which thou wast born, the people of Babylon, having the devil for thy king. Whencesoever the Gentiles came, they came from their father the devil; but they have renounced their sonship to the devil. “Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house.” He, in making thee a sinner, begat thee loathsome: the Other, in that He justifies the ungodly, begetteth thee again in beauty. Forget thine own people, and thy father’s house.

26 Ver. 11. For the King hath greatly desired thy beauty. What “beauty” is that, save that which is His own work? Greatly desired the beauty—Of whom? Of her the sinner, the unrighteous, the ungodly, such as she was with her father, the devil, and among her own people. No, but her’s of whom it is said, Who is this that cometh up made white? She was not white then at the first, but was made white afterwards. For though your sins shall be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow. The king has greatly desired thy beauty. What King is this? For He is the Lord thy God. Now consider whether thou oughtest not to forego that thy father, and thy own people, and to come to this King, Who is thy God? Thy God is “thy King,” thy “King” is also thy Bridegroom. Thou weddest to thy King, Who is thy God: being endowed by Him, being adorned by Him; redeemed by Him, and healed by Him. Whatever thou hast, wherewith to be pleasing to Him, thou hast from Him.

27. Ver. 12. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts. It is that self-same King, Who is thy God, that the daughters of Tyre shall worship with gifts. The daughters of Tyre are the daughters of the Gentiles; the part standing for the whole. Tyre, a city bordering on this country, where the prophecy was delivered, typified the nations that were to believe in Christ. Thence came that Canaanitish woman, who was at first called a dog; for that ye may know that she was from thence, the Gospel speaks thus. He departed into the parts of Tyre and Sidon, and behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, with all the rest that is related there. She who at first, at the house of her “father” and among her “own people,” was but a

dog, who by coming to, and crying after that “King,” was made beautiful by believing in Him, what did she obtain to hear? ‘O woman, great is thy faith.’ The King has greatly desired thy beauty. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship with gifts. With what gifts? Even so would this King be approached, and would have His treasures filled: and it is He Himself Who has given us that wherewith they may be filled, and may be filled by you. Let them come (He says) and worship Him with gifts. What is meant by with gifts. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth destroy; and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither thief nor moth spoileth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Come with “gifts:” Give alms, and all things are clean unto you. Come with gifts to Him that saith, I will have mercy rather than sacrifice. To that Temple, that existed aforetime as a shadow of that which was to come, they used to come with bulls, and rams, and goats, with every different kind of animal for sacrifice: that with that blood one thing should be done, and another be typified by it. Now that very blood, which all these things used to figure, hath come: the King Himself hath come, and He Himself would have your gifts. What gifts? Alms. For He Himself will judge hereafter, and will Himself hereafter account “gifts” to certain persons. Come, (He says,) ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Why? I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: naked, and ye clothed Me: a stranger, and ye took Me in: sick and in prison, and ye visited Me. These are the gifts with which the daughters of Tyre worship the King; for when they said, When saw we Thee? He who is at once above and below, (whence those ascending and descending are spoken of,) said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me.

28. The daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts. And who the daughters of Tyre are, and how they are to worship Him with gifts, he would explain more clearly, saying, The rich among the people shall entreat thy face. These daughters of Tyre, who worship with gifts, are the rich among the people, whom that “friend of the Bridegroom” addresses: Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, Who giveth us richly all things to

enjoy, that they be rich in good works; ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Let them worship with gifts; but they are not losing what they give; they are in full security, placing them where they will always be able to find them. That they lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true Life. It is by worshipping with gifts, they will entreat Thy face. For it is to the Church they flock together, and there give their alms. That they may not come to be without, (i.e. that themselves may not come to stand without,) let them give their alms in the Church. For so will the face of this Bride and Queen be favourable to those who do them. Therefore it was that those who sold their property, came with presents to entreat the face of this Queen; and 'laid what they brought at the Apostles' feet.' Warm then was love in the Church: "the face of the Queen" was then the Church; the face of the Queen was the reverence of "the daughters of Tyre," of the rich that worshipped with presents; The rich among the people shall entreat Thy face. Both they who shall entreat that face, and He whose face they will entreat, are all collectively but one Bride, but one Queen, mother and children belonging all together unto Christ, belonging unto their Head.

29. But inasmuch as these works, and these alms may be done with a view to vain glory among men, therefore the Lord says, Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them. But how they ought nevertheless to be done publicly in the "face of the Bride," He expresses, saying, Let your works so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in Heaven: not that ye should seek your own glory in the good works which ye do in public, but that ye may seek the glory of God. 'And who (says some one) knows whether I seek God's glory, or my own? I am seen to give to the poor; but from what motive I give, who sees?' Let that One Who sees thee suffice thee: He sees thee, Who will reward thee. He loveth inwardly Who seeth inwardly: He loveth inwardly, let Him be also loved inwardly, Who is the Author of that inward beauty itself. Be not delighted with the outward eyes, so to speak, that thou art seen, that thou art praised, observe what follows here.

Ver. 13. All the glory of her, the King's daughter, is from within. Not only is her robe, outwardly, of gold, and of divers colours; but He Who loved her

beauty, knew her to be also beautiful within. What are those inward charms? Those of conscience. It is there Christ sees; it is there Christ loves her: it is there He addresses her, there punishes, there crowns. Let then thine alms be done in secret; for all the glory of her, the King's daughter, is from within.

With fringes of gold, clothed with divers colours. Her beauty is from within; yet in the 'fringes of gold' is the diversity of languages; the beauty of doctrine. What do these avail, if there be not that beauty 'from within.'

30. The virgins shall be brought unto the King after her. It has been fulfilled indeed. The Church has believed; the Church has been formed throughout all nations. And to what a degree do virgins now seek to find favour in the eyes of that King! Whence are they moved to do so? Even because the Church preceded them. The virgins shall be brought unto the King after her. Her near kinswomen shall be brought unto Thee. For they that are brought unto Him are not strangers, but her "near kinswomen," that belong to her. And because he had said, unto the King, he says, turning the discourse to Him, her near kinswomen shall be brought unto Thee.

31. Ver. 15. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought, and shall be led into the Temple of the King. The "Temple of the King" is the Church itself: it is the Church itself that enters into the Temple of the King. Whereof is that Temple constructed? Of the men who enter the Temple? Who but God's "faithful" ones are its "living stones?" They shall be led into the Temple of the King. For there are virgins without the Temple of the King, the nuns among the heretics: they are virgins, it is true; but what will that profit them, unless they be led into the "Temple of the King?" The "Temple of the King" is in unity: the "Temple of the King" is not ruinous, is not rent asunder, is not divided. The cement of those living stones is "charity."

32. They shall be led into the Temple of the King. Ver. 16. Instead of thy fathers, children are born to thee. Nothing can be more manifest. Now consider the "Temple of the King" itself, for it is on its behalf he speaks, on account of the unity of the body that is spread throughout all the world: for those very persons, who have chosen to be virgins, cannot find favour with

the King, unless they be led into the Temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, are thy children born to thee. It was the Apostles begat thee: they were sent: they were the preachers: they are the fathers. But was it possible for them to be with us in the body for ever? Although one of them said, I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: to abide in the flesh is necessary for your sakes. It is true he said this, but how long was it possible for him to remain here? Could it be till this present time, could it be to all futurity? Is the Church then left desolate by their departure? God forbid. Instead of thy fathers, children have been born to thee. What is that? Instead of thy fathers, children have been born to thee? The Apostles were sent to thee as “fathers,” instead of the Apostles sons have been born to thee: there have been appointed Bishops. For in the present day, whence do the Bishops, throughout all the world, derive their origin? The Church itself calls them fathers; the Church itself brought them forth, and placed them on the thrones of “the fathers.” Think not thyself abandoned then, because thou seest not Peter, nor seest Paul: seest not those through whom thou wert born. Out of thine own offspring has a body of “fathers” been raised up to thee. Instead of thy fathers, have children been born to thee. Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth. Observe how widely diffused is the “Temple of the King,” that the virgins that are not led to the Temple of the King, may know that they have nothing to do with that marriage. Instead of thy fathers, have thy children been born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all the earth. This is the Universal Church: her children have been made princes over all the earth: her children have been appointed instead of the fathers. Let those who are cut off own the truth of this, let them come to the One Body: let them be led into the Temple of the King. God hath established His Temple every where: hath laid every where the foundations of the Prophets and Apostles. The Church has brought forth sons; has made them instead of her fathers to be princes over all the earth.

33. Ver. 17. They shall be mindful of thy name in every generation and generation; therefore shall the peoples confess unto Thee. What does it profit then to “confess” indeed, and yet to confess out of “the Temple?” What does it profit to pray, and yet not to pray on the Mount? I cried, says he, unto the Lord with my voice: and He heard me out of His holy hill. Out of what “hill?” Out of that of which it is said, A city set upon a hill cannot

be hid. Of what “hill?” Out of that hill, which Daniel saw ‘grow out of a small stone, and break all the kingdoms of the earth; and cover all the face of the earth.’ There let him pray, who hopes to receive: there let him ask, who would have his prayer heard: there let him confess, who wishes to be pardoned. Therefore shall the peoples confess unto thee for ever, world without end. For in that eternal life it is true indeed there will no longer be the mourning over sins: but yet in the praises of God by that everlasting City which is above, there will not be wanting a perpetual confession of the greatness of that happiness. For to that City itself, to which another Psalm sings, Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God, to her who is the very Bride of Christ, the very Queen, a “King’s daughter, and a King’s consort;” inasmuch as its princes are mindful of her name in every generation and generation, (i.e. so long as this age, which takes many generations to complete it, is passing by,) taking in her behalf a charitable care, that being redeemed from this world, she may reign with God everlastingly; the peoples shall for this very cause confess even to herself; the hearts of all, now enlightened by perfect charity, being laid bare, and made manifest, that she may know the whole of herself most completely, who here is, in many parts of her, unknown to herself. Whence we are admonished by the Apostle to judge nothing before the time; until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness; and make manifest the counsels of the heart; and every man have praise of God. For the Holy City itself will be, as it were, “confessing” to herself, when her several peoples, of which she consists, shall be confessing everlastingly unto the City herself: so that in no single part shall she be concealed from herself, there being no person within her of whom any part is hid.

PSALM 46

Some things, dearly beloved, I now speak to you as things well known, and upon which I ought not to dwell, for what ye know ye ought briefly to be reminded of. The sons of Korah understood we to be ourselves. For I remind you as knowing it, that Korah is interpreted 'Baldness,' and that our Lord, since in the 'place of the Bald skull' He was crucified, hath drawn unto Him many; like that corn of wheat, which except it die, should abide alone; and that those who are drawn unto Him are called sons of Korah. Thus much in the mystery. There were indeed some sons of Korah at the time when this was first sung, but to us ought the Spirit to give life, not the letter to be a veil. Let us then here understand, and see if that which followeth, that is, which the context of this Psalm containeth, agreeth with us. Here also find we ourselves, if yet we adhere to His Members, Whose Body's Head is in heaven, from that Passion ascending, that those who lay in humbleness, He might bring forth with Him in richness, bearing fruit with patience. It is called, A Psalm, to the end, for the sons of Korah, for things secret. Secret is it then; but He Himself, Who in the place of Calvary was crucified, ye know, hath rent the veil, that the secrets of the temple might be discovered. Furthermore since the Cross of our Lord was a key, whereby things closed might be opened; let us trust that He will be with us, that these secrets may be revealed. What is said, To the end, always ought to be understood of Christ. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. But The End He is called, not because He consumeth, but because He perfecteth. For ended call we the food which is eaten, and ended the coat which is woven, the former to consumption, the latter to perfection. Because then we have not where to go farther when we have come to Christ, Himself is called the end of our course. Nor ought we to think, that when we have come to Him, we ought to strive any further to come also to the Father. For this thought Philip also, when he said to Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. When he said, It sufficeth us,

he sought the end of satisfaction and perfection. Then said He, Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip: he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. In Him then have we the Father, because He is in the Father, and the Father in Him, and He and His Father are One.

2. What then doth he admonish us of, who singeth that wherein we ought to recognise our own voice, if indeed we have the affection of this voice. (Ver. 1.) Our God is a refuge and strength. There are some refuges wherein is no strength, whereto when any fleeth, he is more weakened than strengthened. Thou fleest, for example, to some one greater in the world, that thou mayest make thyself a powerful friend; this seemeth to thee a refuge. Yet so great are this world's uncertainties, and so frequent grow the ruins of the powerful day by day, that when to such refuge thou art come, thou beginnest to fear more than ever therein. Before, thou fearedst only for thine own sake, but when with such thou hast taken refuge, thou wilt fear for him also. For many, when to such refuges they have fled, they falling to whom they fled, have been themselves sought after; though none had sought after them, if to such they had not fled. Our refuge is not such, but our refuge is strength. When thither we have fled, we shall be firm.

3. A helper in tribulations, which find us out too much. Tribulations are many, and in every tribulation unto God must we flee; whether it be a tribulation in our estate, or in our body's health, or about the peril of those dearest to us, or any other thing necessary to the sustaining of this life, refuge ought there to be none at all to a Christian man, other than his Saviour, other than his God, to Whom when he has fled, he is strong. For he will not in himself be strong, nor will he to himself be strength, but He will be his strength, Who has become his refuge. But, dearly beloved, among all tribulations of the human soul is no greater tribulation than the consciousness of sin. For if there be no wound herein, and that be sound within man which is called conscience, wherever else he may suffer tribulation, thither will he flee, and there find God. But if in this there be no rest through abundance of iniquity, because God is not even there, what shall man do, whither shall he flee, when he hath begun to suffer tribulations? He will flee from the field to the city, from public to his house, from his house to his chamber, yet follows tribulation. From his chamber he

hath no more whither to flee, except into his chamber within. Furthermore, if therein be tumult, if the smoke of iniquity, if the flame of wickedness, thither can he not flee. He is driven thence, and when thence he is driven, he is driven from himself. And so he hath found his enemy whither he fled; whither shall he from himself escape? Whithersoever he fleeth he draweth himself after himself, and whithersoever such he draweth himself, he tormenteth himself by his very self. These are the tribulations which find a man out too much: for more bitter there are none; so surely are there none more bitter, as there are none more inward. Ye see, dearly beloved, when trees are cut down and proved by the carpenters, sometimes in the surface they seem as though injured and rotten; but the carpenter looks into the inner marrow as it were of the tree, and if within he find the wood sound, he promises that it will last in a building; nor will he be very anxious about the injured surface, when that which is within he declares sound. Furthermore, to man any thing more inward than conscience is not found; what then profits it, if what is without is sound, and the marrow of conscience has become rotten? These are close and vehement overmuch, and as this Psalm saith, too great tribulations; yet even in these the Lord hath become a helper by forgiving sin. For the consciences of the ungodly hateth nothing save indulgence; for if one saith he hath great tribulations, being a confessed debtor to the treasury, when he beholdeth the narrowness of his estate, and seeth that he cannot be solvent; if on account of the distrainers every year hanging over him, he saith that he suffereth great tribulations, and doth not breathe freely except in hope of indulgence, and that in things earthly; how much more the debtor of penalties out of the abundance of sins: when shall he pay what he owes out of his evil conscience, when if he pay, he perisheth? For to pay this debt, is to undergo the penalties. Remaineth then that of His indulgence we may be secure, yet so that, indulgence received, we return not again to contract debts.

4. These sons of Korah then haply are understood to be those, to whom spake Peter in the Acts of the Apostles, when they were intent upon the marvels of the coming of the Holy Spirit, when all on whom He had come spake with all tongues. For he preached unto them, as the Christ, Him Who would do such things by sending His Holy Spirit. They, considering Him, Whom they had crucified with their own hands, how contemptible He was

when He was being slain, how high and exalted before God He had become, that with His Spirit He should fill the foolish, and make infants' tongues eloquent, being pricked in their hearts said, What shall we do? These were the too great tribulations which had found them out. For they had not found out their sins, but the sins were found out in them by the warning of the Apostles. So tribulations found them out, they found not out tribulations. For when without any one's warning man himself considereth his deeds, and asketh God, what saith he? I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the Name of the Lord. Thus there is one tribulation which thou findest out, another which findeth thee out. But in both, whether that which findeth thee out, or that which thou findest out, that both He may repel, He is to be asked, Who is a helper in tribulations. For even he, when he found, said this, Then called I upon the Name of the Lord: and these, in tribulations by which they said that they were found out, said this; God is our refuge and strength, a helper in tribulations, which have found us out too much. But now that a helper He has become, whereby has He become so? Being pricked in their hearts, (It saith,) they said, What shall we do? as though in great desperation: He is so great, Whom we slew; we, where shall we be? And Peter, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. For nothing more grievous than this sin could they think of. What more grievous sin in the sick man, than the slaying the physician? What more grievous can the sick man do, than to kill his own physician? When this is remitted, what is not remitted? From Him then, of Whom is said, refuge and strength, received they great security. Be baptized every one of you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; in His Name, Whom ye slew, be baptized, and your sins are remitted you. The physician even after have ye recognised; now securely drink ye the Blood which ye shed.

5. Now then, such security received, what say they? Ver. 2. Therefore will not we fear, when the earth shall be confounded. Just before anxious, suddenly secure; out of too great tribulations set in great tranquillity. For in them Christ was sleeping, therefore were they tossed: Christ awoke, (as but now we heard out of the Gospel, He commanded the winds, and they were still. Since Christ is in each man's heart by faith, it is signified to us, that his heart as a ship in this world's tempest is tossed, who forgetteth his faith: as

though Christ sleeping it is tossed, but Christ awaking cometh tranquillity. Nay, the Lord Himself, what said He? Where is your faith. Christ aroused, aroused up faith, that what had been done in the ship, might be done in their hearts. A helper in tribulations, which found us out too much. He caused that therein should be great tranquillity.

6. See what tranquillity: Therefore will not we fear when the earth shall be confounded, and the mountains shall be carried into the heart of the sea. Then we shall not fear. Let us seek mountains carried, and if we can find, it is manifest that this is our security. The Lord truly said to His disciples, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be Thou removed, and be Thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done. Haply, to this mountain, He said of Himself; for He is called a Mountain; It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord shall be manifest. But this Mountain is placed above other mountains; because the Apostles also are mountains, supporting this Mountain. Therefore followeth, In the last days the Mountain of the Lord shall be manifest, established in the top of the mountains. Therefore passeth It the tops of all mountains, and on the top of all mountains is It placed; because the mountains are preaching The Mountain. But the sea signifieth this world, in comparison of which sea, like earth seemed the nation of the Jews. For it was not covered over with the bitterness of idolatry, but, like dry land, was surrounded with the bitterness of the Gentiles as with sea. It was to be, that the earth be confounded, that is, that nation of the Jews; and that the mountains be carried into the heart of the sea, that is, first that great Mountain established in the top of the mountains. For He deserted the nation of the Jews, and came among the Gentiles. He was carried from the earth into the sea. Who carrying Him? The Apostles, to whom He had said, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done: that is, through your most faithful preaching it shall come to pass, that this mountain, that is, I Myself, be preached among the Gentiles, be glorified among the Gentiles, be acknowledged among the Gentiles, and that be fulfilled which was predicted of Me, A people whom I have not known shall serve Me. But when were those mountains also carried? This too declareth to us the Scripture of God. When the Apostle preached to the

Jews, they rejected the Word, and then said the Apostle Paul, We were sent unto you, but seeing ye put from you the Word of God, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. The mountains were carried into the heart of the sea. For the Gentiles truly believed the mountains, so that in the heart of the sea were those mountains: not as the Jews, of whom it was said, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. For this also of the New Testament doth the Lord promise, saying by the Prophet, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. This Law, these Commandments, by the Apostles introduced into the faith and creed of all Gentiles, were called mountains, carried into the heart of the sea. Therefore will not we fear. Who will not fear? We who are pricked in heart, lest we be in the number of the reprobate Jews, as of branches broken off. For some even of them believed, and adhered to the Apostles' preaching. Fear then they whom the Mountain deserted: we from the mountains have not retired; and when they were carried into the heart of the sea, we followed.

7. What now follows from this, that the mountains are carried into the heart of the sea? Attend, and see the truth. For when first this was spoken, it was obscure, because it had not then come to pass, but now who doth not acknowledge it already done? Thy book be the page divine, that thou mayest hear this; thy book be the whole world, that thou mayest see it. In those books none read it, save they who know letters; in the whole world, may read even a simple one. What then was done when the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea? Ver. 3. The waters thereof roared, and were troubled: when the Gospel was preached, What is this? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: this the Athenians; but the Ephesians, with what tumult would they have slain the Apostles, when in the theatre, for their goddess Diana, they made such an uproar, as to be shouting, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Amidst which waves and roaring of the sea, feared not they who to that refuge had fled. Nay, the Apostle Paul would enter in to the theatre, and was kept back by the disciples, because it was necessary that he should still abide in the flesh for their sakes. But yet, the waters thereof roared, and were troubled: the mountains shook at the mightiness thereof. Whose might? The sea's? or rather God's, of Whom was said, refuge and strength, a helper in tribulations, which have found us out too much? For

shaken were the mountains, that is, the powers of this world. For one thing are the mountains of God, another the mountains of the world: the mountains of the world, they whose head is the devil, the mountains of God, they whose Head is Christ. But by these mountains were shaken those mountains. Then gave they their voices against Christians, when the mountains were shaken, the waters roaring; for the mountains were shaken, and there was made a great earthquake, with quaking of the sea. But against whom this? Against the City founded upon a rock. The waters roar, the mountains shake, the Gospel being preached. What then, the City of God? Hear what followeth.

8. Ver. 4. The streams of the river make glad the City of God. When the mountains shake, when the sea rages, God deserteth not His City, by the streams of the river. What are these streams of the river? That overflowing of the Holy Spirit, of which the Lord said, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. These rivers then flowed out of the belly of Paul, Peter, John, the other Apostles, the other faithful Evangelists. Since these rivers flowed from one river, many streams of the river make glad the City of God. For that ye might know this to be said of the Holy Spirit, in the same Gospel next said the Evangelist, But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that were to believe on Him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Jesus being glorified after His Resurrection, glorified after His Ascension, on the day of Pentecost came the Holy Spirit, and filled the believers, who spake with tongues, and began to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Hence was the City of God made glad, while the sea was troubled by the roaring of its waters, while the mountains were confounded, asking what they should do, how drive out the new doctrine, how root out the race of Christians from the earth. Against whom? Against the streams of the river making glad the City of God. For thereby shewed He of what river He spake; that He signified the Holy Spirit, by the streams of the river make glad the City of God. And what follows? The Most High hath sanctified His tabernacle: since then there followeth the mention of Sanctification, it is manifest that these streams of the river are to be understood of the Holy Spirit, by Whom is

sanctified every godly soul believing in Christ, that it may be made a citizen of the City of God.

9. Ver. 5. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. Let the sea rage, the mountains shake; God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. What is, in the midst of her? That God stands in any one place, and they surround Him who believe in Him? Then is God circumscribed by place; and broad that which surroundeth, narrow that which is surrounded? God forbid. No such thing imagine of God, Who is contained in no place, Whose seat is the conscience of the godly: and so is God's seat in the hearts of men, that if man fall from God, God in Himself abideth, not falleth like one not finding where to be. For rather doth He lift up thee, that thou mayest be in Him, than so lean upon thee, as if thou withdraw thyself, to fall. Himself if He withdraw, fall wilt thou: thyself if thou withdraw, fall will not He. What then is, God is in the midst of her? It signifieth that God is equal to all, and accepteth not persons. For as that which is in the middle has equal distances to all the boundaries, so God is said to be in the middle, because He consulteth equally for all. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. Wherefore shall she not be moved? Because God is in the midst of her. God shall help her with His countenance: He is the Helper in tribulations that have found us out too much. God shall help her with His Countenance. What is, with His Countenance? With manifestation of Himself. How manifests God Himself, so as that we see His Countenance? I have already told you; ye have learned God's Presence; we have learned it through His works. When from Him we receive any help so that we cannot at all doubt that it was granted to us by the Lord, then God's Countenance is with us. God shall help her with His Countenance.

10. Ver. 6. The heathen are troubled. And how troubled? why troubled? To cast down the City of God, in the midst whereof is God? To overthrow the tabernacle sanctified, which God helpeth with His Countenance? No: with a wholesome trouble are the heathen now troubled. For what followeth? And the kingdoms are bowed. Bowed, saith He, are the kingdoms; not now erected that they may rage, but bowed that they may adore. When were the kingdoms bowed? When that came to pass which was predicted in another Psalm, All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him.

What cause made the kingdoms to bow? Hear the cause. The Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. The idols' fanatics, like frogs in the marshes, clamoured, the more tumultuously the more sordidly, in filth and mire. And what is the brawling of frogs to the thunder of the clouds? For out of them the Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved: He thundered out of His clouds. And what are His clouds? His Apostles, His preachers, by whom He thundered in precepts, lightened in miracles. The same are clouds who are also mountains: mountains for their height and firmness, clouds for their rain and fruitfulness. For these clouds watered the earth, of which it was said, The Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. For it is of those clouds that He threateneth a certain barren vineyard, whence the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; I will command, saith He, the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. This was fulfilled in that which I have mentioned, when the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; when it was said, It was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken first to you; but seeing ye put it from you, we turn to the Gentiles; then was fulfilled, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. The nation of the Jews hath just so remained as a fleece dry upon the ground. For this, ye know, happened in a certain miracle, the ground was dry, the fleece only was wet, yet rain in the fleece appeared not. So also the mystery of the New Testament appeared not in the nation of the Jews. What there was the fleece, is here the veil. For in the fleece was veiled the mystery. But on the ground, in all the nations open lieth Christ's Gospel; the rain is manifest, the Grace of Christ is bare, for it is not covered with a veil. But that the rain might come out of it, the fleece was pressed. For by pressure they from themselves excluded Christ, and the Lord now from His clouds raineth on the ground, the fleece hath remained dry. But of them then the Most High gave His Voice, out of those clouds; by which Voice the kingdoms were bowed and worshipped.

11. Ver. 7. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up. Not any man, not any power, not, in short, Angel, or any creature either earthly or heavenly, but the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up. He Who sent Angels, came after Angels, came that Angels might serve Him, came that men He might make equal to Angels. Mighty Grace! If God be for us, who can be against us? The Lord of Hosts is with

us. What Lord of Hosts is with us? If (I say) God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things. Therefore be we secure, in tranquillity of heart nourish we a good conscience with the Bread of the Lord. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up. However great be thy infirmity, see Who taketh thee up. One is sick, a physician is called to him. His own taken-up, the Physician calleth the sick man. Who hath taken him up? Even He. A great hope of salvation; a great Physician hath taken him up. What Physician? Every Physician save He is man: every Physician who cometh to a sick man, another day can be made sick, beside Him. The God of Jacob is our taker up. Make thyself altogether as a little child, such as are taken up by their parents. For those not taken up, are exposed; those taken up are nursed. Thinkest thou God hath so taken thee up, as when an infant thy mother took thee up? Not so, but to eternity. For thy voice is in that Psalm, 'My father and my mother forsake me, but the Lord hath taken me up. The God of Jacob is our taker up.'

12. Ver. 8. Come and see the works of the Lord. Now of this taking up, what hath the Lord done? Consider the whole world, come and see. For if thou comest not, thou seest not; if thou seest not, thou believest not; if thou believest not, thou standest afar off: if thou believest thou comest, if thou believest thou seest. For how came we to that mountain? Not on foot? Is it by ship? Is it on the wing? Is it on horses? For all that pertain to space and place, be not concerned, trouble not thyself, He cometh to thee. For out of a small stone He hath grown, and become a great mountain, so that He hath filled all the face of the earth. Why then wouldest thou by land come to Him, Who filleth all lands? Lo, He hath already come: watch thou. By growing He waketh even sleepers; if yet there is not in them so deep sleep, as that they be hardened even against the mountain coming; but they hear, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. For it was a great thing for the Jews to see the stone. For the stone was yet small: and small they deservedly despised it, and despising they stumbled, and stumbling they were broken; remains that they be ground to powder. For so was it said of the stone, Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. It is one thing to be broken, another to be ground to powder. To

be broken is less than to be ground to powder: but none grindeth He coming exalted, save whom He brake lying low. For now before His coming He lay low before the Jews, and they stumbled at Him, and were broken; hereafter shall He come in His Judgment, glorious and exalted, great and powerful, not weak to be judged, but strong to judge, and grind to powder those who were broken stumbling at Him. For, A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, is He to them that believe not. Therefore, brethren, no wonder if the Jews acknowledged not Him, Whom as a small stone lying before their feet they despised. They are to be wondered at, who even now so great a mountain will not acknowledge. The Jews at a small stone by not seeing stumbled; the heretics stumble at a mountain. For now that stone hath grown, now say we unto them, Lo, now is fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel, The stone that was small became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Wherefore stumble ye at Him, and go not rather up to Him? Who is so blind as to stumble at a mountain? Came He to thee that thou shouldest have whereat to stumble, and not have whereto to go up? Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. Isaiah saith this; Come ye, and let us go up. What is, Come ye, and let us go up? Come ye, is, Believe ye. Let us go up, is, Let us profit. But they will neither come, nor go up, nor believe, nor profit. They bark against the mountain. Even now by so often stumbling on Him they are broken, and will not go up, choosing always to stumble. Say we to them, Come ye, and see the works of the Lord: what prodigies He hath set forth through the earth. Prodigies are called, because they portend something, those signs of miracles which were done when the world believed. And what thereafter came to pass, and what did they portend?

13. Ver. 9. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. This not yet see we fulfilled: yet are there wars, wars among nations for sovereignty; among sects, among Jews, Pagans, Christians, heretics, are wars, frequent wars, some for the truth some for falsehood contending. Not yet then is this fulfilled, He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; but haply it shall be fulfilled. Or is it now also fulfilled? In some it is fulfilled; in the wheat it is fulfilled, in the tares it is not yet fulfilled. What is this then, He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth? Wars He calleth whereby it is warred against God. But who warreth against God? Ungodliness. And what to God can ungodliness do? Nothing. What doth an earthen vessel

dashed against the rock, however vehemently dashed? With so much greater harm to itself it cometh, with how much the greater force it cometh. These wars were great, frequent were they. Against God fought ungodliness, and earthen vessels were dashed in pieces, even men by presuming on themselves, by too much prevailing by their own strength. This is that, the shield whereof Job also named concerning one ungodly. He runneth against God, upon the stiff neck of his shield. What is, upon the stiff neck of his shield? Presuming too much upon his own protection. Were they such who said, God is our refuge and strength, a Helper in tribulations which have found us out too much? or in another Psalm, For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. When one learneth that in himself he is nothing, and help in himself has none, arms in him are broken in pieces, wars are made to cease. Such wars then destroyed that Voice of the Most High out of His holy clouds, whereby the earth was moved, and the kingdoms were bowed. These wars hath He made to cease unto the end of the earth. He shall break the bow, and dash in pieces the arms, and burn the shield with fire. Bow, arms, shield, fire. The bow is plots; arms, public warfare; shields, vain presuming of self-protection: the fire wherewith they are burned, is that whereof the Lord said, I am come to send fire on the earth; of which fire saith the Psalm, There is nothing hid from the heat thereof. This fire burning, no arms of ungodliness shall remain in us, needs must all be broken, dashed in pieces, burned. Remain thou unharmed, not having any help of thine own; and the more weak thou art, having no arms thine own, the more He taketh thee up, of Whom it is said, The God of Jacob is our taker up. For thou prevailedst as it were through thyself; thou art troubled in thyself. Destroy the arms wherein thou presumedst: hear the Lord saying, My grace is sufficient for thee. Say thou also, When I am weak, then am I strong. It is the Apostle's voice. All his own arms had he destroyed, as it were of his own might, who said, But I will not glory save in my infirmities. As though he said, "I run not against God upon the stiff neck of my shield: who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. But when God taketh us up, doth He send us away unarmed? He armeth us, but with other arms, arms Evangelical, arms

of truth, continence, salvation, faith, hope, charity. These arms shall we have, but not of ourselves: but the arms which of ourselves we had, are burnt up: yet if by that fire of the Holy Spirit we are kindled, whereof it is said, He shall burn the shields with fire; thee, who didst wish to be powerful in thyself, hath God made weak, that He may make thee strong in Him, because in thyself thou wast made weak.

14. What then followeth? (Ver. 10.) Be still. To what purpose? And see that I am God. That is, Not ye, but I am God. I created, I create anew; I formed, I form anew; I made, I make anew. If thou couldest not make thyself, how canst thou make thyself anew? This seeth not the contentious tumult of man's soul; to which contentious tumult is it said, Be still. That is, restrain your souls from contradiction. Do not argue, and, as it were, arm against God. Else yet live thy arms, not yet burned up with fire. But if they are burned, Be still; because ye have not wherewith to fight. But if ye be still in yourselves, and from Me seek all, who before presumed on yourselves, then shall ye see that I am God.

15. I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Just before I said, by the name of earth is signified the nation of the Jews, by the name of sea the other nations. The mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; the nations are troubled, the kingdoms are bowed; the Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. (Ver. 11.) The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our taker up. Miracles are done among the heathen, full filled is the faith of the heathen; burned are the arms of human presumption. Still are they, in tranquillity of heart, to acknowledge God the Author of all their gifts. And after this glorifying, doth He yet desert the people of the Jews? of which saith the Apostle, I say unto you, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. That is, until the mountains be carried hither, the clouds rain here, the Lord here bows the kingdoms with His thunder, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And what thereafter? And so all Israel shall be saved. Therefore, here too observing the same order, I will be exalted (saith He) among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth; that is, both in the sea, and in the earth, that

now might all say what followeth; The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up.

PSALM 47

1. That faith wherein we live, and whereby we live, the Lord our God hath by Holy Books, Holy Scriptures, in manifold and divers manners to us diffused; varying indeed the mysteries of words, but commending the one faith. For one and the same thing is therefore said in divers manners, that by the very manner of speaking it may for fear of weariness be varied, yet may for sake of concord be kept one. Therefore upon this Psalm which we have heard sung, to which we have responded singing, I shall say things which ye know: and yet haply by the aid and gift of the Lord, some sweetness I shall bring you, when things which here and there ye have heard, once again being reminded, ye ruminate. For that same rumination, whereby God marketh the clean beasts, would this insinuate, that every man ought what he hears so to lay up in his heart, as not to be slow afterwards to think thereupon, that when he hears he may be like one chewing, but when he calls to memory things heard, he may be like one ruminating. In another manner then the same things are spoken, and make us sweetly to think of what we know, and the very same willingly to hear, because the manner of speaking is varied, and an ancient matter by the very manner of speaking is made new.

2. The title of the Psalm goeth thus. To the end: for the sons of Korah: a Psalm of David himself. These sons of Korah have the title also of some other Psalms, and indicate a sweet mystery, insinuate a great Sacrament: wherein let us willingly understand ourselves, and let us acknowledge in the title us who hear, and read, and as in a glass set before us behold who we are. The sons of Korah, who are they? There was a certain man named Korah, for so a man was called: nevertheless when that is read which is written, and the Divine Word is found to speak to some, who cannot well be understood to be the sons of that particular man who was called Korah, the mind recurs to the mystery, to seek what Korah signifies. For as it is a

Hebrew word, it is spoken accordingly, and interpreted both in the Greek and in the Latin tongue. And it is done for us already: many Hebrew words have been interpreted for us; and we find that Korah is interpreted 'Calvus.' The more, much more, did ye attend. Obscure it was when it was said, sons of Korah; is it not much more obscure when it is said, sons of the Bald (Calvi)? Who are these sons of the Bald? Haply the sons of the Bridegroom. For the Bridegroom was crucified in the place of Calvary. Recollect the Gospel, where they crucified the Lord, and ye will find Him crucified in the place of Calvary. Furthermore, they who deride His Cross, by devils, as by beasts, are devoured. For this also a certain Scripture signified. When God's Prophet Elisha was going up, children called after him mocking, Go up thou bald head, Go up thou bald head: but he, not so much in cruelty as in mystery, made those children to be devoured by bears out of the wood. If those children had not been devoured, would they have lived even till now? Or could they not, being born mortal, have been taken off by a fever? But so in them had no mystery been shewn, whereby posterity might be put in fear. Let none then mock the Cross of Christ. The Jews were possessed by devils, and devoured; for in the place of Calvary, crucifying Christ, and lifting on the Cross, they said as it were with childish sense, not understanding what they said, Go up, thou bald head. For what is, Go up? Crucify Him, Crucify Him. For childhood is set before us to imitate humility, and childhood is set before us to beware of foolishness. To imitate humility, childhood was set before us by the Lord, when He called children to Him, and because they were kept from Him, He said, Suffer them to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The example of childhood is set before us to beware of foolishness by the Apostle, Brethren, be not children in understanding: and again he proposeth it to imitate, Howbeit in malice be ye children, that in understanding ye may be men. 'For the sons of Korah' the Psalm is sung; for Christians then is it sung. Let us hear it as sons of the Bridegroom, Whom senseless children crucified in the place of Calvary. For they earned to be devoured by beasts; we to be crowned by Angels. For we acknowledge the humility of our Lord, and of it are not ashamed. We are not ashamed of Him called in mystery the bald (Calvus,) from the place of Calvary. For on the very Cross whereon He was insulted, He permitted not our forehead to be bald; for with His own

Cross He marked it. Finally, that ye may know that these things are said to us, see what is said.

3. O clap your hands, all ye nations. Were the people of the Jews all the nations? No, but blindness in part is happened to Israel, that senseless children might cry, 'Calve,' 'Calve;' and so the Lord might be crucified in the place of Calvary, that by His Blood shed He might redeem the Gentiles, and that might be fulfilled which saith the Apostle, Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. Let them insult, then, the vain, and foolish, and senseless, and say, 'Calve,' 'Calve;' but ye redeemed by His Blood which was shed in the place of Calvary, say, O clap your hands, all ye nations; because to you hath come down the Grace of God. O clap your hands. What is O clap? Rejoice. But wherefore with the hands? Because with good works. Do not rejoice with the mouth while idle with the hands. If ye rejoice, clap your hands. The hands of the nations let Him see, Who joys hath deigned to give them. What is, the hands of the nations? The acts of them doing good works. O clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of triumph. Both with voice and with hands. If with the voice only it is not well, because the hands are slow; if only with the hands it is not well, because the tongue is mute. Agree together must the hands and tongue. Let this confess, these work. Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

4. Ver. 2. For the Lord Most High is terrible. The Most High in descending made like one laughable, by ascending into Heaven is made terrible. A great King over all the earth. Not only over the Jews; for over them also He is King. For of them also the Apostles believed, and of them many thousands of men sold their goods, and laid the price at the Apostles' feet, and in them was fulfilled what in the title of the Cross was written, The King of the Jews. For He is King also of the Jews. But 'of the Jews' is little. O clap your hands, all ye nations: for God is the King of all the earth. For it sufficeth not Him to have under Him one nation: therefore such great price gave He out of His side, as to buy the whole world. A great King over all the earth.

5. Ver. 3. He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet. Which subdued, and to whom? Who are they that speak? Haply Jews?

Surely, if Apostles; surely, if Saints. For under these God hath subdued the people and the nations, that to-day are they honoured among the nations, who by their own citizens earned to be slain: as their Lord was slain by His citizens, and is honoured among the nations; was crucified by His own, is adored by aliens, but those by a price made His own. For therefore bought He us, that aliens from Him we might not be. Thinkest thou then these are the words of Apostles, He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet? I know not. Strange that Apostles should speak so proudly, as to rejoice that the nations were put under their feet, that is, Christians under the feet of Apostles. For they rejoice that we are with them under the feet of Him Who died for us. For under Paul's feet ran they, who would be of Paul, to whom He said, Was Paul crucified for you? What then here, what are we to understand? He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet. All pertaining to Christ's inheritance are among "all the nations," and all not pertaining to Christ's inheritance are among "all the nations:" and ye see so exalted in Christ's Name is Christ's Church, that all not yet believing in Christ lie under the feet of Christians. For what numbers now run to the Church; not yet being Christians, they ask aid of the Church; to be succoured by us temporally they are willing, though eternally to reign with us as yet they are unwilling. When all seek aid of the Church, even they who are not yet in the Church, hath He not subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet?

6. Ver. 4. He hath chosen an inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom He loved. A certain beauty of Jacob He hath chosen for our inheritance. Esau and Jacob were two brothers; in their mother's womb both struggled, and by this struggle their mother's bowels were shaken; and while they two were yet therein, the younger was elected and preferred to the elder, and it was said, Two peoples are in thy womb, and the elder shall serve the younger. Among all nations is the elder, among all nations the younger; but the younger is in good Christians, elect, godly, faithful; the elder in the proud, unworthy, sinful, stubborn, defending rather than confessing their sins: as was also the very people of the Jews, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness. But for that it is said, The elder shall serve the younger; it is manifest that under the godly are subdued the ungodly, under the humble

are subdued the proud. Esau was born first, and Jacob was born last; but he who was last born, was preferred to the first-born, who through gluttony lost his birthright. So thou hast it written, He longed for the pottage, and his brother said to him, If thou wilt that I give it thee, give me thy birthright. He loved more that which carnally he desired, than that which spiritually by being born first he had earned: and he laid aside his birthright, that he might eat lentils. But lentils we find to be the food of the Egyptians, for there it abounds in Egypt. Whence is so magnified the lentil of Alexandria, that it comes even to our country, as if here grew no lentil. Therefore by desiring Egyptian food he lost his birthright. So also the people of the Jews, of whom it is said, in their hearts they turned back again into Egypt. They desired in a manner the lentil, and lost their birthright. He hath chosen an inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom He loved.

7. Ver. 5. God is gone up with jubilation. Even He our God, the Lord Christ, is gone up with jubilation; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Is gone up: whither, save where we know? Whither the Jews followed Him not, even with their eyes. For exalted on the Cross they mocked Him, ascending into Heaven they did not see Him. God hath gone up with jubilation. What is jubilation, but admiration of joy which cannot be expressed in words? As the disciples in joy admired, seeing Him go into Heaven, Whom they had mourned dead; truly for the joy, words sufficed not: remained to jubilate what none could express. There was also the voice of the trumpet, the voice of Angels. For it is said, Lift up thy voice like a trumpet. Angels preached the ascension of the Lord: they saw the Disciples, their Lord ascending, tarrying, admiring, confounded, nothing speaking, but in heart jubilant: and now was the sound of the trumpet in the clear voice of the Angels, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this is Jesus. As if they knew not that it was the same Jesus. Had they not just before seen Him before them? Had they not heard Him speaking with them? Nay, they not only saw the figure of Him present, but handled also His limbs. Of themselves then knew they not, that it was the same Jesus? But they being by very admiration, from joy of jubilation, as it were transported in mind, the Angels said, that same is Jesus. As though they said, If ye believe Him, this is that same Jesus, Whom crucified, your feet stumbled, Whom dead and buried, ye thought your hope lost. Lo, this is the same Jesus. He hath

gone up before you, He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven. His Body is removed indeed from your eyes, but God is not separated from your hearts: see Him going up, believe on Him absent, hope for Him coming; but yet through His secret Mercy, feel Him present. For He Who ascended into Heaven that He might be removed from your eyes, promised unto you, saying, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Justly then the Apostle so addressed us, The Lord is at hand; be careful for nothing. Christ sitteth above the Heavens; the Heavens are far off, He Who there sitteth is near. The Lord with the sound of the trumpet. Therefore ye, the sons of Korah, if now ye have understood yourselves, and herein behold yourselves, rejoice also, because here ye see yourselves.

8. Ver. 6. Sing praises to our God, sing praises. Whom as Man mocked they, who from God were alienated. Sing praises to our God. For He is not Man only, but God. Man of the seed of David, God the Lord of David, of the Jews having flesh. Whose (saith the Apostle) are the fathers, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came. Of the Jews then is Christ, but according to the flesh. But who is this Christ Who is of the Jews according to the flesh? Who is over all, God blessed for ever. God before the flesh; God in the flesh, God with the flesh. Nor only God before the flesh, but God before the earth whence flesh was made; nor only God before the earth whereof flesh was made, but even God before the Heaven which was first made; God before the day which was first made; God before Angels; the same Christ is God: for In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. Therefore, Sing praises to our God, sing praises.

9. Ver. 7. For God is the King of all the earth. What? And before was He not God of all the earth? Is He not God of both heaven and earth, since by Him surely were all things made? Who can say that He is not his God? But not all men acknowledged Him their God; and where He was acknowledged, there only, so to say, He was God. In Judah is God known. Not yet was it said to the sons of Korah, O clap your hands, all ye nations. For that God known in Judah, is King of all the earth: now by all He is acknowledged, for that is fulfilled which Isaiah saith, "He is Thy God Who

hath delivered thee, the God of the whole earth shall He be called.” For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding. He teacheth us and warneth us to sing praises with understanding, not to seek the sound of the ear, but the light of the heart. Sing ye praises (saith he) with understanding. The Gentiles, whence ye were called that ye might be Christians, adored gods made with hands, and sang praises to them, but not with understanding. If they had sung with understanding, they had not adored stones. When a man sensible sang to a stone insensible, did he sing with understanding? But now, brethren, we see not with our eyes Whom we adore, and yet correctly we adore. Much more is God commended to us, that with our eyes we see Him not. If with our eyes we saw Him, haply we might despise. For even Christ seen the Jews despised, unseen the Gentiles adored. For to them was it said, ‘Sing ye praises with understanding.’ Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding.

10. Ver. 8. God shall reign over all nations. Who reigned over one nation, shall reign (saith He) over all nations. When this was said, God reigned over one nation. It was a prophecy, the thing was not yet shewn. Thanks be to God, we now see fulfilled what before was prophesied. A written promise God sent unto us before the time, the time fulfilled He hath repaid us. God shall reign over all nations, is a promise. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. What then was promised to come, now being fulfilled, is acknowledged and held. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. What is His Holy Seat? Haply saith one, The Heavens, and he understandeth well. For Christ hath gone up, as we know, with the Body, wherein He was crucified, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; thence we expect Him to come to judge the quick and the dead. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. The Heavens are His Holy Seat. Wilt thou also be His Seat? think not that thou canst not be; prepare for Him a place in thy heart. He cometh, and willingly sitteth. The same Christ is surely the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God: and what saith the Scripture of Wisdom Herself? The soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. If then the soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom, be thy soul righteous, and thou shalt be a royal seat of Wisdom. And truly, brethren, all men who live well, who act well, converse in godly charity, doth not God sit in them, and Himself command? The soul obeyeth God sitting in it, and itself commandeth the members. For thy soul commandeth

thy members, that so may move the foot, the hand, the eye, the ear, and itself commandeth the members as its servants, but yet itself serveth its Lord sitting within. It cannot well rule its inferior, unless its superior it have not disdained to serve. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat.

11. The princes of the peoples are gathered together unto the God of Abraham. The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. True it is, God said this, and thereupon the Jews prided themselves, and said, We are Abraham's children; priding themselves in their Father's name, carrying his flesh, not holding his faith; by seed cleaving to Him, in manners degenerating. But the Lord, what said He to them so priding themselves? If ye are Abraham's children, do the works of Abraham. Again, what said John to them, when certain of them were coming and trembling, who by repenting would amend themselves? Offspring of vipers! For they were unrighteous, they were lost, they were sinners, they were ungodly: they came to the baptism of John; and what said he to them? Offspring of vipers. They called themselves Abraham's children, and he called them children of vipers. Was Abraham a viper? Nay; but because by ill-living they had imitated devils, and had become their children, by imitating whom they lived ill; therefore said he, Offspring of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say with yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, and to pride yourselves, as it were, upon the stock of Abraham; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. For neither will Abraham remain without children, if God condemn you; for He is powerful both to condemn those whom He hateth, and to render to him those whom He promised. And whence will He render to him sons, if He condemneth the Hebrews begotten of his own flesh? Of these stones. He shewed them the stones in the wilderness. What were the stones? what but the Gentiles who adored stones? Wherefore stones? By adoring stones they were called stones; for the Psalm had predicted, They that make them be like unto them, and every one that trusteth in them. Yet of these stones rendered He children unto Abraham. Now all we who adored stones, converted to the Lord, are made children of Abraham, not by deriving from him flesh, but by imitating his faith: therefore, (ver. 9.) The princes of the peoples are gathered together unto the

God of Abraham. The princes of the peoples: the princes of the nations: not the princes of one people, but the princes of all people have gathered together unto the God of Abraham.

12. Of these princes was that Centurion too, of whom but now when the Gospel was read ye heard. For he was a Centurion having honour and power among men, he was a prince among the princes of the peoples. Christ coming to him, he sent his friends to meet Him, nay unto Christ truly passing over to him he sent his friends, and asked that He would heal his servant who was dangerously sick. And when the Lord would come, he sent to Him this message: I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof, but say in a word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers. See how he kept his rank! first he mentioned that he was under another, and afterwards that another was under him. I am under authority, and I am in authority; both under some I am, and over some I am. And I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. As though he said, If I being set under authority command those who are under me, Thou Who art set under no man's authority, canst not Thou command Thy creature, since all things were made by Thee, and without Thee was nothing made. Say, then, said he, in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof. He feared to admit Christ within his own walls, yet already was He within, in his heart: already was his soul His seat, already He sat there Who sought the humble. Then Jesus turned about and marvelled at him and said unto them that followed Him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in Israel. And as another Evangelist relates the same thing, Jesus followeth on and saith, And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. For this Centurion was not of the people of Israel, for in the people of Israel the proud repelled God from them: among the princes of the nations was found one humble, who invited God to himself. Admiring at his faith, Jesus reprobates the Jews' misbelief. For sound to themselves they seemed, whereas they were dangerously sick, when their Physician not knowing they slew. Therefore when He reprobated, and repudiated their pride, what said He? I say unto you, that

many shall come from the east and west, not belonging to the kindred of Israel: many shall come to whom He said, "O clap your hands, all ye nations;" and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Abraham begat them not of his own flesh; yet shall they come and sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven, and be his sons. Whereby his sons? Not as born of his flesh, but by following his faith. But the children of the kingdom, that is, the Jews, shall be cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. They shall be condemned to outer darkness who are born of the flesh of Abraham, and they shall sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven, who have imitated Abraham's faith. Justly therefore here also saith He, The princes of the peoples have gathered together unto the God of Abraham.

13. And what they who belonged to the God of Abraham? For the mighty gods of the earth are greatly lifted up. They who were gods, the people of God, the vineyard of God, whereof it is said, Judge betwixt Me and My vineyard, shall go into outer darkness, shall not sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, are not gathered unto the God of Abraham. Wherefore? For the mighty gods of the earth; they who were mighty gods of the earth, presuming upon earth. What earth? Themselves; for every man is earth. For to man was it said, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. But man ought to presume upon God, and thence to hope for help, not from himself. For the earth raineth not upon itself, nor shineth for itself; but as the earth from heaven expecteth rain and light, so man from God ought to expect mercy and truth. They then, the mighty gods of the earth, were greatly lifted up, that is, greatly prided themselves: they thought no physician necessary for themselves, and therefore remained in their sickness, and by their sickness were brought down even to death. The natural branches were broken off that the humble wild olive tree might be grafted in. For the mighty gods of the earth are greatly lifted up. Hold we fast then, brethren, humility, charity, godliness: since we are called, on their proving reprobate, even by their example let us fear to pride ourselves.

PSALM 48

1. The title of this Psalm is, A song of praise, to the sons of Korah, on the second day of the week. Concerning this what the Lord deigneth to grant receive ye like sons of the firmament. For on the second day of the week, that is, the day after the first which we call the Lord's day, which also is called the second week-day, was made the firmament of Heaven. Nay, the firmament Heaven. For God called the firmament Heaven. But in the first day He had made Light, and divided it from darkness; and called the Light, Day; and the darkness, night. But as the context of this Psalm indicates, somewhat also God foretold in that His work, which should be fulfilled in us: and so according to the condition of this creation the world ran its course. For in vain the Lord said of Moses, He wrote of Me, unless all things which are written, even when God framed the creature, can be interpreted to signification of things to come: that thou mayest understand God to have made the Light when Christ rose from the dead. For then truly the Light was divided from the darkness, when immortality was separated from mortality. What then followeth but that to the Head the Body also be made, which is the Church? Verily there is also a Psalm concerning the first day of the week, wherein the Lord's Resurrection is declared most openly. For there it is said, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. What more evident than that Christ is the King of Glory? Of Whom it is said, Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. The second day of the week then we ought not to understand but of the Church of Christ: but the Church of Christ in the Saints, the Church of Christ in those who are written in Heaven, the Church of Christ in those who to this world's temptations yield not. For they are worthy of the name of 'firmament.' The Church of Christ, then, in those who are strong, of whom saith the Apostle, We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, is called the firmament. Of this it is sung in this Psalm. Let us hear, acknowledge, associate, glory,

reign. For Her called firmament, hear also in the Apostolic Epistles, the pillar and firmament of the truth. Of this firmament is it sung to the sons of Korah, who ye know are the sons of the Bridegroom crucified in the place of Calvary. For Korah is interpreted Calvitium. Now followeth in this Psalm, which is inscribed, On the second day of the week;

2. Ver. 1. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. See, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: but do infidels praise the Lord? Do they also who believe and yet live ill praise the Lord? they through whom it cometh to pass that the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, do they praise God? Or in truth if they do praise, is their praise accepted; when it is written, Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner? Thou saidst then, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, but say where? In the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Of this it is elsewhere spoken, Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. In such, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, that is, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. This is the city set upon an hill, which cannot be hid: this is the candle which is not hidden under a bushel, to all known, to all proclaimed. Yet are not all men citizens thereof, but they in whom great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. What then is that city: let us see whether perhaps, since it is said, In the city of our God, in His holy mountain, we ought not to enquire for this mountain where also we may be heard. For not in vain is it said in another Psalm, I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. That hill helped thee then that thou mightest be heard. For if unto it thou wentest not up, lying below thou mightest cry out, but heard thou couldest not be. What then is that mountain, brethren? One is it with great care to be enquired for, with great solicitude investigated, with labour also to be occupied, and ascended. But if in any part of the earth it is, what shall we do? Shall we go abroad out of our own country, that to that mountain we may arrive? Nay, then we are abroad, when in it we are not. For that is our city, if we are members of the King, Who is the head of the same city. Where then is that mountain? If any place it occupied, we must labour, as I said, to arrive thereat. But why art thou troubled? I would thou mayest not be slothful to ascend to the mountain, as the mountain was not slow to come to thee sleeping. For there was a certain corner stone contemptible, whereat the Jews stumbled, cut out

of a certain mountain without hands, that is, coming of the kingdom of the Jews without hands, because human operation went not with Mary of whom was born Christ. But if that stone, when the Jews stumbled thereat, had remained there, thou hadst not had whither to ascend. But what was done? What saith the prophecy of Daniel? What but that the stone grew, and became a great mountain? How great? So that it filled the whole face of the earth. By growing, then, and by filling the whole face of the earth, that mountain came to us. Why then seek we the mountain as though absent, and not as being present ascend to it; that in us the Lord may be great, and greatly to be praised?

3. Further, lest thou shouldest not recognise this mountain even in this Psalm, and shouldest think it to be sought in some other part of the earth, see what followeth. When he had said, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain, what added he? (Ver. 2.) Spreading abroad the joys of the whole earth, the mountains of Sion. Sion is one mountain, why then mountains? Is it that to Sion belonged also those which came from the other side, so as to meet together on the Corner Stone, and become two walls, as it were two mountains, one of the circumcision, the other of the uncircumcision; one of the Jews, the other of the Gentiles: no longer adverse, although diverse, because from different sides, now in the corner not even diverse. For He is our peace, Who hath made both one. The same Corner Stone which the builders rejected, is become the Head Stone of the corner. The mountain hath joined in itself two mountains; one house there is, and two houses; two, because coming from different sides; one, because of the Corner Stone, wherein both are joined together. Hear also this, the mountains of Sion: the sides of the North are the city of the great King. For thou hadst thought of Sion as one place, where Jerusalem was built, and therein none occurred to thee, save the people of the circumcision, which indeed in the remnant was gathered by Christ, but in the greater part winnowed like chaff. For it is written, A remnant shall be saved. But consider also the Gentiles, see also the wild olive tree grafted into the fatness of the olive. See the Gentiles; the sides of the North: the sides of the North are joined to the city of the great King. The North is wont to be contrary to Sion: Sion forsooth is in the South, the North over against the South. Who is the North, but He who said, I will sit in the sides of the North, I will be like the Most High? The devil

had held dominion over the ungodly, and possessed the nations serving images, adoring demons; and all whatsoever there was of human kind any where throughout the world, by cleaving to him, had become North. But since He Who binds the strong man, taketh away his goods, and maketh them His own goods; men delivered from infidelity and superstition of devils, believing in Christ, are fitted on to that city, have met in the corner that wall that cometh from the circumcision, and that was made the city of the great King, which had been the sides of the North. Therefore also in another Scripture is it said, Out of the North come clouds of golden colour: great is the glory and honour of the Almighty. For great is the glory of the physician, when from being despaired of the sick recovers. Out of the North come clouds, and not black clouds, not dark clouds, not lowering, but of golden colour. Whence but by grace illumined through Christ? See, the sides of the North are the city of the great King. The sides truly, because they had adhered to the devil; for whoever adhere to any one, are said to be his ‘sides.’ For even of some men we are wont so to speak, he is a good man, but he hath bad sides; that is, he indeed excelleth in probity, but wicked are they that are joined with him. “The sides of the North then,” those who adhered to the devil: whence came also that son, of whom but now we heard, that “he was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” For by going to a far country he had come even to the North, and there, as ye know, he had joined himself to one of the princes of that country: he became then a side of the North, by adhering to a prince of that country; but because the city of the great King is collected even out of the side of the North, he returned to himself, and said, I will arise, and go to my father. And his father met him, and said of him, He was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. That fatted calf was the Corner Stone. At last the elder son, who refused to sit down to meat, being exhorted by his father, entered in; and now the two walls, like the two sons coming to the calf, have made the city of the great King.

4. Let the Psalm then follow, and say, God shall be known in her houses. Now in her ‘houses,’ because of the mountains, because of the two walls, because of the two sons. God shall be known in her houses, but he commendeth grace, therefore he added, when He shall take her up. For what would that city have been, unless He had taken her up? Would it not

immediately have fallen, unless it had such foundation. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Let none then glory in his own merits; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For then is that city great, then is the Lord known therein, when He shall take her up; as the physician taketh up the sick man to be cured, not to be loved as he is. For the physician hates the fever. The physician doth not love the sick man, and the physician doth love the sick man. If he loved him sick, he would always wish him sick; again, if he loved not the sick man, to the sick man he would not come. But he loveth him sick, that he may make him whole. The Lord then hath taken up this city, and is known therein, that is, His grace is known in that city: for whatever that city hath, which glorieth in the Lord, it hath not of itself. For because of this it is said, What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? God shall be known in her houses, when He shall take her up.

5. Ver. 3. For, lo, the kings of the earth are gathered together. Behold now those sides of the North, see how they come, see how they say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord: and He will teach us His way, and we will walk in it. Lo, the kings of the earth are gathered together, and have come together in one. In what one, but that “corner stone?” (Ver. 4.) They saw it, and so they marvelled. After their marvelling at the miracles and glory of Christ, what followed? They were troubled, they were moved, (Ver. 5.) trembling took hold upon them. Whence took trembling hold upon them, but from the consciousness of sins? Let them run then, kings after a king; kings, let them acknowledge the King. Therefore saith He elsewhere, Yet have I been set by Him a King upon His holy hill of Sion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the ends of earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. A King then was heard of, set up in Sion, to Him were delivered possessions even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Kings behaved to fear lest they should lose the kingdom, lest the kingdom be taken from them. As wretched Herod feared, and for the Child slew the children. But fearing to lose his kingdom, he deserved not to know the King. Would that he too had

adored the King with the Magi: not by ill-seeking the kingdom, slain the Innocents, and perished guilty. For as concerning him, he destroyed the Innocents: but as for Christ, even a Child, the children dying for Him did He crown. Therefore behoved kings to fear when it was said, Yet have I been set a King by Him upon His holy hill of Sion, and inheritance to the uttermost parts of the earth shall He give Him, Who set Him up King. But why envy ye, O ye kings? View, not envy. For otherwise is He King, Who said, My kingdom is not of this world. Fear not then that the kingdom of this world be taken from you. A kingdom shall be given to you, but of heaven, where He is King. What then follows? Understand now therefore, O ye kings, now were ye preparing to envy; Understand now. Of another King is it spoken Whose kingdom is not of this world. Justly then, The kings were gathered together in one, they were troubled, trembling took hold upon them. Thence also this is said to them, Understand now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. And what did they? There pains as of a woman in travail. What are the pains as of a woman in travail, but the pangs of a penitent? See the same conception of pain and travail: Of Thy fear (saith Isaiah) we have conceived, we have travailed of the Spirit of salvation. So then the kings conceived from the fear of Christ, that by travailing they brought forth salvation by believing on Him Whom they had feared. There pains as of a woman in travail: when of travail Thou hearest, expect a birth. The old man travaileth, but the new man is born: There pains as of a woman in travail.

6. Ver. 6. With a strong wind Thou shalt break the ships of Tarshish. Briefly understood, this is, Thou shalt overthrow the pride of the nations. But where in this history is mentioned the overthrowing of the pride of the nations? Because of the ships of Tarshish. Learned men have enquired for Tarshish a city, that is, what city was signified by this name: and to some it has seemed that Cilicia is called Tarshish, because its metropolis is called Tarsus. Of which city was the Apostle Paul, being born in Tarsus of Cilicia. But some have understood by it Carthage, being haply sometimes so named, or in some language so signified. For in the Prophet Isaiah it is thus found; Howl, ye ships of Carthage. But in Ezekiel by some interpreters the word is translated Carthage, by some Tarshish: and from this diversity it can be

understood that the same which was called Carthage, is called Tharsus. But it is manifest, that in the beginning of its reign Carthage flourished with ships, and so flourished, that among other nations they excelled in trafficking and navigation. For when Dido, flying from her brother, escaped to the parts of Africa, where she built Carthage, the ships which had been prepared for commerce in his country she had taken with her for her flight, the princes of the country consenting to it; and the same ships also when Carthage was built failed not in traffic. And hence that city became too proud, so that justly by its ships may be understood the pride of the nations, presuming on things uncertain, as on the breath of the winds. Now let none presume on full sails, and on the seeming fair state of this life, as of the sea. Be our foundation in Sion: there ought we to be stablished, not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine. Whoso then by the uncertain things of this life had been puffed up, let them be overthrown, and be all the pride of the nations subjected to Christ, Who shall with a strong wind break all the ships of Tarshish: not of any city, but of Tarshish. How with a strong wind? With very strong fear. For so all pride feared Him that shall judge, as on Him humble to believe, lest Him exalted it should fear.

7. Ver. 7. As we have heard, so have we seen. Blessed Church! at one time thou hast heard, at another time thou hast seen. She heard in promises, seeth in performance: heard in Prophecy, seeth in the Gospel. For all things which are now fulfilled were before prophesied. Lift up thine eyes then, and stretch them over the world; see now His 'inheritance even to the uttermost parts of the earth:' see now is fulfilled what was said, All kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him: see fulfilled what was said, Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Thy glory above all the earth. See Him Whose feet and hands were pierced with nails, Whose bones hanging on the tree were counted, upon Whose vesture lots were cast: see reigning Whom they saw hanging; see sitting in Heaven Whom they despised walking on earth: see thus fulfilled, All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. Seeing all this, exclaim with joy, As we have heard, so have we seen. Justly the Church herself is so called out of the Gentiles. Hearken, O daughter, and see: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house. Thy father was the North, come to Mount Sion, hear and see; not see

and hear, but hear and see: first hear, after see. Thou hearest first what thou seest not. Thou shalt see hereafter, what thou hast heard. A people (saith He) whom I have not known hath served Me. At the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed Me. If at the hearing of the ear it obeyed Me, then it saw not. Where then is, They to whom it was not told of Him, shall see; and they who have not heard shall understand? They to whom the Prophets were not sent, first heard and understood the Prophets: they who first heard not, afterwards hearing marvelled. They remained behind to whom they were sent, carrying the books, understanding not the truth: having the tables of the Testament, and not holding the inheritance. But we, as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God; there have we heard, there also seen. Whoso is without the same, neither heareth, nor seeth; whoso is within, is neither blind, nor deaf. As we have heard, so have we seen. And where hearest thou? where seest thou? In the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God. God hath founded it for ever. Let not heretics insult, divided into parties, let them not exalt themselves who say, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there. Whoso saith, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there, inviteth to parties. Unity God promised. The kings are gathered together in one, not dissipated through schisms. But haply that city which hath held the world, shall sometime be overthrown. Far be the thought! God hath founded it for ever. If then God hath founded it for ever, why fearest thou lest the firmament should fall?

8. Ver. 8. We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy people. Who have received, and where received? Hath not the same Thy people received Thy mercy. If Thy people hath received Thy mercy, how then We have received Thy mercy, and, in the midst of Thy people? As if they who received were one party, they in the midst of whom they received another. A great mystery, but yet well known. When hence also, that is, out of these verses, hath been extracted and brought forth what ye know, it will be not ruder, but sweeter. Now forsooth all are reckoned the people of God, who carry His Sacraments, but not all belong to His Mercy. All forsooth receiving the Sacrament of the Baptism of Christ, are called Christians, but not all live worthily of that Sacrament. There are some of whom saith the Apostle, Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Yet on account of this form of godliness they are named among God's people. As

to the floor, until the corn is threshed, belongs not the wheat only, but the chaff. But will it also belong to the garner? In the midst then of an evil people is a good people, which hath received the Mercy of God. He liveth worthily of the Mercy of God who heareth, and holdeth, and doeth what the Apostle saith, We beseech you that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain. Whoso then receiveth not the Grace of God in vain, the same receiveth not only the Sacrament, but also the Mercy of God as well. And what does it harm him that he is in the midst of a people disobedient, until the floor be winnowed, until the good be separated from the evil? What does it harm him to dwell in the midst of the people? Let him be of those who are called the Firmament; let him be a lily among thorns. And that thorns also belong to the people of God, wouldest thou hear? So is it set forth in this very similitude, As a lily, He saith, among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. Did He say among strange women? No, but among the daughters. Then are there evil daughters; and among them, the lily is among thorns. So those who have the Sacraments, and have not good manners, are both said to be of God, and not of God; are both said to be His, and to be strangers: His because of His own Sacraments, strangers because of their own vice. So also strange daughters: daughters, because of the form of godliness; strange, because of their loss of virtue. Be the lily there; let it receive the Mercy of God: hold fast the root of a good flower, be not ungrateful for soft rain coming from heaven. Be thorns ungrateful, let them grow by the showers: for the fire they grow, not for the garner. We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy people. In the midst of Thy people not receiving Thy mercy, we have received Thy mercy. For He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, yet, in the midst of them, as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.

9. Now occurreth this to every one's thoughts. What? That people, which in the midst of the people of God receiveth the mercy of God, what numbers hath it? How few are they, there is scarce found one! Will God be content with these, and will He destroy so great a multitude? This say they who promise themselves what they have never heard promised by God. And truly if we live ill, if we enjoy this world's delights, if we serve our passions, will God destroy us? How many are there who seem to keep God's commandments? There is scarce found one, or two, or a few at most.

Those only will God deliver, and the rest condemn? God forbid, say they; when He cometh and seeth so great a multitude on the left, He will have mercy, and give indulgence. This is evidently what the serpent promised the first man. For God had threatened death, if he tasted; but he said, 'Not so, Ye shall not surely die.' They believed the serpent, they found true what God threatened, false what the devil had promised. So now also, brethren, set before your eyes the Church, after the example and similitude of Paradise: the serpent ceaseth not to suggest what then he suggested. But the fall of the first man ought to avail with us for experience of caution, not for imitation of his sin. Therefore he fell, that we may rise. Let us answer to such suggestions, what Job answered. For him also tempted he by a woman, as by Eve, and on the dunghill he conquered, that was conquered in Paradise. Therefore let us not have such words, nor think that they are few; they are many, but among more they lie hid. For we cannot deny that the wicked are more, and so many more, that among them the good appear not at all, as the wheat appears not in the floor. For whoever looketh on a floor, might think that was chaff only. Bring a man without experience, and he thinks it vainly done that oxen are put in, that men sweat there under the heat, to thresh the chaff, yet there is also the heap, to be purged by winnowing, then will come forth plenty of corn, which before lay hidden in the plenty of chaff. And now wouldest thou find out the good? Be such, and thou shalt find.

10. Against this despairing, then, see what followeth in this Psalm. For when he had said, We have received Thy mercy in the midst of Thy people, he signified that there is a people not receiving the mercy of God, in the midst of whom some do receive the mercy of God: and then lest it should occur to men that there are so few, as to be nearly none, how did He console them in the words following? Ver. 9. According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth. What is this? Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Neither can there be any praise of Him but in His saints. For they who live ill, praise Him not, but as it were, preach Him with their tongue, blaspheme in their life. Since then there is no praise of Him but in His saints, let not heretics say to themselves, His praise hath remained in us, because we are few, and separate from the crowd; we live righteously, we praise God, not

only in our speech, but also in our conversation. They are answered out of this Psalm, Why say ye that God is praised in your ‘part,’ to Whom it is said, According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth. That is, as Thou art known through all the earth, so Thou art also praised through all the earth, nor are there wanting who now praise Thee through all the earth. But they praise Thee who live well. For, According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise, not in a part, but unto the ends of the earth. Thy right hand is full of righteousness. That is, many are they also who shall stand at Thy right hand. Not only shall they be many, who shall stand at Thy left hand, but there also shall be a full heap set at Thy right hand. Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11. Ver. 10. Let mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord. O mount Zion, O daughters of Judah, ye labour now among tares, among chaff, among thorns ye labour: yet be glad because of God’s judgments. God erreth not in judgment. Live ye separate, though separate ye were not born; not vainly hath a voice gone forth from your mouth and heart, Destroy not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men. He shall winnow with such art, carrying in His hand a fan, that not one grain of wheat shall fall into the heap of chaff prepared to be burned, nor one beard of chaff pass to the heap to be laid up in the garner. Be glad, O ye daughters of Judæa, because of the judgments of God that erreth not, and do not yet judge rashly. To you let it belong to collect, to Him let it belong to separate. Let mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord; but think not that the ‘daughters of Judah’ are Jews. Judah is confession; all the sons of confession are all the sons of Judah. For salvation is of the Jews, is nothing else than that Christ is of the Jews. This saith also the Apostle, He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Be such a Jew; glory in the circumcision of the heart, though thou hast not the circumcision of the flesh. Let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord.

12. Ver. 11. Walk about Zion, and embrace her. Be it said to them who live ill, in the midst of whom is the people, which hath received the mercy of God. In the midst of you is a people living well, Walk about Zion. But how? embrace her. Not with scandals, but with love go round about her: that so those who live well in the midst of you ye may imitate, and by imitation of them, be incorporate with Christ, Whose members they are. Walk about Zion, go round about her: speak in the towers thereof. In the height of her bulwarks, set forth the praises thereof.

13. Ver. 12. Set your hearts upon her might. Not that ye may have the form of godliness, deny the power thereof, but, upon her might set your hearts. What is the might of this city? Whoso would understand the might of this city, let him understand the force of love. That is a virtue which none conquereth. Love's flame no waves of the world, no streams of temptation, extinguish. Of this it is said, Love is strong as death. For as when death cometh, it cannot be resisted; by whatever arts, whatever medicines, you meet it; the violence of death can none avoid who is born mortal; so against the violence of love can the world do nothing. For from the contrary the similitude is made of death; for as death is most violent to take away, so love is most violent to save. Through love many have died to the world, to live to God; by this love inflamed, the martyrs, not pretenders, not puffed up by vain-glory, not such as they of whom it is written, Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing, but men whom truly a love of Christ and of the truth led on to this passion; what to them were the temptations of the tormentors? Greater violence had the eyes of their weeping friends, than the persecutions of enemies. For how many were held by their children, that they might not suffer? to how many did their wives fall upon their knees, that they might not be left widows? How many have their parents forbidden to die, as we know and read in the Passion of the Blessed Perpetua! All this was done; but tears, however great, and with whatever force flowing, when did they extinguish the ardor of love? This is the might of Sion, to whom elsewhere it is said, Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. Speak ye in her towers; set your hearts upon her might, and distribute her houses.

14. What here understand we, Set your hearts upon her might, and distribute her houses? That is, distinguish house from house. Do not confound. For there is a house having the form of godliness, and not having godliness; but there is a house having both form and godliness. Distribute, confound not. But then ye distribute and confound not, when ye 'set your hearts upon her might;' that is, when through love ye are made spiritual. Then ye will not judge rashly, then ye will see that the evil harms not the good as long as we are in this floor. Distribute her houses. There can be also another understanding. The two houses, one coming of the circumcision, one of the uncircumcision, it is commanded the Apostles to distribute. For when Saul was called, and made the Apostle Paul, agreeing in unity with his fellow Apostles, he so with them determined, that they should go to the circumcision, he to the uncircumcision. By that dispensation of their Apostleship, they distributed the houses of the city of the great King; and meeting in the corner, divided the Gospel in dispensation, in love united it. And truly this is rather to be understood; for it followeth and sheweth that it is here said to the preachers, distribute her houses: that ye may tell it to the generation following: that is, that even to us, who were to come after them, their dispensation of the Gospel should reach. For not for those only they laboured, with whom they lived in the earth; nor the Lord for those Apostles only to whom He deigned to shew Himself alive after His Resurrection, but for us also. For to them He spake, and signified us when He spake, Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Were they then to be here alway, even to the end of the world? Also He said, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word. Therefore He considereth us, because He suffered on account of us. Justly then it is said, That ye may tell it to the generation following.

15. Tell what? (Ver. 13.) For this is God, even our God. The earth was seen, the earth's Creator was not seen; the flesh was held, God in the flesh was not acknowledged. For the flesh was held by those, from whom had been taken the same flesh, for of the seed of Abraham was the virgin Mary. At the flesh they stayed, the Divinity they did not understand. O Apostles, O mighty city, preach thou on the towers, and say, This is God, even our God. So, even so as He was despised, as He lay a stone before the feet of the stumbling, that He might humble the hearts of the confessing; even so, This

is God, even our God. Certainly He was seen, as was said, ‘Afterward did He shew Himself upon earth, and conversed with men.’ This is God, even our God. He is also Man, and who is there will know Him? This is God, even our God. But haply for a time as the false gods. For because they can be called gods, but cannot be so, for a time they are even called so. For what saith the Prophet, or what warneth He to be said to them? This shall ye say to them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from those that are under the heavens. He is not such a god: for our God is above all gods. Above all what gods? For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. The same then is our God. This is God, even our God. For how long? For ever and ever: He shall rule us for ever. If He is our God, He is also our King. He protecteth us, being our God, lest we die; He ruleth us, being our King, lest we fall. But by ruling us He doth not break us; for whom He ruleth not, He breaketh. Thou shalt rule them, saith He, with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. But there are whom He ruleth not; these He spareth not, as a potter’s vessel dashing them in pieces. By Him then let us wish to be ruled and delivered, for He is our God for ever and ever, and He shall rule us for ever.

PSALM 49

SERMON I

On the first part of the Psalm.

1. All divine sayings are profitable to those that understand them aright: but dangerous to those who will wrest them according to the perverseness of their own heart, instead of correcting their own heart according to the rectitude of them. For there is this great perverseness usual in men; that whereas they ought themselves to live according to the Will of God, they would have God live according to their will: and while they will not be set right themselves, they would have Him made wrong: judging the right to be not what He willeth, but what they will. Again, we are wont to hear men murmuring against God, because with ill men in this life it goeth well, while the good suffer; as if He were perverse and knew not what He did, or altogether withdrew His eyes from things human, or would not have His peace disturbed, and minded not these things, since it were a labour for God to observe and correct them. Those men, therefore, whose will to worship God is in order that it may be well with them here, murmur when they chance to see those who do not worship God enriched and abounding in earthly prosperity; but themselves, who worship God, struggling with difficulties, with want, with woe, and other hardships of human mortality. Against this voice, and against these blasphemies of men murmuring, holy Scripture ever doth chant a charm healing the bite of the serpent. For such corruption is the mark of a poisoned heart, belching forth against God the foulness of blasphemy: nay, what is worse, rejecting the hand of the healer, not rejecting the fangs of the serpent. Thus, I say, the heart of man doth thrust from itself the sternness of the Word of God, and giveth entrance to the allurements of the serpent engaging it to evil. Against these men, therefore, holy Scripture doth sing her chant, and is now speaking to us in this Psalm. To which Psalm I would direct the attention of your Holiness,

did not God Himself bid us all hearken: and not us only, but the whole world. For hear how He beginneth.

Ver. 1. Hear ye these things, all ye nations. Not then you only who are here. For of what power is our voice so to cry out, as that all nations may hear? For Our Lord Jesus Christ hath proclaimed it through the Apostles, hath proclaimed it in so many tongues that He sent; and we see this Psalm, which before was only repeated in one nation, in the Synagogue of the Jews, now repeated throughout the whole world, throughout all Churches; and that fulfilled which is here spoken of, Hear ye these words, all ye nations. To this alone I would engage your attention, lest because of bodily fatigue ye might not perchance keep your minds awakened, being alarmed at the length of this Psalm. If it shall be possible it will be ended to-day: if not, there will remain something for us to-morrow: nevertheless, do you be constantly attentive. For if the Lord will, ye shall hear as much as will not load, but lighten you. Hear ye these words, all ye nations: of whom ye are: With ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world. This He seemeth to have repeated a second time, lest to have said hear, before, were too little. What I say, he saith, hear, with ears ponder, that is, hear not cursorily. What is, with ears ponder? It is what the Lord said, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear: for as all who were in His presence must have had ears, what ears did He require save those of the heart, when He said, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear. The same ears also this Psalm doth smite. With ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world. Perhaps there is here some distinction. We ought not indeed to narrow our view, but there is no harm in explaining even this view of the sense. Perhaps there is some difference between the saying, all nations, and the saying, all ye that dwell in the world. For perchance he would have us understand the expression, dwell in, with a further meaning, so as to take all nations for all the wicked, but the dwellers of the world all the just. For he doth inhabit who is not held fast: but he that is occupied is inhabited, and doth not inhabit. Just as he doth possess whatever he hath, who is master of his property: but a master is one who is not held in the meshes of covetousness: while he that is held fast by covetousness is the possessed, and not the possessor. We have a certain sense affixed to habitation in the Scripture of God, in the place where he saith, I would rather be an abject in the house of the Lord, than to inhabit the tents of the

ungodly. But why? If thou art an abject in the house of the Lord, dost thou not dwell there? He would not intimate habitation, except in the case of those who reign, and hold, and domineer, and govern: but they that are despised do not as it were inhabit, but are subject.

For thus he saith, I would rather be an abject in the house of God, than to reign in the tents of the ungodly. Therefore, if there is any distinction between all nations and the inhabitants of the world, as there is between hear and ponder it with your ears, then though there seemeth to be a repetition, yet what he wished to intimate is something different: because not only sinners and the ungodly were to hear these words, but the godly also. Now all hear promiscuously: but when men shall have come to give an account, those who have heard to no purpose will be separated from those who have pondered with their ears. Therefore let even the ungodly hear: Hear ye this, all ye nations. Let the just also hear, who have not heard to no purpose, and who rather rule the world than are ruled by the world: with ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world.

3. And again he saith, both all ye earthborn, (ver. 2.) and sons of men. The expression earthborn he doth refer to sinners; the expression sons of men to the faithful and righteous. Ye see then that this distinction is observed. Who are the earthborn? The children of the earth. Who are the children of the earth? They who desire earthly inheritances. Who are the sons of men? They who appertain to the Son of Man. We have already before explained this distinction to your Sanctity, and have concluded that Adam was a man, but not the son of man; that Christ was the Son of Man, but was God also. For whosoever pertain to Adam, are earthborn: whosoever pertain to Christ, are sons of men. Nevertheless, let all hear, I withhold my discourse from no one. If one is earthborn, let him hear, because of the judgment: another is a son of man, let him hear for the kingdom's sake. The rich and poor together. Again, the same words are repeated. The expression rich refers to the earthborn; but the word poor to the sons of men. By the rich understand the proud, by the poor the humble. Let a man have large means of wealth; if in them he is not lifted up, he is poor: let him not have any thing: but covet and be puffed up, him God numbereth among the rich and reprobate. Now both the rich and poor in heart God distinguisheth from those that are so in

coffer and household. Are not they poor who accept the monition of the Apostle, who bid Timothy, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded? How did He make them poor who were rich? By taking from them the cause wherefore riches are sought. For no man would be rich for any other reason, than that he may be puffed up among those with whom he dwelleth, and may seem to be greater than they. But when he bade them not be high-minded, he made them equal with those who have nothing: so that perchance, a beggar with very few pence may be more exalted than the rich man who mindeth the Apostle, saying, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded. How not to be high-minded? If they do what followeth, Trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. He said not, Who giveth to them; but Who giveth to us. Had Paul himself no riches? Evidently he had. What riches? Those of which the Scripture speaketh in another place, To a faithful man the whole world is full of riches. Hear also himself declaring: As having nothing and yet possessing all things. Therefore let him who wishes to be rich not cleave to a part, and he shall have all; let him cleave to Him Who hath created all. The rich and poor together. He saith in another Psalm, The poor shall eat and be satisfied. How hath he commended the poor? The poor shall eat and be satisfied. What eat they? That Food which the faithful know. How shall they be satisfied? By imitating the Passion of their Lord, and not without cause receiving their recompense. The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and they shall praise the Lord who seek Him. What of the rich? Even they eat. But how eat they? All the rich upon the earth have eaten and worshipped. He said not, Have eaten and are satisfied; but, have eaten and worshipped. They worship God indeed, but they will not display brotherly humaneness. These eat and worship; those eat and are filled: yet both eat. Of the eater what he eateth is required: let him not be forbidden by the distributor to eat, but let him be admonished to fear him who doth require his account. Let these words then be heard by sinners and righteous, nations, and those who inhabit the world, earthborn and sons of men, the rich and the poor together: not divided, not separated. That is for the time of the harvest to do, the hand of the winnower will effect that. Now together let rich and poor hear, let goats and sheep feed in the same pasture, until He come Who shall separate the one on His right hand, the other on His left. Let them all hear together

the teacher, lest separated from one another they hear the voice of the Judge.

4. And what is it they are now to hear? (ver. 3.) My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart understanding. And this repetition is perhaps made, lest perchance if he had said only my mouth, thou shouldest suppose that one spake to thee who had understanding but in his lips. For many have understanding in their lips, but have not in their heart, of whom the Scripture saith, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. What saith he then who speaketh to thee? when he hath said, My mouth shall speak of wisdom, in order that thou mayest know that what is poured forth from the mouth floweth from the bottom of the heart, he hath added, And the meditation of my heart of understanding.

5. Ver. 4. I will incline mine ear to the parable, I will shew my proposition upon the harp. Who is this, the meditation of whose heart speaketh understanding, in such sort, that it be not only on the surface of the lips, but also fill the inner man? Who is he that heareth and thus speaketh? For many speak what they hear not. Who are they who speak what they hear not? These be they who do not what they speak: they be like the Pharisees whom the Lord affirmeth to sit in the seat of Moses. He willed to speak to thee from Moses' seat, by the mouth of those who speak those things, and do not; and the Lord would thus give thee security. Fear not, He saith, What they say, do ye; but what they do, do not ye: for they say, and do not. They hear not what they say. But they who do and then say, hear what they say: and so say with profit, because they hear. He then who is a speaker and not a hearer profiteth another, profiteth not himself. He then who would be both a hearer and a speaker, who speaketh to thee, before he saith, I will shew my proposition upon the harp, which is to speak by means of the body, (for the soul useth the body as a harper useth the harp,) first saith, I will incline mine ear to the parable. Before that I shall speak to thee through the body, before that my harp giveth her sound, I will first incline mine ear to the parable, that is to say, I will hear what I am to say to thee. And why to a parable? Because now we see through a glass darkly, as saith the Apostle; whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For our vision is not yet that face to face, where there are no longer parables, where

there no longer are riddles and comparisons. Whatever now we understand we behold through riddles. A riddle is a dark parable which it is hard to understand. Howsoever a man may cultivate his heart and apply himself to apprehend mysteries, so long as we see through the corruption of this flesh, we see but in part. But when we shall have put on incorruption in the resurrection of the dead, when the Son of Man shall have appeared to judge the quick and dead, then shall be seen the Son of Man judging, Who was first judged, separating the bad from the good, placing the bad on the left hand, the good on the right. Both the good and bad shall see Him alike, but to the bad He shall say, Go ye into everlasting fire; while to the good He shall say, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive ye the Kingdom. The wicked shall depart into everlasting fire, but the just into everlasting life; and there shall be that vision face to face of which the former are not worthy. Mark what I say. Just as both the bad and good saw the Son of Man here, when He was yet to be judged, (for the Apostles saw Him who followed Him, the Jews saw Him who crucified Him,) so shall both the good and bad see Him when He shall come to judge: the good that they may receive their reward for having followed Him; the bad that they may receive their punishment for having crucified Him. Will they only be condemned who have crucified Him? I dare to say, they only. Then we, say the sinners of this age, are safe. If God searcheth not the heart, ye are safe. What have I said? Let your love understand me, lest they affirm, when God cometh to judgment, that they understood not. The Jews, because they saw Christ, crucified Him: thou, because thou seest not Christ, resistest His Word. Thou who resistest His Word, wouldest thou not crucify His Flesh, if thou sawest Him? The Jew contemned Him hanging on the Tree, thou contemneth Him sitting in Heaven. Therefore two kinds of people saw Him, while He was here; two kinds shall also see Him, when He shall have come to judgment. For Son of Man He shall come, that He may judge; because Son of Man He came, that He might be judged. Accordingly, because the Father was not made flesh, the Father suffered not, and judgeth by the Son, as He Himself saith in the Gospel, The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: and as He saith a little lower down, Hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. For according as He is the Son of God, He is the Word always with the Father, and because always with the Father, with the Father He always judgeth: but

according as He is the Son of Man, He was both judged and will judge. But as He was seen by those who believed, and by those who crucified Him, when He was judged; so will He be seen, when He shall have begun to be judge, both by those whom He shall condemn, and by those whom He shall crown. But that vision of divinity, which He hath promised to them that love Him, when He saith, He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and he that loveth Me keepeth My commandments, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him: this the ungodly shall not see. This manifestation is in a certain way familiar: He keepeth it for His own, He will not shew it to the ungodly. Of what sort is the vision itself? Of what sort is Christ? Equal to the Father. Of what sort is Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For this vision we sigh now, and groan so long as we sojourn here; to this vision we shall be brought home at the last, this vision now we see but darkly. If then we see now darkly, let us incline our ear to the parable, and then let us shew our proposition upon the harp: let us hear what we say, do what we enjoin.

6. And what hath he said? (ver. 5.) And wherefore shall I fear in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me. He beginneth something obscurely. Wherefore shall I fear, he saith, in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me. Therefore he ought the rather to fear if the iniquity of his heel shall compass him. Nay, for let not man fear, he saith, who hath not power to escape. For example, he who feareth death, what shall he do to escape death? Let him tell me how he is to escape what Adam oweth, he who is born of Adam. But let him consider that he is born of Adam, and hath followed Christ, and ought to pay what Adam oweth, and obtain what Christ hath promised. Therefore, he who feareth death can no wise escape: but he who feareth the damnation which the ungodly shall hear, Go ye into everlasting fire, hath an escape. Let him not fear then. For why should he fear? Will the iniquity of his heel compass him? If then he avoid 'the iniquity of his heel,' and walk in the ways of God, he shall not come to the evil day: the evil day, the last day, shall not be evil to him. For the last day shall be ill with some, shall be good with others. Shall it be ill with those to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom? But it shall be ill with those to whom it shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire. But if the iniquity of his heel shall compass him,

wherefore shall he fear in the evil day? Now while they live, let them take heed to themselves, let them put away iniquity from their heel: let them walk in that way, let them walk in the way of which He saith Himself, I am the way, the truth, and the life: and let them not fear in the evil day, for He giveth them safety Who became The Way. Wherefore should I fear in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me. Therefore let them avoid the iniquity of their heel. With the heel a man slippeth. Let your Love observe. What was said by God to the Serpent? She shall mark thy head, and thou shalt mark her heel. The devil marketh thy heel, in order that when thou slippest he may overthrow thee. He marketh thy heel, do thou mark his head. What is his head? The beginning of an evil suggestion. When he beginneth to suggest evil thoughts, then do thou thrust him away before pleasure ariseth, and consent followeth; and so shalt thou avoid his head, and he shall not grasp thy heel. But wherefore said He this to Eve? Because through the flesh man doth slip. Our flesh is an Eve within us. He that loveth his wife, he saith, loveth himself. What meaneth himself? He continueth, and saith, For no man ever yet hath hated his own flesh. Because then the devil would make us slip through the flesh, just as he made that man Adam to slip, through Eve; Eve is bidden to mark the head of the devil, because the devil marketh her heel. If then the iniquity of our heel shall compass us, why fear we in the evil day, since being converted to Christ we are able not to do iniquity; and there will be nothing to compass us, and we shall joy and not sorrow in the last day?

7. But who are they whom the iniquity of their heel shall compass? (Ver. 6.) They who trust in their virtue, and in the abundance of their riches do glory. Therefore such sins will I avoid, and the iniquity of my heel shall never compass me. What is avoiding such sins? Let us not trust in our own virtue, let us not glory in the abundance of our own riches, but let us glory in Him Who hath promised to us, being humble, exaltation, and hath threatened condemnation to men exalted; and then iniquity of our heel shall never compass us. Who trust in their virtue, and glory in the abundance of their riches.

8. There are some who rely on their friends, others rely on their virtue, others on their riches. This is the presumption of mankind which relieth not

on God. He hath spoken of virtue, he hath spoken of riches, he speaketh of friends. (Ver. 7.) Brother redeemeth not, shall man redeem? Dost thou expect that man shall redeem thee from the wrath to come? If brother redeem thee not, shall man redeem thee? Who is the brother, who if He hath not redeemed thee, no man will redeem? It is He who said after His resurrection, Go, tell My brethren. Our Brother He hath willed to be: and when we say to God, Our Father, this is manifested in us. For he that saith to God, Our Father; saith to Christ, Brother. Therefore let him that hath God for his Father and Christ for his Brother, not fear in the evil day. For the iniquity of his heel shall not compass him; for he relieth not on his virtue, nor glorieth in the abundance of his riches, nor vaunteth himself of his powerful friends. Let him rely on Him who died for him, that he might not die eternally: Who for his sake was humbled, in order that he might be exalted; Who sought him ungodly, in order that He might be sought by him faithful. Therefore if He redeem not, shall man redeem? Shall any man redeem, if the Son of man redeem not? If Christ redeem not, shall Adam redeem? Brother redeemeth not, shall man redeem?

9. He shall not give to God his propitiation, and the price of the redemption of his soul. He trusteth in his virtue, and in the abundance of his riches doth glory, who shall not give to God his propitiation: that is, satisfaction whereby he may prevail with God for his sins: nor the price of the redemption of his soul, who relieth on his virtue, and on his friends, and on his riches. But who are they that give the price of the redemption of their souls? They to whom the Lord saith, Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. They give the price of the redemption of their soul who cease not to do almsdeeds. So those whom the Apostle chargeth by Timothy he would not have to be proud, lest they should glory in the abundance of their riches. Lastly, what they possessed he would not have to grow old in their hands: but that something should be made of it to be for the price of the redemption of their souls. For he saith, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded: nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. And as if they had said, What shall we then make of our riches? he continueth, Let them be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, and they

will not lose that. How know we? Hear what followeth. Let them lay up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life. So shall they give the price of the redemption of their soul. And our Lord counselleth this: Make for yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where thief approacheth not, neither moth corrupteth. God would not have thee lose thy wealth, but He hath given thee counsel to change the place thereof. Let your love understand. Suppose thy friend were just now to enter thy house, and find thou hadst placed thy store of grain in a damp place, and he knew the natural proneness of grain to decay, which thou perchance knewest not, he would give thee counsel of this sort, saying, ‘Brother, thou art losing what with great toil thou hast gathered, thou hast placed it in a damp place, in a few days this grain will decay.’ ‘And what am I to do, brother?’ ‘Raise it into a higher place.’ Thou wouldest hearken to thy friend suggesting that thou shouldest raise grain from a lower to a higher chamber, and dost thou not hearken to Christ charging thee to lift thy treasure from earth to heaven, where not what thou keepest in store may be paid to thee, but that thou mayest keep in store earth, mayest receive heaven, mayest keep in store things mortal, mayest receive things everlasting, that while thou lendest Christ to receive at thy hands but a small loan upon earth, He may repay thee a great recompense in Heaven? Nevertheless, they whom the iniquity of their heel shall compass, because they trust in their virtue, and in the abundance of their riches do glory, and rely on human friends who are able to help them in nothing, shall not give to God their propitiation, and the price of the redemption of their souls.

10. And what hath he said of such a man? (Ver. 9.) Yea, he hath laboured for ever, and shall live till the end. His labour shall be without end, his life shall have an end. Wherefore saith he, He shall live till the end? Because such men think life to be nought but daily enjoyments. So when many poor and needy men of our times, unstable, and not looking to what God doth promise them for their labours, see rich men in daily feastings, in the splendour and glitter of gold and of silver, they say what? ‘These are the only people; they really live!’ This is a saying, be it said no longer: we both warn you, and it remains to warn you, that it be said by fewer persons than it would be said, if we had not warned you. For we do not presume to say

that we so say these words, as that it be not said, but that it be said by fewer persons: for it will be said even unto the end of the world. It is too little that he saith, he liveth; he addeth and saith, he thundereth, thinkest thou that he alone liveth? Let him live! his life will be ended: because he giveth not the price of the redemption of his soul, his life will end, his labour will not end. He laboured for ever, and shall live till the end. How shall he live till the end? As he lived that was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, who, being proud and puffed up, spurned the man full of sores lying before his gate, whose sores the dogs licked, and who longed for the crumbs which fell from his table. What did those riches profit him? Both changed places: the one was borne from the rich man's gate into Abraham's bosom, the other from his rich feasts was cast into the fire: the one was in peace, the other burned: the one was sated, the other thirsted: the one had laboured till the end, but he lived for ever: the other had lived till the end, but he laboured for ever. And what did it profit the rich man, who asked, while lying in torments in hell, that a drop of water should be poured upon his tongue from the finger of Lazarus, saying, For I am burning here in this flame, and it was not granted to him? One longed for the drop from the finger, as the other had for the crumbs from the rich man's table; but the labour of the one is ended, and the life of the other is ended: the labour of this is for ever, the life of that is for ever. We who labour perchance here on the earth, have not our life here: and shall not be so placed hereafter, for our life shall be Christ for ever: while they who will have their life here, shall labour for ever and live till the end.

Ver. 9, 10. For he shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying. The man who laboured for ever and shall live till the end, shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying. What is this? He shall not comprehend what death is, whenever he shall have seen wise men dying. For he saith to himself, 'this fellow, for all he was wise and dwelled with wisdom and worshipped God with piety, is he not dead? Therefore I will enjoy myself while I live; for if they that are wise in other respects, could do any thing, they would not have died.' Just as the Jews saw Christ hanging on the Cross and despised Him, saying, 'If this Man were the Son of God, He would come down from the Cross:' not seeing what death is. If they had seen what death is; if they had seen, I say. He died for a time, that

He might live again for ever: they lived for a time, that they might die for ever. But because they saw Him dying, they saw not death, that is to say, they understood not what was very death. What say they even in Wisdom? Let us condemn Him with a most shameful death, for by His own sayings He shall be respected; for if he is indeed the Son of God, He will deliver Him from the hands of His adversaries: He will not suffer His Son to die, if He is truly His Son. But when they saw themselves insulting Him upon the Cross, and Him not descending from the Cross, they said, He was indeed but a Man. Thus was it spoken: and surely He could have come down from the Cross, He that could rise again from the tomb: but He taught us to bear with those who insult us; He taught us to be patient of the tongues of men, to drink now the cup of bitterness, and afterwards to receive everlasting salvation. Being sick, drink a bitter draught, in order that thou mayest be whole, whose vitals are not sound: shrink not, for that thou mightest not shrink, thy Physician did drink before thee; that is, the Lord did drink before thee the bitterness of the Passion. He did drink Who had no sin, He Who had not any thing in Him to be cured. Drink thou until there pass away the bitterness of this world, and there come a world where is no offence, no wrath, no wasting, no bitterness, no fever, no guile, not any enmities, no old age, no death, no contention. Labour thou here, being to come to the end of thy labours; labour thou, lest, whilst thou wilt not labour here, thou come to the end of thy life, and never come to the end of thy labours. For he shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying.

12. The imprudent and unwise shall perish together. Who is the imprudent? He that looketh not out for himself for the future. Who is the unwise? He that perceiveth not in what evil case he is. But do thou perceive in what evil case thou art now, and look out that thou be in a good case for the future. By perceiving in what evil case thou art, thou wilt not be unwise: by looking out for thyself for the future, thou wilt not be imprudent. Who is he that looketh out for himself? That servant to whom his master gave what he should expend, and afterwards said to him, Thou canst not be my steward, give an account of thy stewardship; and who answered, What shall I do? I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed; had, nevertheless, by even his master's goods made to himself friends, who might receive him when he was put out of his stewardship. Now he cheated his master in order that he might get to

himself friends to receive him: fear not thou lest thou be cheating, the Lord Himself exhorteth thee to do so: He saith Himself to thee, Make to thyself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Perhaps what thou hast got, thou hast gotten of unrighteousness: or perhaps this very thing is unrighteousness, that thou hast and another hath not, thou aboundest and another needeth. Of this mammon of unrighteousness, of these riches which the unrighteous call riches, make to thyself friends, and thou shalt be prudent: thou art gaining for thyself, and art not cheating. For now thou seemest to lose it. Wilt thou lose it if thou place it in a treasury? For boys, my brethren, no sooner find some money, wherewith to buy something, than they put it in a money-box, which they open not until afterwards: do they, because they see not what they have got, on that account lose it? Fear not: boys put in a money-box, and are secure: dost thou place it in the hand of Christ, and fear? Be prudent, and provide for thyself against the future in Heaven. Be therefore prudent, copy the ant, as saith the Scripture; ‘Store in summer, lest thou hunger in winter:’ the winter is the last day, the day of tribulation; the winter is the day of offences and of bitterness: gather what may be there for thee for the future: but if thou doest not so, thou wilt perish both imprudent and unwise.

13. But that rich man too died, and a like funeral was made for him. See to what men have brought themselves: they regard not what a wicked life he led while he lived, but what pomp followed him when he died! O happy he, whom so many lament! But the other lived in such sort, that few lament. For all ought to lament a man living so sadly. But there is the funeral train; he is received in a costly tomb, he is wound in costly robes, he is buried in perfumes and spices. Secondly, what a monument he hath! How marbled! Doth he live in that same monument? He is therein dead. Men deeming these to be good things, have strayed from God, and have not sought the true good things, and have been deceived with the false. To this end see what followeth. He who gave not the price of the redemption of his soul, who understood not death, because he saw wise men dying, he became imprudent and unwise, in order that he might die with them. And how shall they perish, who shall leave their riches to aliens? Together the imprudent and unwise man shall perish.

14. Hearken brethren: And they shall leave their riches to aliens. As if he had included them in a curse, so that when they shall have died, aliens shall possess their goods. Therefore happy they who leave their sons in their inheritance, to whom they that are their own succeed. He had sons, he is not dead. What of his sons? They also keep what their parents have left them: to keep is too little, they increase it also. For whom do they in turn keep it? For their sons, and they for their sons, and the third generation for their sons. What for Christ? What for his soul? All for his children? Among their sons which they have on earth let them reckon one Brother whom they have in heaven; to Whom they ought to give all, let them but share it with Him. But, nevertheless, some one saith to me, "See those whom the Scripture hath spoken of as accursed, who it hath said perish and leave their riches to aliens; but that man is blessed who leaveth to his own sons." I examine this sense, because 'I incline mine ear to a parable:' and I see that Scripture speaketh not thus to no purpose. For I see many ungodly men die, whose successors are their sons; nor could Scripture have so spoken as to sever those men from misery of whose life it disapproveth; and what do ye think, brethren, I understand by it, but that all such men do leave their riches to aliens? How are their sons aliens? The sons of the ungodly are aliens: for we see a certain foreigner that became a neighbour, because he did good. If any of thy friends doth thee no good, he is a stranger. Where do we find a certain foreigner that became a neighbour because he did good? In the Gospel. A certain man lay wounded by robbers, for the Lord had said to a certain man, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. And he had answered, And who is my neighbour? And the Lord proceeded. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who wounded him, and left him half dead in the road: his neighbours passed by: for he was a Jew, he was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho: a priest went by, and passed over on the other side, a Levite went by, and he also passed over on the other side; a certain Samaritan went by, (a Samaritan was a foreigner,) he came to him, he beheld his misery, and of pity healed his wounds; he set him on his beast, and led him to an inn, he commended him to the host." Which things are spoken in a mystery, and seem too perplexed to unravel on the present occasion: yet for the sake of what I have proposed, my brethren, The Lord saith, "Who is neighbour to that wounded man?" He answered, "I suppose, he that wrought a work of mercy upon

him.” “Go,” He saith, “and do thou likewise.” He upon whom thou shewest mercy is thy neighbour. If then a foreign Samaritan by shewing mercy and by relieving became neighbour; whatsoever persons will not relieve thee in tribulation, have become aliens to thee. Moreover, let us observe, those rich men, who have lived ill, who have done proudly, are dead, and have left their riches, I say not to strangers, but to their sons, and the sons follow the way of their parents: and as those were proud, so these; as those were grasping, so these too; as those were covetous, so these; they are aliens to them. For that ye may know how they are strangers, else let them have succoured that rich man who was burning in the flame, being heirs of his wealth. But perhaps he had not any to succeed him, and aliens possessed his riches? We find in the very Gospel that he had: for he saith, I have five brethren. His own brethren could not succour him burning in the flame. What would the rich man say to thee? I have five brethren: one brother I have not made my friend who lay before my gate: those brethren cannot help me; those who possess my riches are become aliens to me. Ye see how that all that live ill, leave their riches to aliens.

15. But do those same aliens indeed serve them who are called their own? Hear in what they serve them, observe how they are ridiculed: Together the imprudent and unwise shall perish; and shall leave their riches, why hath he said, to strangers? Because they can do them no good. Nevertheless, wherein do they seem to themselves to do good? (Ver. 11.) And their tombs shall be their house for ever. Now because these tombs are erected, the tombs are a house. For often thou hearest a rich man saying, I have a house of marble which I must quit, and I think not for myself of an eternal house, where I shall alway be. When he thinketh to make for himself a monument of marble or of sculpture, he is deeming as it were of an eternal house: as if therein this rich man would abide! If he would abide there, he would not burn in hell. We must consider that the place where the spirit of an evil doer abideth, is not where the mortal body is laid: but their tombs shall be their house for ever. Their dwelling places are from generation to generation. ‘Dwelling places’ are wherein they abode for a season: ‘house’ is wherein they will abide as it were for ever, that is to say, their tombs. Thus they leave their dwelling places, where they abode while they lived, to their families, and they pass as it were to everlasting houses, to their tombs.

What profit to them are their dwelling places, from generation to generation? Now suppose a generation and generation are sons, grandsons there will be, and great grandsons; what do their dwelling places, what do they profit them? What? Hear: they shall invoke their names in their lands. What is this? They shall take bread and wine to their tombs, and there they shall invoke the names of the dead. Dost thou consider how loudly was invoked the name of the rich man after his death, when men drank them drunk at his monument, and there came down not one drop upon his own burning tongue? Men minister to their own belly, not to the ghosts of their friends. The souls of the dead nothing doth reach, but what they have done of themselves while alive: but if they have done nought of themselves while alive, nothing doth reach them dead. But what do the survivors? They will but invoke their names in their lands.

16. Ver. 12. And man though he was in honour perceived not, he was compared to the beasts without sense, and was made like to them. This is just as men were derided, who perceived not what they ought to do with their riches while they lived, and thought they would be blessed, if they should have a marble monument for an everlasting house, and if their relations to whom they had left their substance should invoke their names in their own lands. They ought, on the contrary, to have made ready for themselves an eternal house in good works, to have made ready for themselves everlasting life, to have sent before them expenditure, to have followed their works, to have ministered to a needy companion, to have given to him with whom they were walking, not to have despised Christ covered with sores before their gate, Who hath said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. However, 'man being in honour hath not understood.' What is, being in honour? Being made after the image and likeness of God, man is preferred to beasts. For God hath not so made man as He made a beast: but God hath made man for beasts to minister to: is it to his strength then, and not to his understanding? Nay. But he understood not: and he who was made after the image of God, is compared to the beasts without sense, and is made like unto them. Whence it is said elsewhere, Be ye not like to horse and mule, in which there is no understanding.

17. Ver. 13. This their own way is an offence to them. Be it an offence to them, not to thee. But when will it be so to thee too? If thou thinkest such men to be blessed. If thou perceivest that they be not blessed, their own way will be an offence to themselves; not to Christ, not to His Body, not to His members. And afterwards they shall bless with their mouth. What meaneth, Afterwards they shall bless with their mouth? Though they have become such, that they seek nothing but temporal goods, yet they become hypocrites: and when they bless God, with lips they bless, and not with heart. Christians like these, when to them eternal life is commended, and they are told, that in the name of Christ they ought to be despisers of riches, do make grimaces in their hearts: and if they dare not do it with open face, lest they blush, or lest they should be rebuked by men, yet they do it in heart, and scorn; and there remaineth in their mouth blessing, and in their heart cursing. And afterwards they shall bless with their mouths. It were too long a task to finish the Psalm: meanwhile, let what ye have heard to-day suffice for your Love, to-morrow ye shall hear whatever shall please the Lord.

SERMON II

On the second part of the Psalm.

1. Yesterday, though the Psalm was commenced, the end thereof remained due, as your Love remembereth. But we had come to that verse, where the Spirit of God marketh men who mind not ought but present things of this world and earth, and for the world to come after this life think of nought, and conceive that there is no happiness but in the riches and honours of this world, and in transitory power; but after their death mind nothing but how stately funerals may be obtained for them, and how they may be buried in monuments raised with wondrous skill, and their names may be invoked in their own lands from their own houses: while they make no provision to themselves for the place where their spirit shall be after this life; they fools not dreading the voice of Christ, Who saith, Fool, this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast prepared? and not regarding the rich man condemned to torments in hell after magnificent daily feastings, and purple and fine linen; nor the poor man reposing in Abraham's bosom after labours and sores and hunger: for

such things they not caring, but minding that which is present, and not looking forward for any thing beyond this life, but how their name, which is abhorred in heaven, may be invoked upon earth; the holy Scripture, therefore, describing such men, saith, (ver. 13.) This their own way is a stumbling-block to themselves, and hereafter they shall bless with their mouth. As saith the Lord Jesus of certain who at first come to the faith purified by the word of God, and by exorcisms in the name of Christ, in order that they may receive the Grace of God, that they may be baptized, and afterwards go back to worse evil deeds than they had committed before, The latter things, He saith, shall be made worse for them than the former: this the Apostle Peter: but the Lord, And the last things, He saith, of that man shall be worse than the former. Wherefore? Because at first he was even an open heathen, afterwards he is cloaked with the Christian name, under the garb of religion he is a concealed evil doer. And he shall be worse, because he is concealed, as he saith, And afterwards shall they bless with their mouth: that is, thou hearest the name of God and the name of Christ on their lips, in their heart thou findest it not. Concerning whom is said, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. As far as this the Psalm had been treated of.

2. In the next place thus commence the verses which are to be examined and treated of to-day: (ver. 14.) Like sheep laid in hell, death is their shepherd. Whose? Of those whose way is a stumblingblock to themselves. Whose? Of those who mind only things present, while they think not of things future: of those who think not of any life, but of that which must be called death. Not without cause, then, like sheep in hell, have they death to their shepherd. What meaneth, 'they have death to their shepherd?' For is death either some thing or some power? Yea, death is either the separation of the soul from the body, or a separation of the soul from God, and that indeed which men fear is the separation of the soul from the body: but the real death, which men do not fear, is the separation of the soul from God. And oftentimes when men fear that which doth separate the soul from the body, they fall into that wherein the soul is separated from God. This then is death. But how is death their shepherd? If Christ is life, the devil is death. But we read in many places in Scripture, how that Christ is life. But the devil is death, not because he is himself death, but because through him is

death. For whether that (death) wherein Adam fell was given man to drink by the persuasion of him: or whether that wherein the soul is separated from the body, still they have him for the author thereof, who first falling through pride envied him who stood, and overthrew him who stood with an invisible death, in order that he might have to pay the visible death. They who belong to him have death to their shepherd: but we who think of future immortality, and not without reason do wear the sign of the Cross of Christ on the forehead, have no shepherd but life. Of unbelievers death is the shepherd, of believers life is the shepherd. If then in hell are the sheep, whose shepherd is death, in heaven are the sheep, whose shepherd is life. What then? Are we now in heaven? In heaven we are by faith. For if not in heaven, where is the Lift up your heart? If not in heaven, whence with the Apostle Paul, For our conversation is in heaven? In body we walk on earth, in heart we dwell in heaven. We dwell there, if thither we send any thing which holdeth us there. For no one dwelleth in heart, save where thought is: but there his thought is, where his treasure is. He hath treasured on earth, his heart doth not withdraw from earth: he hath treasured in heaven, his heart from heaven doth not come down: for the Lord saith plainly, Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.

3. They then, whose shepherd is death, seem to flourish for a time, and the righteous to labour: but why? Because it is yet night. What meaneth, it is night? The merits of the righteous appear not, and the felicity of the unrighteous hath, as it were, a name. So long as it is winter, grass appeareth more verdant than a tree. For grass flourisheth through the winter, a tree is as it were dry through the winter: when in summer time the sun hath come forth with greater heat, the tree, which seemed dry through the winter, is bursting with leaves, and putteth forth fruits, but the grass withereth: thou wilt see the honour of the tree, the grass is dried. So also now the righteous labour, before that summer cometh. There is life in the root, it doth not yet appear in the branches. But our root is love. And what saith the Apostle? That we ought to have our root above, in order that life may be our shepherd, because our dwelling ought not to quit heaven, because in this earth we ought to walk as if dead; so that living above, below we may be dead; not so as that being dead above, we may live below. In as much then as our life and heart ought not to depart from above, what saith the Apostle?

For ye are dead. And in order that thou mayest not fear, Your life is hidden, he saith, with Christ in God. Behold where our root is! But when our honour shall appear, as it were in leaves and fruits, he continueth, and saith, When Christ, your life, shall have appeared, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory; and it shall be morning. For now it is not morning. Let the proud and rich of this world be puffed up now, let the ungodly tread down the good, unbelievers believers, and let them say, What doth it profit you that ye have believed? what more have ye because ye have Christ? Let believers answer, if they are indeed believers, It is night, that which we hold doth not yet appear. Let not the hands be idle in good works. Whence it is elsewhere said, In the day of my trouble I sought God with my hands in the night season before Him, and I was not deceived. Our labour shall appear in the morning, and there shall be fruit in the morning: so that they that now labour shall hereafter reign, and they that now boast them and are proud, shall hereafter be brought under. For what followeth? Like sheep laid in hell, death is their shepherd; and the righteous shall reign over them in the morning.

4. I suppose that now this verse is clear, because we have before said, The righteous shall reign over them in the morning. Endure thou the night, yearn for the morning. Think not because the night hath life, the morning too hath not life. Doth then he that sleepeth live, and he that riseth live not? Is not he that sleepeth more like death? And who are they that sleep? They whom the Apostle Paul rouseth, if they choose but to awake. For to certain he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. They then that are lightened by Christ watch now, but the fruit of their watchings appeareth not yet: in the morning it shall appear, that is, when doubtful things of this world shall have passed away. For these are very night: for do they not appear to thee like darkness? One doth ill, he liveth, flourisheth; terrifieth, is honoured: one doth well, he is blamed, blasphemed, accused, laboureth, is terrified: these things are as if it were darkness. But in the root is vigour, fruit, opulence: life is not yet in the branches, but the root hath not withered: it is like to one withering, but the time cometh, it is clad with its honour, it is enriched with its fruits. Then they of whom it is said that we should not envy them—for the Psalm saith of them, what? For they shall soon wither like the grass, and like the herbs

of the field they shall quickly fall—shall fall, I say, when they shall see on the right hand the saints, upon whom while labouring men trample, and shall speak among themselves, doing penance, but a penance too late and without fruit. They that would not now do one with fruit, shall then do one without fruit. What then shall they say, when being in penance without fruit? These are they whom we had sometime in derision, and for a similitude of reproach. I say the words of the Book of Wisdom: they know them who are wont to hear them. For they are the future words of evil-doers, when they shall see the Judge, and all the faithful now at His right hand, and all His Saints with Him judging; this they have to say, (the Scripture saith their own words,) These are they whom we had sometime in derision, and for a similitude of reproach, we fools accounted their life madness. For when a man shall have begun to live to God, to contemn the world, not to choose to avenge his own wrongs, not to choose riches here, to contemn all things, to think of the Lord alone, not to forsake the way of Christ, not only by the heathen is it said, ‘He is mad;’ but, what is more to be lamented, (because even within many are sleeping, and will not awake,) men hear from their own people, from Christians, ‘What is come to thee?’ My brethren, he who saith to a man living according to the way of Christ, ‘What is come to thee?’ do we think what he saith? We shudder at the Jews, because they said to our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast a devil: and whenever we hear the Gospel being read, we beat our breasts. A wicked thing said the Jews to Christ, Thou hast a devil: come now Christian, when thou hast seen the devil banished from the heart of a Christian and Christ indwelling, and thou sayest, ‘What is come to thee?’ doth he seem to thee to have a devil? It was said even of the Lord Himself, that He was mad, when He spake words, which they would not receive: it was said, He is mad, He hath a devil; and yet some awaked from sleep and said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. So now also, brethren, so long as both the nations hear these words, and they that dwell in the world, and earthborn, and sons of men, and rich and poor, that is, both they that pertain to Adam and they that pertain to Christ, some say, he hath a devil, others say, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. For some hold the world’s way, and hear these words for a time: others hear not in vain, but do what is said, Ponder with your ears, ye that dwell in the world. And while they are doing these things, the fruit is uncertain. But they that do ill and choose the world’s

way, of them death is the shepherd: but they that choose God's way, of them life is the shepherd. Life Itself shall come to judge, and to condemn with their shepherd those to whom shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. But they on whom men have trampled, and who were ridiculed for believing, shall hear from Life Itself, Whom they have for shepherd, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Therefore the righteous shall reign over them, not now, but in the morning. Let no one say, Wherefore am I a Christian? I rule no one, I would rule the wicked. Be not in haste, thou shalt reign, but in the morning. And the help of them shall grow old in hell from their glory. Now they have glory, in hell they shall grow old. What is the help of them? Help from money, help from friends, help from their own might. But when a man shall be dead, in that day shall perish all his thoughts. How great glory he seemed to have among men, while he lived, so great oldness and decay of punishments shall he have, when he shall be dead in hell.

5. Ver. 15. Nevertheless, God shall redeem my soul. Behold the voice of one hoping in the future: Nevertheless, God shall redeem my soul. Perhaps it is the voice of one still wishing to be relieved from oppression. Some one is in prison, he saith, God shall redeem my soul: some one is in bond, God shall redeem my soul: some one is suffering peril by sea, is being tossed by waves and raging tempests, what saith he? God shall redeem my soul. They would be delivered for the sake of this life. Not such is the voice of this man. Hear what followeth: God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He shall have received me. He is speaking of this redemption, which Christ now sheweth in Himself. For He hath descended into hell, and hath ascended into heaven. What we have seen in the Head we have found in the Body. For what we have believed in the Head, they that have seen, have themselves told us, and by themselves we have seen; For we are all one body. But are they better that hear, we worse to whom it hath been told? Not so saith The Life Itself, Our Shepherd Himself. For He rebuketh a certain disciple of His, doubting and desiring to handle His scars, and when he had handled the scars and had cried out, saying, My Lord and my God, seeing His disciple doubting, and looking to the whole world about to believe, 'Because thou hast seen Me,' He saith, 'thou hast believed: blessed are they

that see not, and believe.’ But God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He hath received me. Here then what? Labour, oppression, tribulation, temptation: expect nothing else. Where joy? In future hope. For the Apostle saith, Always rejoicing. In so great tribulations, Always rejoicing, always sorrowful: always rejoicing, for he said himself, As if sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Our sorrow hath an as if: our joy hath not an as if: because it is in sure hope. Wherefore hath our sorrow an as if? Because like as sleep it shall pass away, and the righteous shall reign in the morning. For your Love knoweth, how that he that intimateth sleep, doth add an as if: as if I were sitting, as if I were speaking, as if I were dining, as if I were disputing. The whole is, as if: for when he hath awaked, he findeth not that which he did see. As if I had found a treasure, saith the beggar. If there were not an as if, he would not be a beggar: but because there was as if, he is a beggar. So now they that open their eyes to worldly pleasures, and close their heart, of them the as if passeth away, and their own reality cometh. As if is their happiness of the world, their reality is punishment. But our as if is sorrow; our joy is not as if. For the Apostle doth not say, As if rejoicing, but always sorrowful: or, As if sorrowful, and as if rejoicing: but he saith, As if sorrowful, but always rejoicing. As poor: (and there as he hath put for as if:) yet making many rich. And when the Apostle said this, he had nothing: he had given up his all, he possessed not any riches. And he saith in continuation, what? As if having nothing: and this same ‘having nothing’ of the Apostle was ‘as if.’ And possessing all things: there he hath not said as if. ‘As if’ he was poor; but not as if, but really, he enriched many. As if he had nothing: but not as if, but truly, he possessed all things. Whence did he truly possess all things? Because he clave to the Maker of all things. Nevertheless, he saith, God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He hath received me.

6. What then of them that here will flourish? Thou wilt see an evil man flourishing, and perchance thy feet will stumble, and thou wilt say in thy heart, I know the doings of this man, what sins this man hath committed, and see, he is flourishing, doth terrify, doth rule, his head is lifted up, he suffereth no pain, nothing in his house doth suffer diminution: and thou wilt fear, because thou hast believed, and perchance thy heart saith, Wretch that I am, I suppose to no purpose I have believed, God doth not regard things

human. God therefore doth awaken us: and He saith what? (ver. 16.) Fear not, though a man have become rich. For why didst thou fear, because a man hath become rich? Thou didst fear that thou hadst believed to no purpose, that perchance thou shouldest have lost the labour for thy faith, and the hope of thy conversion: because perchance there hath come in thy way gain with guilt, and thou couldest have been rich, if thou hadst seized upon that same gain with the guilt, and neededst not have laboured; and thou, remembering what God hath threatened, hast refrained from guilt, and hast contemned the gain: thou seest another man that hath made gain by guilt, and hath suffered no harm; and thou fearest to be good. Fear not, saith the Spirit of God to thee, though a man shall have become rich. Wouldest thou not have eyes but for things present? Things future He hath promised, Who hath risen again; peace in this world, and repose in this life, He hath not promised. Every man doth seek repose; a good thing he is seeking, but not in the proper region thereof he is seeking it. There is no peace in this life; in Heaven hath been promised that which on earth we are seeking: in the world to come hath been promised that which in this world we are seeking.

7. Ver. 16. Fear not, though a man be made rich, and though the glory of his house be multiplied. Wherefore fear not? For when he shall die, he shall not receive any thing. Thou seest him living, consider him dying. Thou markest what he hath here, mark what he taketh with him. What doth he take with him? He hath store of gold, he hath store of silver, numerous estates, slaves: he dieth, these remain, he knoweth not for whom. For though he leaveth them for whom he will, he keepeth them not for whom he will. For many have gained even what was not left them, and many have lost what was left them. All these things then remain, and he taketh with him what? Perhaps some one saith, He taketh that with him in which he is wound, and that which is expended upon him for a costly and marble tomb, to erect a monument, this he taketh with him. I say, not even this. For these things are presented to him without his feeling them. If thou deckest a man sleeping and not awake, he hath the decorations with him on the couch: perhaps the decorations are resting upon the body of him as he lieth, and perhaps he seeth himself in tatters during sleep. What he feeleth is more to him than what he feeleth not. Though even this when he shall have awaked will not

be: yet to him sleeping that which he saw in sleep was more than that which he felt not. Why then, brethren, should men say to themselves, Let money be spent at my death: why do I leave my heirs rich? Many things will they have of mine, let me too have something of my own for my body. What shall a dead body have? what shall rotting flesh have? what shall flesh not feeling have? If that rich man had any thing, whose tongue was dry, then man hath something of his own. My brethren, do we read in the Gospel, that this rich man appeared in the fire with allsilken and fine-linen coverings? Was he of such sort in hell as he was in feastings at table? When he thirsted and desired a drop, all those things were not there. Therefore man carrieth not with him any thing, nor doth the dead take with him that which the burial taketh. For where feeling is, there is the man; where is no feeling, the man is not. There lieth fallen the vessel which contained the man, the house which held the man. The body let us call the house, the spirit let us call the inhabitant of the house. The spirit is tormented in hell: what doth it profit him, that the body lieth in spices and perfumes, wound in costly linens? just as if the master of the house should be sent into banishment, and thou shouldest garnish the walls of his house. He in banishment is in need, and doth faint with hunger, he scarce findeth to himself one hovel where he may snatch a sleep, and thou sayest, "Happy is he, for his house hath been garnished." Who would not judge that thou wast either jesting or wast mad? Thou dost garnish the body, the spirit is tormented. Give something to the spirit, and ye have given something to the dead man. But what wilt thou give him, when he desired one drop, and received not? For the man scorned to send before him any thing. Wherefore scorned? Because this their way is a stumbling-block to them. He minded not any but the present life, he thought not but how he might be buried, wound in costly vestments. His soul was taken from him, as the Lord saith: Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? And that is fulfilled which this Psalm saith; Fear not, though a man be made rich, and though the glory of his house be multiplied: for when he shall die he shall not receive anything, nor shall his glory descend together with him.

8. Ver. 17. For his soul shall be blessed in his life. Let your love observe; For his soul shall be blessed in his life. As long as he lived he did well for

himself. This all men say, but say falsely. It is a blessing from the mind of the blesser, not from the truth itself. For what sayest thou? Because he ate and drank, because he did what he chose, because he feasted sumptuously, therefore he did well with himself. I say, he did ill for himself. Not I say, but Christ. He did ill for himself. For that rich man, when he feasted sumptuously every day, was supposed to do well with himself: but when he began to burn in hell, then that which was supposed to be well was found to be ill. For what he had eaten with men above, he digested in hell beneath. Unrighteousness I mean, brethren, on which he used to feast. He used to eat costly banquets with the mouth of flesh, with his heart's mouth he used to eat unrighteousness. What he ate with his heart's mouth with men above, this he digested amid those punishments in the places beneath. And verily he had eaten for a time, he digested ill for everlasting. Is then unrighteousness eaten? perhaps some one saith: what is it that he saith? Unrighteousness eaten? It is not I that say: hear the Scripture: As a sour grape is vexation to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is unrighteousness to them that use it. For he that shall have eaten unrighteousness, that is, he that shall have had unrighteousness wilfully, shall not be able to eat righteousness. For righteousness is bread. Who is bread? I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Himself is the bread of our heart. For just as he that eateth with the mouth of the body sour grapes, hath his teeth set on edge and blunted, and he becometh less suited to eat bread, and it remaineth to him to praise what he seeth and not be able to eat it; so also he that hath practised unrighteousness and fed upon sins in his heart, beginneth not to be able to eat bread, he praiseth the word of God, and doeth not. Whence doeth he not? Because when he beginneth to do, he laboureth; just as we see the teeth labour after sour grapes, when we begin to eat bread. But what do they whose teeth are blunted? They refrain for a space from sour grapes, and their teeth return to their soundness, and they fall to bread. So we also praise righteousness: but if we will eat righteousness, let us refrain from iniquities: and there ariseth in the heart, not only a zest to praise righteousness, but also a readiness to eat it. For if the Christian saith, 'God knoweth that it delighteth me, but I cannot do it:' he hath loosened teeth, he hath long eaten unrighteousness. Is then even righteousness eaten? If it were not eaten, the Lord would not have said, Blessed are they which

do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Therefore since his soul shall be blessed in life, in life it shall be blessed, in death it shall be tormented.

9. Ver. 18. He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good. Attend ye, and be fed, let it sink in your hearts; eat, see such men, and be not such: beware of such words. He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good. How many Christians there be, brethren, who then give thanks to God, when gain cometh to them! That is, He shall confess Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good: he shall praise Thee and say, 'Truly Thou art my God:' 'He hath loosed me from prison, I will confess to Him.' Gain cometh to him, he confesseth; inheritance cometh, he confesseth: he suffereth loss, he blasphemeth. What sort of son art thou, whom when thy Father is correcting, He is displeasing to thee? Would He correct thee, unless thou wast displeasing? or if thou didst so much displease as that He hated thee, would He choose to correct? Give thanks then to the Corrector, in order that thou mayest receive an inheritance from God, Who correcteth thee. For thou art being instructed, when thou art being corrected. 'But He correcteth much.' Yes, for great is that which thou hast to receive. For if thou weighest the correction together with that which thou art to receive, thou wilt find that the correction is nothing. The Apostle Paul saith this: For the lightness of our tribulation, which is temporal for the present, according to an incredible manner, worketh for us an eternal weight of glory. But when? To us looking, he saith, not to those things which are seen, but to those things which are not seen: not to those things which are temporal, but to those things which are eternal. For those things which are seen are temporal; but those things which are not seen are eternal. And again: The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. What is it then that thou sufferest? But thou art always suffering. I grant it. From the time that thou wast born, through all thy ages until thy old age; until thou shalt die, suppose that thou suffer what Job suffered; what he suffered for a few days let a man suffer from his very infancy: what thou sufferest doth pass away, is ended; what thou wilt receive will have no end. I would not thou shouldest match the punishment with the reward; match time with eternity if thou canst.

10. He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good. Be not of such sort, brethren: see ye how that to this end we say these words, to this end we sing, to this end we treat, to this end toil—do not these things. Your business doth prove you: sometimes in your business ye hear the truth, and ye blaspheme. The Church ye blaspheme. Wherefore? Because ye are Christians. ‘If so it be, I betake myself to Donatus’s party: I will be a heathen.’ Wherefore? Because thou hast eaten bread, and the teeth are in pain. When thou sawest the bread itself, thou didst praise; thou beginnest to eat, and the teeth are in pain; that is, when thou wast hearing the Word of God thou didst praise: when it is said to thee, Do this, thou blasphemest: do not so ill: say this, ‘The bread is good, but I cannot eat it.’ But now if thou seest with the eyes, thou praisest: when thou beginnest to close the teeth, thou sayest, Bad is this bread, and like him that made it. So it cometh to pass that thou confessest to God, when God doeth thee good: and thou liest when thou singest, I will alway bless God, His praise is ever in my mouth. How alway? If alway gain, alway He is blessed: if sometime there is loss, He is not blessed, but blasphemed. Forsooth thou blessest alway, forsooth His praise is ever in thy mouth! Thou wilt be such as just now he describeth: He will confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good.

11. Ver. 19. He shall enter even unto the generations of his fathers: that is, he shall imitate his fathers. For the unrighteous, that now are, have brothers, have fathers. Unrighteous men of old, are the fathers of the present; and they that are now unrighteous, are the fathers of unrighteous posterity: just as the fathers of the righteous, the righteous of old, are the fathers of the righteous that now are; and they that now are, are the fathers of them that are to be. The Holy Spirit hath willed to shew that righteousness is not evil when men murmur against her: but these men have their father from the beginning, even to the generation of their fathers. Two men Adam begat, and in one was unrighteousness, in one was righteousness: unrighteousness in Cain, righteousness in Abel. Unrighteousness seemed to prevail over righteousness, because Cain unrighteous slew Abel righteous in the night. Is it so in the morning? Nay, but the righteous shall reign over them in the morning. The morning shall come, and it shall be seen where Abel is, and where Cain. So all men who are after Cain, and so all who are after Abel, even unto the end of the world. He shall enter even unto the generations of

his fathers: even to eternity he shall not see light. Because even when he was here, he was in darkness, taking pleasure in false goods, and not loving real goods: even so he shall go hence into hell: from the darkness of his dreams the darkness of torments shall receive him. Therefore, even to eternity he shall not see light. But wherefore this? What he hath written in the middle of the Psalm, the same also he hath writ at the end: (Ver. 20.) Man, though he was in honour, understood not, was compared to the beasts without sense, and was made like to them. But ye, brethren, consider that ye be men made after the image and likeness of God. The image of God is within, is not in the body; is not in these ears which ye see, and eyes, and nostrils, and palate, and hands, and feet; but is made nevertheless: wherein is the intellect, wherein is the mind, wherein the power of discovering truth, wherein is faith, wherein is your hope, wherein your charity, there God hath His Image: there at least ye perceive and see that these things pass away; for so he hath said in another Psalm, Though man walketh in an image, yet he is disquieted in vain: he heapeth up treasures, and knoweth not for whom he shall gather them. Be not disquieted, for of whatsoever kind these things be, they are transitory, if ye are men who being in honour understand. For if being men in honour ye understand not, ye are compared to the beasts without sense, and are made like to them.

PSALM 50

Exposition

1. How much availeth the Word of God to us for the correction of our life, both regarding His rewards to be expected, and His punishments to be feared, let each one measure in himself; and let him put his conscience without deceit before His eyes, and not flatter himself in a danger so great: for ye see that even our Lord God Himself doth flatter no one: though He comforteth us by promising His blessings, and by strengthening our hope; yet them that live ill and despise His word he assuredly spareth not. Let each one examine himself, while it is time, and let him see where he is, and either persevere in good, or be changed from evil. For as he saith in this Psalm, not any man whatever nor any angel whatever, but, (ver. 1.) The Lord, the God of gods, hath spoken. But in speaking, He hath done what? He hath called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down. He that ‘hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down,’ is Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh, in order that He might dwell in us. Our Lord Jesus Christ then is the God of gods; because by Himself were all things made, and without Himself was nothing made. The Word of God, if He is God, is truly the God of gods; but whether He be God the Gospel answereth, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And if all things were made by Himself, as He saith in the sequel, then if any were made gods, by Himself were they made. For the one God was not made, and He is Himself alone truly God. But Himself the only God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, is one God.

2. But then who are those gods, or where are they, of whom God is the true God? Another Psalm saith, God hath stood in the synagogue of gods, but in the midst He judgeth gods. As yet we know not whether perchance any gods be congregated in heaven, and in their congregation, for this is ‘in the

synagogue,' God hath stood to judge. See in the same Psalm those to whom he saith, I have said, Ye are gods, and children of the Highest all; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. It is evident then, that He hath called men gods, that are deified of His Grace, not born of His Substance. For He doth justify, who is just through His own self, and not of another; and He doth deify who is God through Himself, not by the partaking of another. But He that justifieth doth Himself deify, in that by justifying He doth make sons of God. For He hath given them power to become the sons of God. If we have been made sons of God, we have also been made gods: but this is the effect of Grace adopting, not of nature generating. For the only Son of God, God, and one God with the Father, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was in the beginning the Word, and the Word with God, the Word God. The rest that are made gods, are made by His own Grace, are not born of His Substance, that they should be the same as He, but that by favour they should come to Him, and be fellow-heirs with Christ. For so great is the love in Him the Heir, that He hath willed to have fellow-heirs. What covetous man would will this, to have fellow-heirs? But even one that is found so to will, will share with them the inheritance, the sharer having less himself, than if he had possessed alone: but the inheritance wherein we are fellow-heirs of Christ, is not lessened by multitude of possessors, nor is it made narrower by the number of fellow-heirs: but is as great for many as it is for few, as great for individuals as for all. See, saith the Apostle, what love God hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and be, the sons of God. And in another place, Dearly beloved, we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We are therefore in hope, not yet in substance. But we know, he saith, that when He shall have appeared, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The Only Son is like Him by birth, we like by seeing. For we are not like in such sort as He, Who is the same as He is by Whom He was begotten: for we are like, not equal: He, because equal, is therefore like. We have heard who are the gods that being made are justified, because they are called the sons of God: and who are the gods that are not Gods, to whom the God of gods is terrible? For another Psalm saith, He is terrible over all gods. And as if thou shouldest enquire, What gods? He saith, For all the gods of the nations are devils. To the gods of the nations, to the devils, terrible: to the gods made by Himself, to sons, lovely. Furthermore, I find

both of them confessing the Majesty of God, both the devils confessed Christ, and the faithful confessed Christ. Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, said Peter. We know who Thou art, Thou art the Son of God, said the devils. A like confession I hear, but like love I find not; nay even here love, there fear. To whom therefore He is lovely, the same are sons; to whom He is terrible, are not sons; to whom He is lovely, the same He hath made gods; those to whom He is terrible He doth prove not to be gods. For these are made gods, those are reputed gods: these Truth maketh gods, those error doth so account.

3. Ver. 1. The God, therefore, of gods, the Lord hath spoken. Hath spoken many ways. By Angels He hath Himself spoken, by Prophets He hath Himself spoken, by His own mouth hath Himself spoken, by His faithful He doth Himself speak, by our lowliness, when we say any thing true, He doth Himself speak. See then, by speaking diversely, many ways, by many vessels, by many instruments, yet He doth Himself sound every where, by touching, moulding, inspiring: see what He hath done. For He hath spoken, and hath called the world. What world? Africa, perhaps! for the sake of those that say, the Church of Christ is the portion of Donatus. Africa indeed alone He hath not called, but even Africa He hath not severed. For He that hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, leaving out no parts that He hath not called, in His calling hath found Africa. Let it rejoice therefore in unity, not pride itself in division. We say well, that the voice of the God of gods hath come even into Africa, hath not stayed in Africa. For He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down. There is no place where may lurk the conspiracies of heretics, they have no place wherein they may hide themselves under the shadow of falsehood; for there is none that can hide himself from the heat thereof. He that hath called the world, hath called even the whole world: He that hath called the world, hath called as much as He hath formed. Why do false christs and false prophets rise up against me? why is it that they strive to ensnare me with captious words, saying, Lo! here is Christ, Lo! He is there! I hear not them that point out portions: the God of gods hath pointed out the whole: He that hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, hath redeemed the whole; but hath condemned them that lay false claim to portions.

4. But we have heard the world called from the rising of the sun unto the going down: whence doth He begin to call, Who hath called? This thing also hear ye: (ver. 2.) Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty. Evidently the Psalm doth agree with the Gospel, which saith, Throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Hear, "Throughout all nations:" He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down. Hear, "Beginning at Jerusalem." Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty. Therefore, He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, agreeth with the words of the Lord, Who saith, It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name throughout all nations. For all nations are from the rising of the sun unto the going down. But that, Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty, that thence beginneth the beauty of His Gospel, that thence He began to be preached, being beautiful in form beyond the sons of men, agreeth with the words of the Lord, Who saith, "Beginning at Jerusalem." New things are in tune with old, old things with new: the two Seraphim say to one another, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. The two Testaments are both in tune, and the two Testaments have one voice: let the voice of the Testaments in tune be heard, not that of pretenders disinherited. This thing then hath the God of gods done, He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, His semblance going before out of Sion. For in that place were His disciples, who received the Holy Ghost sent from heaven on the fiftieth day after His resurrection. Thence the Gospel, thence the preaching, thence the whole world filled, and that in the Grace of Faith.

5. For when the Lord Himself had come, because He came to suffer, He came hidden: and though He was strong in Himself, He appeared in the flesh weak. For He must needs appear in order that He might not be perceived; be despised, in order that He might be slain. There was semblance of glory in divinity, but it lay concealed in flesh. For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. So then He walked hidden among the Jews, among His enemies, doing marvels, suffering ills, until He was hanged on the tree, and the Jews seeing Him hanging both despised Him the more, and before the Cross wagging their heads they said, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the

Cross. Hidden then was the God of gods, and He gave forth words more out of compassion for us than out of His own majesty. For whence, unless assumed from us, were those words. My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? But when hath the Father forsaken the Son, or the Son the Father? Are not Father and Son one God? Whence then, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me, save that in the Flesh of infirmity there was acknowledged the voice of a sinner? For as He took upon Him the likeness of the flesh of sin, why should He not take upon Him the voice of sin? Hidden then was the God of gods, both when He walked among men, and when He hungered, and when He thirsted, and when fatigued He sat, and when with wearied body He slept, and when taken, and when scourged, and when standing before the judge, and when He made answer to him in his pride, Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it had been given thee from above; and while led as a victim 'before His shearer He opened not His mouth,' and while crucified, and while buried, He was always hidden God of gods. What took place after He rose again? The disciples marvelled, and at first believed not, until they touched and handled. But flesh had risen, because flesh had been dead: Divinity which could not die, even still lay hid in the flesh of Him rising. Form could be seen, limbs held, scars handled: the Word by Whom all things were made, who doth see? who doth hold? who doth handle? And yet the Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us. And Thomas, that was holding Man, understood God as he was able. For when he had handled the scars, he cried out, My Lord, and my God. Yet the Lord was shewing that form, and that flesh, which they had seen upon the Cross, which had been laid in the sepulchre. He stayed with them forty days. To the impious Jews He shewed not Himself: He shewed Himself to them that had believed on Him before He was crucified: so that them whom being crucified He had left wavering, by rising again He made strong. In the next place, on the fortieth day charging His Church, that is, 'the world, called from the rising of the sun unto the going down,' (in order that they that will perish in schism might have no excuse,) He ascended into heaven, saying to them, Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, (whence is the semblance of His beauty,) and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the whole earth. For after these words were spoken, a cloud received Him. They were beholding Him Whom they knew: yet they knew in humiliation, not yet in clearness. And when from

them He went into heaven, they were admonished by an angelic voice, saying, Men of Galilee, why stand ye? This Jesus Which ye see go, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen Him going into heaven. He ascended then: they returned rejoicing, and remained in the city, according to His commandment, until they were filled with the Holy Spirit. But what was said to Thomas handling? Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that see not, and believe. We are foretold. That world called from the rising of the sun unto the going down seeth not, and believeth. Hidden then is the God of gods, both to those among whom He walked, and to those by whom He was crucified, and to those before whose eyes He rose, and to us who believe on Him in heaven sitting, Whom we have not seen on earth walking. But even if we were to see, should we not see that which the Jews saw and crucified? It is more, that not seeing we believe Christ to be God, than that they seeing deemed Him only to be man. They in a word by thinking evil slew, we by believing well are made alive.

6. What then, brethren? This God of gods, both then hidden, and now hidden, shall He ever be hidden? Evidently not: hear what followeth: (ver. 3.) God shall come manifest. He that came hidden, shall come manifest. Hidden He came to be judged, manifest He shall come to judge: hidden He came that He might stand before a judge, manifest He shall come that He may be judge even of judges: He shall come manifest, and shall not be silent. But why? Is He now silent? And whence are all the words that we say? whence those precepts? whence those warnings? whence that trumpet of terror? He is not silent, and is silent: is not silent from warning, is silent from avenging: is not silent from precept, is silent from judgment. For He suffereth sinners daily doing evil things, not caring for God, not in their conscience, not in heaven, not in earth: all these things escape Him not, and universally He doth admonish all; and whenever He chastiseth any on earth, it is admonition, not yet condemnation. He is silent then from judgment, He is hidden in heaven, as yet He intercedeth for us: He is long-suffering to sinners, not putting forth His wrath, but awaiting penitence. He saith in another place; I have held my peace, shall I always hold my peace? When then He shall not hold His peace, God shall come manifest. What God? Our God. And the God Himself, Who is our God: for he is not God, who is not our God. For the gods of the nations are devils: the God of Christians is

very God. Himself shall come, but ‘manifest,’ not still to be mocked, not still to be buffeted and scourged: He shall come, but ‘manifest,’ not still to be smitten with a reed upon the head, not still to be crucified, slain, buried: for all these things God being hidden hath willed to suffer. He shall come manifest, and shall not be silent.

7. But that He shall come to judgment, the following words teach. Fire shall go before Him. Do we fear? Be we changed, and we shall not fear. Let chaff fear the fire: what doth it to gold? What thou mayest do is now in thy power, so thou mayest not experience, for want of being corrected, that which is to come even against thy will. For if we might so bring it about, brethren, that the day of judgment should not come; I think that even then it were not for us to live ill. If the fire of the day of judgment were not to come, and over sinners there impended only separation from the face of God, in whatever affluence of delights they might be, not seeing Him by Whom they were created, and separated from that sweetness of His ineffable countenance, in whatever eternity and impunity of sin, they ought to bemoan themselves. But what shall I say, or to whom shall I say? This is a punishment to lovers, not to despisers. They that have begun to feel in any degree the sweetness of wisdom and truth, know what I say, how great a punishment it is to be only separated from the face of God: but they that have not tasted that sweetness, if not yet they yearn for the face of God, let them fear even fire; let punishments terrify those, whom rewards win not. Of no value to thee is what God promiseth, tremble at what He threateneth. The sweetness of His presence shall come; thou art not changed, thou art not awakened, thou sighest not, thou longest not: thou embracest thy sins and the delights of thy flesh, thou art heaping stubble to thyself, the fire will come. Fire shall burn in His presence. This fire will not be like thy hearth-fire, into which nevertheless, if thou art compelled to thrust thy hand, thou wilt do whatsoever he would have thee who doth threaten this alternative. If he say to thee, “write against the life of thy father, write against the lives of thy children, for if thou do not, I thrust thy hand into thy fire:” thou wilt do it in order that thy hand be not burned, in order that thy member be not burned for a time, though it is not to be ever in pain. Thine enemy threateneth then but so light an evil, and thou doest evil; God threateneth eternal evil, and doest thou not good? To do evil not even menaces should

compel thee: from doing good not even menaces should deter thee. But by the menaces of God, by menaces of everlasting fire, thou art dissuaded from evil, invited to good. Wherefore doth it grieve thee, except because thou believest not? Let each one then examine his heart, and see what faith doth hold there. If we believe a judgment to come, brethren, let us live well. Now is time of mercy, then will be time of judgment. No one will say, "Call me back to my former years." Even then men will repent, but will repent in vain: now let there be repentance, while there is fruit of repentance; now let there be applied to the roots of the tree a basket of dung, sorrow of heart, and tears; lest He come and pluck up by the roots. For when He shall have plucked up, then the fire is to be looked for. Now, even if the branches have been broken, they can again be grafted in: then, "every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire." Fire shall burn in His presence.

8. Ver. 3. And a mighty tempest round about Him. A mighty tempest, in order to winnow so great a floor. In this tempest shall be that winnowing whereby from the saints shall be put away every thing impure, from the faithful every unreality; from godly men and them that fear the Word of God, every scorner and every proud man. For now a sort of mixture doth lie there, from the rising of the sun unto the going down. Let us see then how He will do That is to come, what He will do with that tempest which shall be a mighty tempest round about Him. Doubtless this tempest is to make a sort of separation. It is that separation which they waited not for, who brake the nets, before they came to land. But in this separation there is made a sort of distinction between good men and bad men. There be some that now follow Christ with lightened shoulders without the load of the world's cares, who have not heard in vain, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow Me; to which sort is said, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Some then shall be judging with the Lord: but others to be judged, but to be placed on the right hand. For that there will be certain judging with the Lord, we have most evident testimony, which I have but now quoted: Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

9. But some one saith, “The twelve Apostles shall there sit; nothing more.” Where then shall be the Apostle Paul? Shall he be severed thence? Far be it from us to say so, far be it from us even to think so in secret. But what if he shall himself sit in the place of Judas? On the contrary, divine Scripture hath declared who was ordained in place of Judas: for Matthias hath expressly been named in the Acts of the Apostles, so that we cannot doubt of him. Judas falling then, the number twelve was filled up. Since therefore that number twelve hath occupied twelve seats, shall not the Apostle Paul judge? Perhaps he shall judge standing? Not so it is: the Retributor of justice shall not so do: not by any means shall he judge standing, that hath laboured more than they all. Assuredly this one Apostle Paul doth compel us diligently to think and examine, why twelve thrones have been spoken of. For we find other numbers in the Scriptures which signify multitude. Five virgins are admitted, five are excluded. Understand virgins in whatever manner you please, either relating to chastity and integrity of heart, wherein the whole Church ought to be a virgin, whereunto is said, I have espoused you to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin to Christ: or relating to those women that have also integrity of the flesh dedicated to God—amid so many thousands are there but five? But in the number five is to be perceived the continence of the five senses of the flesh. For to many cometh corruption through the eyes, to many through the ear, to many through illicit smelling, to many through sinful tasting, to many through adulterous embraces: from all these five gates of corruption whosoever do contain themselves, and who do so contain themselves that they have glory in their own conscience, not look for praise from men; are the five wise virgins, that have oil with them. What is, that have oil with them? It is our glory, the testimony of our conscience. Again, he that was being tormented in hell saith, I have five brethren. Therein is perceived the people of the Jews, set under the Law: for Moses the lawgiver wrote five books. Again, the Lord after the Resurrection commanded nets to be cast on the right side, there are taken up a hundred and fifty-three fishes, and for all they were so great, saith the Evangelist, the nets were not rent. For before the Passion He had commanded nets to be thrown, adding neither to the right hand, nor to the left: because, if He had said to the right, He had signified only the good; if to the left, only the bad: but when right and left are not mentioned, good and bad are taken promiscuously. But then were taken, as the Evangelist

testifieth, so many, that the nets were breaking. For this time was signified by that taking: the nets broken, signified the cuttings and rendings of heretics and schismatics. But what the Lord did after His resurrection, signified what is to be to us after our resurrection, in that number of the kingdom of heaven, where shall be no bad man. Therefore the nets that were thrown to the right side expressed those on the right hand, those on the left hand having been removed. Nevertheless will there be only one hundred and fifty-three righteous men of those on the right hand? The Scripture doth point to thousands of thousands. Read the Apocalypse: Twelve times twelve thousand there will be perchance, as is there understood, from the people of the Jews alone. Mark the numerousness of the Martyrs: that alone near us which is called the White Mass, doth contain more than one hundred and fifty-three Martyrs. Lastly, those seven thousand of whom reply was made to Elias, I have left me seven thousand men that have not bowed knees before Baal, far exceed that number of fishes. Therefore the hundred and fifty-three fishes doth not alone express just such a number of saints, but Scripture doth express the whole number of saints and righteous men by so great a number for a particular reason; to wit, in order that in those hundred and fifty-three all may be understood that pertain to the resurrection to eternal life. For the Law hath ten commandments: but the Spirit of Grace, through which alone the Law is fulfilled, is called sevenfold. The number then must be examined, what mean ten and seven: ten in commandments, seven in the grace of the Holy Spirit: by which grace the commandments are fulfilled. Ten then and seven contain all that pertain to the resurrection, to the right hand, to the kingdom of heaven, to life eternal, that is, they that fulfil the Law by the Grace of the Spirit, not as it were by their own work or their own merit. But ten and seven, if thou countest from one unto seventeen, by adding all the numbers by steps, so that to one thou mayest add two, add three, add four, that they may become ten, by adding five that they may become fifteen, by adding six that they may become twenty-one, by adding seven that they may become twenty-eight, by adding eight that they may become thirty-six, by adding nine that they may become forty-five, by adding ten that they may become fifty-five, by adding eleven that they may become sixty-six, by adding twelve that they may become seventy-eight, by adding thirteen that they may become ninety-one, by adding fourteen that they may become one

hundred and five, by adding fifteen that they may become one hundred and twenty, by adding sixteen that they may become one hundred and thirty-six, by adding seventeen, make up one hundred and fifty-three, thou wilt find a vast number of all saints to belong to this number of a few fishes. In like manner then as in five virgins, countless virgins; as in five brethren of him that was tormented in hell, thousands of the people of the Jews; as in the number of one hundred and fifty-three fishes, thousands of thousands of saints: so in twelve thrones, not twelve men, but great is the number of the perfect.

10. But I see what is next required of us; in like manner as in the case of the five virgins, a reason was given why many should belong to five, and why to those five many Jews, and why to a hundred and fifty-three many perfect—to shew why and how to the twelve thrones not twelve men, but many belong. What mean the twelve thrones, which signify all men every where that have been enabled to be so perfect as they must be perfect, to whom it is said, Ye shall sit over the twelve tribes of Israel? And why do all men every where belong to the number twelve? Because the very every where which we say, we say of the whole world: but the compass of lands is contained in four particular quarters, East, West, South, and North: from all these quarters they being called in the Trinity and made perfect in the faith and precept of the Trinity,—seeing that three times four are twelve, ye perceive wherefore the saints belong to the whole world; they that shall sit upon twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, since the twelve tribes of Israel, also, are the twelve tribes of the whole of Israel. For like as they that are to judge are from the whole world, so also they that are to be judged are from the whole world. The Apostle Paul of himself, when he was reproving believing laymen, because they referred not their causes to the Church, but dragged them with whom they had matters before the public, said, Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? See after what sort He hath made Himself judge: not only himself, but also all that judge aright in the Church.

11. Since then it is evident, that many are to judge with the Lord, but that others are to be judged, not however on equality, but according to their deserts; He will come with all His Angels, when before Him shall be

gathered all nations, and among all the Angels are to be reckoned those that have been made so perfect, that sitting upon twelve thrones they judge the twelve tribes of Israel. For men are called Angels: the Apostle saith of himself, As an angel of God ye received me. Of John Baptist it is said, Behold, I send My Angel before Thy face, that shall prepare Thy way before Thee. Therefore, coming with all Angels, together with Him He shall have the Saints also. For plainly saith Isaias also, He shall come to judgment with the elders of the people. Those ‘elders of the people,’ then, those but now named Angels, those thousands of many men made perfect coming from the whole world, are called Heaven. But earth the others, yet fruitful. Which is the earth that is fruitful? That which is to be set on the right hand, unto which it shall be said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat: truly fruitful earth in which the Apostle doth joy, when they sent to him to supply his necessities: Not because I ask a gift, he saith, but I require fruit. And he giveth thanks, saying, Because at length ye have budded forth again to be thoughtful for me. He saith, Ye have budded forth again, as to trees which had withered away with a kind of barrenness. Therefore the Lord coming to judgment, (that we may now hear the Psalm, brethren,) He will do what? (ver. 4.) He will call the heaven from above. The heaven, all the Saints, those made perfect that shall judge, them He shall call from above, to be sitters with Him to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. For how shall He call the heaven from above, when the heaven is always above? But those that He here calleth heaven, the same elsewhere He calleth heavens. What heavens? That tell out the glory of God: for, The heavens tell out the glory of God: whereof is said, Into all the earth their sound hath gone forth, and into the ends of the world their words. For see the Lord severing in judgment: He shall call the heaven from above and the earth, to sever His people. From whom but from evil men? Of whom here afterwards no mention is made, now as it were condemned to punishment. See these good men, and distinguish. He shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people. He calleth the earth also, not however to be associated but to be dissociated. For at first He called them together, when the God of gods spake and called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, He had not yet severed: those servants had been sent to bid to the marriage, who had gathered good and bad. But when the God of gods shall come manifest and shall not keep silence, He shall so call the heaven from above

that it may judge with Him. For what the heaven is, the heavens themselves are; just as what the earth is, the lands themselves, just as what the Church is, the Churches themselves: He shall call the heaven from above and the earth, to sever His people. Now with the heaven He severeth the earth, that is, the heaven with Him doth sever the earth. How doth He sever the earth? In such sort that He setteth on the right hand some, others on the left. But to the earth severed, He saith what? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me to eat, and so forth. But they say, When saw we Thee an hungred? And He, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me. He shall call therefore the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people.

12. Ver. 5. Gather to Him His righteous. The voice divine and prophetic, seeing future things as if present doth exhort the Angels gathering. For He shall send His Angels, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Gather to Him His righteous. What righteous men save those that live of faith and do works of mercy? For those works are works of righteousness. Thou hast the Gospel: Beware of doing your righteousness before men to be seen of them. And as if it were inquired, what righteousness? When therefore thou doest alms, He saith. Therefore alms He hath signified to be works of righteousness. Those very persons gather for His righteous: gather those that have had compassion on the needy, that have considered the needy and poor: gather them, "The Lord preserve them, and make them to live;" Gather to Him His righteous: who order His covenant above sacrifices: that is, who think of His promises above those things which they work. For those things are sacrifices, God saying, 'I will have mercy more than sacrifice.' Who keep His covenant more than sacrifice.

13. Ver. 6. And the Heaven shall declare His righteousness. Truly this righteousness of God to us the 'heavens have declared,' the Evangelists have foretold. Through them we have heard that some will be on the right hand, to whom the Householder saith, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive. Receive what? A kingdom. In return for what thing? I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat. What so valueless, what so earthly, as to break bread to the hungry? At so much is valued the kingdom of heaven.

Break thy bread to the hungry, and the needy without covering bring into thy house; if thou seest one naked, clothe him. If thou hast not the means of breaking bread, hast not house into which thou mayest bring, hast not garment wherewith thou mayest cover: give a cup of cold water, cast two mites into the treasury. As much the widow doth buy with two mites, as Peter buyeth, by leaving the nets, as Zacchæus buyeth by giving half his goods. Of so much worth is all that thou hast. The heavens shall declare His righteousness, for God is Judge. Truly judge not confounding but severing. For the Lord knoweth them that are His. Even if grains lie hid in the chaff, they are known to the husbandman. Let no one fear, that he is a grain even among the chaff; the eyes of our winnower are not deceived. Fear not lest that tempest, which shall be round about Him, should confound thee with chaff. Certainly mighty will be the tempest; yet not one grain will it sweep from the side of the corn to the chaff: because not any rustic with three-pronged fork, but God, Three in One, is Judge. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge. Let heavens go, let the heavens tell, into every land let their sound go out, and unto the ends of the world their words: and let that body say, From the ends of the world unto Thee have I cried, when my heart was in heaviness. For now mingled it groaneth, divided it shall rejoice. Let it cry then and say, Destroy not my soul with ungodly men, and with men of blood my life. He destroyeth not together, because God is Judge. Let it cry to Him and say, Judge me, O Lord, and sever my cause from the nation unholy: let it say, He shall do it: there shall be gathered to Him His righteous ones. He hath called the earth that He may sever His people.

14. Ver. 7. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee. He shall come and shall not keep silence; see how that even now, if ye hear, He is not silent. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee. For if thou hearest not, I will not speak to thee. Hear, and I will speak to thee. For if thou hearest not, even though I shall speak, it will not be to thee. When then shall I speak to thee? If thou hearest. When hearest thou? If thou art my people. For, Hear, my people: thou hearest not if thou art an alien people. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee: Israel, and I will testify to thee. Israel, hear thou, my people, hear thou. Israel is the name of election: Thou shalt not be called, He saith, Jacob, but thou shalt be called Israel. Therefore hear thou, as if

Israel, as if seeing God; though not in form, but now in faith. For thus is interpreted Israel, 'seeing God.' He that hath ears of hearing, let him hear: and he that hath eyes of seeing, let him see. Hear thou, Israel, and I will testify to thee. That which above He hath said, My people; the same in the sequel is Israel: and that which He hath said above, I will speak to thee; the same in the sequel is, I will testify to thee. What shall speak the Lord our God to His people? To His Israel what shall He testify? Let us hear: God, thy God, I am. God I am, and thy God I am. How, God I am? As to Moses it was said, I am That I am. How, Thy God I am? I am God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. I am God, and thy God I am: and if I be not thy God, I am God. By my good I am God, by thy evil I am not thy God. For Thy God, is properly said to that man whom God doth keep more as one of His family, as though in His household, as though in His peculiar; Thy God am I. What wilt thou more? Requirest thou a reward from God, so that God may give thee something; so that what He hath given thee may be thine own? Behold God Himself, who shall give, is thine own. What richer than He? Gifts thou wast desiring, thou hast the Giver Himself. God, thy God, I am.

15. What He requireth of man, let us see; what tribute our God, our Emperor and our King doth enjoin us; since He hath willed to be our King, and hath willed us to be His province? Let us hear His injunctions. Let not a poor man tremble beneath the injunction of God: what God enjoineth to be given to Himself, He doth Himself first give That enjoineth: be ye only devoted. God doth not exact what He hath not given, and to all men hath given what He doth exact. For what doth He exact? Let us hear now: (ver. 8.) I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices. I will not say to thee, Wherefore hast thou not slain for me a fat bull? why hast thou not selected the best he-goat from thy flock? Wherefore doth that ram amble among thy sheep, and is not laid upon mine altar? I will not say, Examine thy fields and thy pen and thy walls, seeking what thou mayest give Me. I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices. What then? Dost Thou not accept my sacrifices? (Ver. 9.) But thy holocausts are always in My sight. Certain holocausts concerning which is said in another Psalm, If Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would surely have given, with holocausts Thou wilt not be delighted: and again he turneth himself, Sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit,

a heart broken and humbled God doth not despise. Which be then holocausts that He despiseth not? Which holocausts that are always in His sight? Kindly, O Lord, he saith, deal in Thy good will with Sion, and be the walls of Jerusalem builded, then shalt Thou accept the sacrifice of righteousness, oblations, and holocausts. He saith that certain holocausts God will accept. But what is a holocaust? A whole consumed with fire: causis is burning, holon is whole: but a holocaust is a whole consumed with fire. There is a certain fire of most burning love: be the mind inflamed with love, let the same love hurry off the limbs to its use, let it not allow them to serve cupidity, in order that we may wholly glow with fire of divine love that will offer to God a holocaust. Such holocausts of thine are in My sight always.

16. As yet that Israel perchance doth not understand what are the holocausts thereof which He hath in His sight always, and is still thinking of oxen, of sheep, of he-goats: let it not so think: I will not accept calves of thy house. Holocausts I named; at once in mind and thought to earthly flocks thou wast running, therefrom thou wast selecting for Me some fat thing: I will not accept calves of thy house. He is foretelling the New Testament, wherein all those sacrifices have ceased. For they were then foretelling a certain Sacrifice which was to be, with the Blood whereof we should be cleansed. I will not accept calves of thy house, nor he-goats of thy flocks.

17. Ver. 10. For mine are all the beasts of the wood. Why should I ask of thee what I have made? Is it more thine, to whom I have given it to possess, than Mine, Who have made it? For Mine are all the beasts of the wood. But perchance that Israel saith, The beasts are God's, those wild beasts which I enclose not in my pen, which I bind not to my stall; but this ox and sheep and he-goat—these are mine own. Cattle on the mountain, and oxen. Mine are those which thou possessest not, Mine are these which thou possessest. For if thou art My servant, the whole of thy property is Mine. For it cannot be, that that is the property of the master which the servant hath gotten to himself, and yet that not be the property of the Master which the Master Himself hath created for the servant. Therefore Mine are the beasts of the wood which thou hast not taken; Mine are also the cattle on the mountains

which are thine, and the oxen which are at thy stall: all are Mine own, for I have created them.

18. Ver. 11. I know all the winged creatures of heaven. How doth He know? He hath weighed them, hath counted. Which of us knoweth all the winged creatures of heaven? But even though to some man God give knowledge of all the winged creatures of heaven, He doth not Himself know in the same manner as He giveth man to know. One thing is God's knowledge, another man's: in like manner as there is one possession of God's, another of man's: that is, God's possessing is one thing, man's another. For what thou possessest, thou hast not wholly in thy power, or else thy ox, so long as it liveth, is in thy power; so as that it either die not, or be not to be fed. With whom there is the highest power, there is highest and most secret cognition. Let us ascribe this to God, while praising God. Let us not dare to say, How knoweth God? Do not, I pray you, brethren, of me expect this, that I should unfold to you, how God doth know: this only I say, He doth not so know as a man, He doth not so know as an Angel: and how He knoweth I dare not say, because also I cannot ken. One thing, nevertheless, I ken, that even before all the winged creatures of heaven were, God knew that which He was to create. What is that knowledge? O man, thou beginnest to see, after that thou hadst been formed, after that thou hadst received sense of seeing. These fowls sprung of the water at the word of God, saying, Let the waters bring forth fowls. Whereby did God know the things which He commanded the water to bear forth? Now surely He knew what He had created, and before He created He knew. So great then is the knowledge of God, so that with Himself they were in a certain ineffable manner before they were created: and of thee doth He expect to receive what He had, before He created? I know all the winged creatures of heaven, which thou to Me canst not give. The things which thou wast about to slay for Me, I know all: not because I made I know, but in order that I might make. And the beauty of the field is with Me. The fairness of the field, the abundance of all things engendering upon earth, is with Me, He saith. How with Him? Were they so, even before they were made? Yea, for with Him were all things to come, and with Him are all things by-gone: things to come in such sort, that there be not withdrawn from Him all things bygone. With Him are all things by a certain cognition of the ineffable wisdom of God residing in the Word, and

the Word Himself is all things. Is not the beauty of the field in a manner with Him, inasmuch as He is every where, and Himself hath said, Heaven and earth I fill? What with Him is not, of Whom it is said, If I shall have ascended into heaven, Thou art there; and if I shall have descended into hell, Thou art present? With Him is the whole: but it is not so with Him as that He doth suffer any contamination from those things which He hath created, or any want of them. For with thee, perchance, is a pillar near which thou art standing, and when thou art weary, thou leanest against it. Thou needest that which is with thee, God needeth not the field which is with Him. With Him is field, with Him beauty of earth, with Him beauty of heaven, with Him all winged creatures, because He is Himself every where. And wherefore are all things near Him? Because even before that all things were, or were created, to Him were known all things.

19. Who can explain, who expound that which is said to Him in another Psalm, For my goods Thou needest not? He hath said that He needeth not from us any necessary thing. (Ver. 12.) If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee. He that keepeth Israel shall neither hunger nor thirst, nor be weary, nor fall asleep. But, lo! according to thy carnality I speak: because thou wilt suffer hunger when thou hast not eaten, perhaps thou thinkest even God doth hunger that He may eat. Even though He shall be hungry, He telleth not thee: all things are before Him, whence He will He taketh what is needful for Him. These words are said to convince little understanding; not that God hath declared His hunger. Though for our sake this God of gods deigned even to hunger. He came to hunger, and to fill; He came to thirst, and give drink; He came to be clothed with mortality, and to clothe with immortality; He came poor, to make rich. For He lost not His riches by taking to Him our poverty, for, "In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee. For Mine is the whole world, and the fulness thereof. Do not then labour to find what to give Me, without whom I have what I will.

20. Why then dost still think of thy flocks? (Ver. 13.) Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of he-goats? Ye have heard what of us He requireth not, Who willeth to enjoin us somewhat. If of such things ye were thinking, now withdraw your thoughts from such things: think not to offer

God any such thing. If thou hast a fat bull, kill for the poor: let them eat the flesh of bulls, though they shall not drink the blood of he-goats. Which, when thou shalt have done, He will account it to thee, That hath said, If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee: and He shall say to thee, “I was hungry, and thou gavest Me to eat.” Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of he-goats?

21. Say then, Lord our God, what dost Thou enjoin Thy people, Thy Israel? (Ver. 14.) Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. Let us also say to Him, In me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. I had feared lest Thou mightest enjoin something which would be out of my power, which I was counting to be in my pen, and but now perchance it had been taken away by a thief. What dost Thou enjoin me? Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. Let me revert to myself, wherein I may find what I may immolate: let me revert to myself; in myself may I find immolation of praise: be Thy altar my conscience. Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. We are without anxiety, we go not into Arabia in quest of frankincense: not any bags of covetous dealer do we sift: God requireth of us the sacrifice of praise. Zacchæus had this sacrifice of praise in his patrimony; the widow had it in her bag; some poor host or other hath had it in his jar: another neither in patrimony, nor in bag, nor in jar, hath had any thing, had it wholly in his heart: salvation was to the house of Zacchæus; and more this poor widow cast in than those rich men: this man, that doth offer a cup of cold water, shall not lose his reward: but there is even “peace on earth to men of good will.” Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. O sacrifice gratuitous, by grace given! I have not indeed bought this to offer, but Thou hast given: for not even this should I have had. Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. And this is the immolation of the sacrifice of praise, to render thanks to Him from Whom thou hast whatever of good thou hast, and by Whose mercy is forgiven thee whatsoever of evil of thine thou hast. Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise: and render to the Highest thy prayers. With this odour the Lord is well-pleased. Render to the Highest thy prayers.

22. Ver. 15. And call thou upon Me in the day of thy tribulation: and I will draw thee forth, and thou shalt glorify Me. For thou oughtest not to rely on thy powers, all thy aids are deceitful. Upon Me call thou in the day of

tribulation: I will draw thee forth, and thou shalt glorify Me. For to this end I have allowed the day of tribulation to come to thee: because perchance if thou wast not troubled, thou wouldest not call on Me: but when thou art troubled, thou callest on Me; when thou callest upon Me, I will draw thee forth, when I shall draw thee forth thou shalt glorify Me, that thou mayest no more depart from Me. A certain man had grown dull and cold in fervour of prayer, and said, Tribulation and grief I found, and on the Name of the Lord I called. He found tribulation as it were some profitable thing; he had rotted in the slough of his sins; now he had continued without feeling, he found tribulation to be a sort of caustic and cutting. I found, he saith, tribulation and grief, and on the Name of the Lord I called. And truly, brethren, tribulations are known to all men. Behold those afflictions that abound in mankind; one afflicted with loss bewaileth; another smitten with bereavement mourneth; another exiled from country grieveth and desireth to return, deeming sojourning intolerable; another's vineyard is hailed upon, he observeth his labours and all his toil spent in vain. When can a human being not be made sad? An enemy he findeth in a friend. What greater misery in mankind? These things all men do deplore and grieve at, and these are tribulations: in all these they call upon the Lord, and they do rightly. Let them call upon God, He is able either to teach how it must be borne, or to heal it when borne. He knoweth how not to suffer us to be tried above that we are able to bear. Let us call upon God even in those tribulations: but these tribulations do find us; as in another Psalm is written, Helper in tribulations which have found us too much: there is a certain tribulation which we ought to find. Let such tribulations find us: there is a certain tribulation which we ought to seek and to find. What is that? The above-named felicity in this world, abundance of temporal things: that is not indeed tribulation, these are the solaces of our tribulation. Of what tribulation? Of our sojourning. For the very fact that we are not yet with God, the very fact that we are living amid trials and difficulties, that we cannot be without fear, is tribulation: for there is not that peace which is promised us. He that shall not have found this tribulation in his sojourning, doth not think of going home to his father-land. This is tribulation, brethren. Surely now we do good works, when we deal bread to the hungry, home to the stranger, and the like: tribulation even this is. For we find pitiful objects upon whom we shew pity; and the pitiful case of pitiful objects maketh us

compassionate. How much better now would it be with thee in that place, where thou findest no hungry man whom thou mayest feed, where thou findest no stranger whom thou mayest take in, no naked man whom thou mayest cover, no sick man whom thou mayest visit, no litigant whom thou mayest set at one! For all things in that place are most high, are true, are holy, are everlasting. Our bread in that place is righteousness, our drink there is wisdom, our garment there is immortality, our house is everlasting in the heavens, our steadfastness is immortality: doth sickness come over? Doth weariness weigh down to sleep? No death, no litigation: there peace, quiet, joy, righteousness. No enemy hath entrance, no friend falleth away. What is the quiet there? If we think and observe where we are, and where He that cannot lie hath promised that we are to be, from His very promise we find in what tribulation we are. This tribulation none findeth, but he that shall have sought it. Thou art whole, see if thou art miserable; for it is easy for him that is sick to find himself miserable: when thou art whole, see if thou art miserable; that thou art not yet with God. 'Tribulation and grief I found, and on the Name of the Lord I called.' Immolate, therefore, to God the sacrifice of praise. Praise Him promising, praise Him calling, praise Him exhorting, praise Him helping: and understand in what tribulation thou art placed. Call upon (Him), thou shalt be drawn forth, thou shalt glorify, shalt abide.

23. But see what followeth, my brethren. For now some one or other, because God had said to him, Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise, and had enjoined in a manner this tribute, did meditate to himself and said, I will rise daily, I will proceed to Church, I will say one hymn at matins, another at vespers, a third or fourth in my house, daily I do sacrifice the sacrifice of praise, and immolate to my God. Well thou doest indeed, if thou doest this: but take heed, lest now thou be careless, because now thou doest this: and perchance thy tongue bless God, and thy life curse God. O my people, saith to thee the God of gods, the Lord That spake, 'calling the earth from the rising of the sun unto the setting,' though yet thou art placed amid the tares, Immolate the sacrifice of praise to thy God, and render to Him thy prayers: but take heed lest thou live ill, and chant well. Wherefore this? For, (ver. 16.) Unto the sinner, saith God, Why dost thou tell out My judgments, and takest My Covenant in thy mouth? Ye see, brethren, with what

trembling we say these words. We take the Covenant of God in our mouth, and we preach to you the instruction and judgment of God. And what saith God to the sinner? Why dost thou? Doth He then forbid preachers that be sinners? And where is that, What they say do, but what they do, do not? Where is that, Whether in truth or on occasion Christ be preached? But these words were said, lest they should fear that hear, from whomsoever it be that they hear: not that they should be without care that speak good words, and do evil deeds. Now therefore, brethren, ye are without care: if ye hear good words ye hear God, through whomsoever it be that ye may hear. But God would not dismiss without reproof them that speak: lest with their speaking alone, without care for themselves they should slumber in evil life, and say to themselves, “For God will not consign us to perdition, through whose mouth He has willed that so many good words should be spoken to His people.” Nay, but hear what thou speakest, whoever thou art that speakest: and thou that wilt be heard thyself, first hear thyself; and speak what a certain man doth speak in another Psalm, I will hear what in me speaketh the Lord God, for He shall speak peace to His people. What am I then, that hear not what in me He speaketh, and will that other hear what through me He speaketh? I will hear first, will hear, and chiefly I will hear what speaketh in me the Lord God, for He shall speak peace to His people. Let me hear, and ‘chasten my body, and to servitude subject it, lest perchance to others preaching, myself be found a cast-away.’ Why dost thou tell out my judgments? Wherefore to thee what profiteth not thee? He admonisheth him to hear: not to lay down preaching, but to take up obedience. But thou, why dost thou take My Covenant in thy mouth?

24. Ver. 17. But thou hatest instruction. Thou hatest discipline. When I spare, thou singest and praisest: when I chasten, thou murmurest: as though, when I spare, I am thy God: and, when I chasten, I am not thy God. “I rebuke and chasten those whom I love.” But thou hatest instruction: and hast thrown My sayings behind thee. The words that are said through thee, thou throwest behind thee. And thou hast thrown My sayings behind thee: to a place where they may not be seen by thee, but may load thee. And thou hast thrown My sayings behind thee.

25. Ver. 18. If thou sawest a thief, thou didst consent unto him, and with adulterers thou didst make thy portion. Lest perchance thou shouldest say, I have not committed theft, I have not committed adultery. What if he pleased thee that hath committed? Hast thou not with the very pleasing consented? Hast thou not by approval made thy portion with him that hath committed? For this is, brethren, to consent with a thief, and to make with an adulterer thy portion: for even if thou committest not, and approvest what is committed, thou art an accessory in the deed: for ‘the sinner is praised in the longings of his soul, and he that doeth iniquity shall be blessed.’ Thou doest not evil things, thou praisest evil-doers. For is this a small evil? Thou didst make thy portion with adulterers.

26. Ver. 19. Thy mouth hath abounded in malice, and thy tongue hath embraced deceit. Of the malevolence and deceit, brethren, of certain men he speaketh, who by adulation, though they know what they hear to be evil, yet lest they offend those from whom they hear, not only by not reproofing but by holding their peace do consent. Too little is it, that they do not say, Thou hast done evil: but they even say, Thou hast done even well: and they know it to be evil: but their mouth aboundeth in malice, and their tongue embraceth deceit. Deceit is a sort of guile in words, of uttering one thing, thinking another. He saith not, thy tongue hath committed deceit or perpetrated deceit, but in order to point out to thee a kind of pleasure taken in the very evil doing, He hath said, Hath embraced. It is too little that thou doest it, thou art delighted too; thou praisest openly, thou laughest to thyself. Thou dost push to destruction a man heedlessly putting forth his faults, and knowing not whether they be faults: thou that knowest it to be a fault, sayest not, Whither art thou rushing? If thou wert to see him heedlessly walk in the dark, where thou knewest a well to be, and wert to hold thy peace, of what sort wouldest thou be? wouldest thou not be set down for an enemy of his life? And yet if he were to fall into a well, not in soul but in body he would die. He doth fall headlong into his vices, he doth expose before thee his evil doings: thou knowest them to be evil, and praisest and laughest to thyself. Oh that at length he were to be turned to God at whom thou laughest, and whom thou wouldest not reprove, and that he were to say, “Let them be confounded that say to me, Well, well.”

27. And thy tongue hath embraced deceit. (Ver. 20.) Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract. And this sitting doth belong to that whereof he hath spoken above in, hath embraced. For he that doeth any thing while standing or passing along, doth it not with pleasure: but if he for this purpose sitteth, how much leisure doth he seek out to do it! Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract. That very evil detraction thou wast making with diligence, thou wast making sitting; thou wouldest thereon be wholly engaged; thou wast embracing thy evil, thou wast kissing thy craftiness. Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract: and against thy mother's son thou didst lay a stumbling-block. Who is mother's son? Is it not brother? He would repeat then the same that he had said above, thy brother. Hath he intimated that any distinction must be perceived by us? Evidently, brethren, I think a distinction must be made. Brother against brother doth detract, for example's sake, as though for instance one strong, and now a doctor and scholar of some weight, doth detract from his brother, one perchance that is teaching well and walking well: but another is weak, against him he layeth a stumbling-block by detracting from the former. For when the good are detracted from by those that seem to be of some weight and to be learned, the weak fall upon the stumbling-block, who as yet know not how to judge. Therefore this weak one is called mother's son, not yet father's, still needing milk, and hanging on the breast. He is borne as yet in the bosom of his mother the Church, he is not strong enough to draw near to the solid food of his Father's table, but from the mother's breast he draweth sustenance, unskilled in judging, inasmuch as yet he is animal and carnal. For the spiritual man judgeth all things, but the animal man perceiveth not those things which are of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him. To such men saith the Apostle, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as to babes in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not meat; for ye were not able, but not even now are ye able. A mother I have been to you: as is said in another place, I became a babe among you, even as a nurse cherishing her own children. Not a nurse nursing children of others, but a nurse cherishing her own children. For there are mothers who when they have borne give to nurses: they that have borne cherish not their children, because they have given them to be nursed; but those that cherish, cherish not their own, but those of others: but he himself had borne, he was himself cherishing, to no nurse did commit what he had borne; for he had

said, Of whom I travail again until Christ be formed in you. He did cherish them, and gave milk. But there were some as it were learned and spiritual men who detracted from Paul. His letters indeed, say they, are weighty and powerful; but the presence of his body weak, and speech contemptible: he saith himself in his Epistle, that certain his detractors had said these words. They were sitting, and were detracting against their brother, and against that their mother's son, to be fed with milk, they were laying a stumbling-block. And against thy mother's son thou didst lay a stumbling-block.

28. Ver. 21. These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue. Therefore the Lord our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. Now, These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue. What is, I held my tongue? From vengeance I have desisted, my severity I have deferred, patience to thee I have prolonged, thy repentance I have long looked for. These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue. But when for this thing I was waiting, that thou shouldest repent, according to the Apostle saying, "But thou according to the hardness of thy heart, and thy heart unrepentant, art treasuring to thyself wrath in the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the just judgment of God;" thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee. It is too little that thy evil doings please thee, thou thinkest that they please even Me. God, because thou findest not to be an avenger, thou wouldest have for a participator, and as though a corrupt judge, thou wouldest have Him sharer of the spoil. Thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee; Thou hast imagined that I shall be like unto thee, while thou wilt not be like unto Me. For, Be ye, he saith, perfect, even as your Father, Which is in the heavens, Who maketh His sun to rise on the good and evil. Him thou wouldest not copy, Who giveth good things even to evil men, insomuch that sitting thou dost detract even from good men. Thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee. I will reprove thee, when 'God manifest shall come, our God, and shall not keep silence,' I will reprove thee. And what to thee shall I do in reproofing thee? what to thee shall I do? Now thyself thou seest not, I will make thee see thyself. Because if thou shouldest see thyself, and shouldest displease thyself, thou wouldest please Me: but because not seeing thyself thou hast pleased thyself, thou wilt displease both Me and Thyself; Me when thou shalt be judged; thyself when thou shalt burn. But what to thee shall I do? He saith. I will set thee before thy face. For why

wouldest thou escape thyself? At thy back thou art to thyself, thou seest not thyself: I make thee see thyself: what behind thy back thou hast put, before thy face will I put; thou shalt see thy uncleanness, not that thou mayest amend, but that thou mayest blush. Now because He saith these words, brethren, is he to be despaired of to whom this is said? Was not that city of which it was said, Three days, and Nineve shall be overthrown, within three days meet to be converted, to pray, bewail, to obtain remission of the impending punishment? Let them hear that are such, while they may hear even Him keeping silence. For 'He shall come, and shall not keep silence,' and shall reprove, when for amendment no place shall be. I will set thee, He saith, before thy face. Now then do thou, whosoever art of such sort, what God threateneth to do to thee. Take thyself from thy back, where thou wilt not see thyself, dissembling thy doings, and place thyself before thyself. Mount the judgment seat of thy mind, be to thyself judge, let fear rack thee, let confession burst forth from thee, and say thou to thy God, For mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my short-coming is before me ever. Let what was behind thee come before thee: lest thou thyself hereafter be set before thyself by God the Judge, and there be no place whither thou mayest flee from thyself.

29. But, (ver. 22.) understand these things, ye that forget God. See how He crieth, and keepeth not silence, spareth not. Thou hadst forgotten the Lord, didst not think of thy evil life. Perceive how thou hast forgotten the Lord. Lest at length He seize like a lion, and there be none to deliver. What is like a lion? Like a brave one, like a mighty one, like him whom none can withstand. To this he made reference when he said, Lion. For it is used for praise, it is used also for shewing evil. The devil hath been called lion: Your adversary, He saith, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom He may devour. May it not be that whereas he hath been called lion because of savage fierceness, Christ hath been called Lion for wondrous mightiness? And where is that, The Lion hath prevailed of the tribe of Judah? Let your love attend for a brief space to the little which still remaineth: I entreat you that ye shake off weariness, He will be with you that hath given you strength up to this hour. A little before he had said, as if enjoining us as ye have heard, a sort of tribute of praise to Him: Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise, and render to the Most High thy prayers. But afterwards, But to

the sinner hath God said, Why dost thou tell out My judgments, and takest My Covenant in thy mouth? As though He had said to him, It profiteth thee nothing that thou praisest! I have enjoined sacrifice of praise to them that live well: for them it profiteth that they praise: but if thou praisest, it profiteth thee nothing: why praisest thou Me? Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. Afterwards He concludeth as if to both, and reproofing the bad that forget God, he saith, Understand these things, ye that forget God, lest at length He seize like a lion, and there be none to deliver.

30. Ver. 23. Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. How shall sacrifice of praise glorify Me? Assuredly sacrifice of praise doth no wise profit evil men, because they take Thy Covenant in their mouth, and do damnable things that displease Thine eyes. Straightway, he saith, even to them this I say, Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. For if thou livest ill and speakest good words, not yet dost thou praise: but again, if, when thou beginnest to live well, to thy merits thou dost ascribe thy living well, not yet dost thou praise. I will not have thee to be a robber reviling the Lord's Cross: but neither will I have thee to be him that in the Temple did vaunt his merits, and hide his wounds. If thou hast been unrighteous and persisting in that unrighteousness, I say not to thee, praise will not profit; but thou dost not praise Me; that to be praise I count not; again, if thou hast been in a manner righteous, (for no one is righteous but the humble and godly,) and hast walked on puffed up with thy righteousness, and hast despised others in comparison with thyself, and hast above measure lifted thyself up as if glorying in thy merits, thou dost not praise Me. Neither he doth praise Me, who liveth ill, nor doth he praise Me, who liveth well as though of his own power. But was that Pharisee such as he was as of his own power, when he said, Thanks to Thee I give, that I am not like other men? Thanks to God he gave for that good which he had in himself. Though then some good be in thee, though thou now understand that not from thyself is that which is good, but from God thou hast received: yet in that very thing if thou hast lifted up thyself above another that hath not, thou art accounted envious; not yet My praiser shalt thou be. First then be made straight from thy most evil way, begin to live well: understand that thou art not made straight but by the gift of God: for By the Lord the goings of a man are directed. This when thou shalt have understood, give countenance to others also, in order that

they may be what thou art: because even thou wast that which they are. Give countenance as much as thou canst, and do not despair; for not only as far as to thee is God rich. Therefore he doth not praise, that by living ill offendeth the Lord; he praiseth not, that, when he hath begun to live well, of his own strength doth think his living well to be, not received of God; nor doth he praise, that, though he knoweth that he hath received his living well from God, yet only so far as to himself will have God to be rich. He then that was saying, Thanks to Thee I give, O God, that I am not like other men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, or even as this publican; had he not herein cause for saying, Give this publican also what Thou hast given me, supply also to me what Thou hast not yet given? But now, as if full, he was belching: he did not say, But I am needy and poor: which that Publican was saying, O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Therefore the Publican went down justified, rather than that Pharisee. Therefore hear ye that live well, hear ye that live ill: Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. No one offereth Me this sacrifice, and is evil. I say not, Let there not offer Me this any one that is evil; but no one doth offer Me this, that is evil. For he that praiseth, is good: because if he praiseth, he doth also live well, because if he praiseth, not only with tongue he praiseth, but life also with tongue doth agree.

31. Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me: and there is the way whereby I will shew him the salvation of God. In sacrifice of praise is the way whereby I will shew him the salvation of God. What is the salvation of God? Christ Jesus. And how in sacrifice of praise to us is shewn Christ? Because Christ with grace came to us. These words saith the Apostle: But I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me: but that in flesh I live, in faith I live of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Acknowledge then sinners, that there would not need physician, if they were whole. For Christ died for the ungodly. When then they acknowledge their ungodlinesses, and first copy that Publican, saying, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner: shew wounds, beseech Physician: and because they praise not themselves, but blame themselves, So that he that glorieth, not in himself but in the Lord may glory,—they acknowledge the cause of the coming of Christ, because for this end He came, that He might save sinners: for Jesus Christ came, he saith, into this world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Further, those Jews, boasting of their work, thus the same Apostle doth rebuke, in saying,

that they to grace belonged not, who to their merits and their works thought that reward was owing. He therefore that knoweth himself to belong to grace, doth know what is Christ and what is Christ's, because he needeth grace. If grace it is called, gratis it is given; if gratis it is given, not any merits of thine have preceded that it should be given. For if thy merits have preceded, reward is not reckoned according to grace, but according to debt. If therefore thou sayest thy merits have preceded, thyself thou wilt have to be praised, not God: therefore thou dost not acknowledge Christ, Who came with the grace of God: turn thee then to thy merits, see them to have been evil, so that there is not owed thee aught but punishment, not reward. And when thou shalt have seen what to thee through merit is owed, thou dost acknowledge what through grace is given: and with sacrifice of praise thou dost glorify God. For there is the way wherein thou mayest know Christ, the salvation of God.

PSALM 51

Exposition

1. Neither must this multitude's throng be defrauded, nor their infirmity burthened. Silence we ask, and quiet, in order that our voice, after yesterday's labour, be able with some little vigour to last out. It must be believed, that your love hath met together in greater numbers to-day for nothing else, but that ye may pray for those whom an alien and perverse inclination doth keep away. For we are speaking neither of heathens nor of Jews, but of Christians: nor of those that are yet Catechumens, but of many that are even baptized, from the Laver of whom ye do no wise differ, and yet to their heart ye are unlike. For to-day how many brethren of ours we think of, and deplore their going unto vanities and lying insanities, to the neglect of that to which they have been called. Who, if in the very circus from any cause they chance to be startled, do immediately cross themselves, and stand bearing It on the forehead, in the very place, from whence they had withdrawn, if It in heart they had borne. God's mercy must be implored, that He may give understanding for condemning these things, inclination to flee them, and mercy to forgive. Opportunely, then, of Penitence a Psalm to-day has been chanted. Speak we even with the absent: there will be to them for our voice your memory. Neglect not the wounded and feeble, but that ye may more easily make whole, whole ye ought to abide. Correct by reproving, comfort by addressing, set an example by living well, He will be with them That hath been with you. For now that ye have overpast these dangers, the fountain of God's mercy is not closed. Where ye have come they will come; where ye have passed, they will pass. A grievous thing it is indeed, and exceeding perilous, nay ruinous, and for certain a deadly thing, that witting they sin. For in one way to these vanities doth he run that despiseth the voice of Christ; in another way, he that

knoweth from what he is fleeing. But that not even of such men we ought to despair, this Psalm doth shew.

2. For there is written over it the title thereof, A Psalm of David himself, when there came to him Nathan the prophet, when he went in unto Bersabee. Bersabee was a woman, wife of another. With grief indeed we speak, and with trembling; but yet God would not have to be hushed what He hath willed to be written. I will say then not what I will, but what I am obliged; I will say not as one exhorting to imitation, but as one instructing you to fear. Captivated with this woman's beauty, the wife of another, the king and prophet David, from whose seed according to the flesh the Lord was to come, committed adultery with her. This thing in this Psalm is not read, but in the title thereof it appeareth; but in the book of Kings it is more fully read. Both Scriptures are canonical, to both without any doubt by Christians credit must be given. The sin was committed, and was written down. Moreover her husband in war he caused to be killed: and after this deed there was sent to him Nathan the prophet; sent by the Lord, to reprove him for so great an outrage.

3. What men should beware of, we have said; but what if they shall have fallen they should imitate, let us hear. For many men will to fall with David, and will not to rise with David. Not then for falling is the example set forth, but if thou shalt have fallen for rising again. Take heed lest thou fall. Not the delight of the younger be the lapse of the elder, but be the fall of the elder the dread of the younger. For this it was set forth, for this was written, for this in the Church often read and chanted: let them hear that have not fallen, lest they fall; let them hear that have fallen, that they may rise. So great a man's sin is not hushed, is proclaimed in the Church. There hear men that are ill hearers, and seek for themselves countenance for sinning: they look out for means whereby they may defend what they have made ready to commit, not how they may beware of what they have not committed, and they say to themselves, If David, why not I too? Thence that soul is more unrighteous, which, forasmuch as it hath done it because David did, therefore hath done worse than David. I will say this very thing, if I shall be able, more plainly. David had set forth to himself none for a precedent as thou hast: he had fallen by lapse of concupiscence, not by the

countenance of holiness: thou dost set before thine eyes as it were a holy man, in order that thou mayest sin: thou dost not copy his holiness, but dost copy his fall. That thou dost love in David, which in himself David hated: thou makest thee ready to sin, thou inclinest to sin: the book of God in order that thou mayest sin thou consultest: the Scriptures of God for this thou hearest, that thou mayest do what displeaseth God: this did not David; he was reprov'd by a Prophet, he stumbled not over a Prophet. But others hearing to their health, by the fall of a strong man measure their weakness: and what God condemneth desiring to avoid, from careless looking do restrain their eyes: them they fix not upon the beauty of another's flesh, nor make themselves careless with perverse simpleness; they say not, 'With good intent I have observed, of kindness I have observed, of charity I have long looked.' For they set before themselves the fall of David, and they see that this great man for this purpose hath fallen, in order that little men may not be willing to look on that whereby they may fall. For they restrain their eyes from wantonness, not readily do they join themselves in company, they do not mingle with strange women, they raise not complying eyes to strange balconies, to strange terraces. For from afar David saw her with whom he was captivated. Woman afar, lust near. Elsewhere was what he saw, in himself that whereby he fell. This weakness of the flesh must be therefore minded, the words of the Apostle recollected, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. He hath not said, let there not be; but, let there not reign. There is sin in thee, when thou takest pleasure; there reigneth, if thou shalt have consented. Carnal pleasure, especially if proceeding unto unlawful and strange objects, is to be bridled, not let loose: by government to be tamed, not to be set up for government. Look and be without care, if thou hast nothing whereby thou mayest be moved. But thou makest answer, "I contain with strong resolution." Art thou any wise stronger than David?

4. He admonisheth, moreover, by such an example, that no one ought to lift himself up in prosperous circumstances. For many fear adverse circumstances, fear not prosperous circumstances. Prosperity is more perilous to soul than adversity to body. First, prosperity doth corrupt, in order that adversity may find something to break. My brethren, against felicity stricter watch must be kept. Wherefore see ye after what manner the saying of God amid our own felicity doth take from us security: Serve ye,

He saith, the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. In exultation, in order that we may render thanks; in trembling, lest we fall. This sin did not David, when he was suffering Saul for persecutor. When holy David was suffering Saul his enemy, when he was being vexed by his persecutions, when he was fleeing through divers places, in order that he might not fall into his hands, he lusted not for her that was another's, he slew not husband after committing adultery with wife. He was in the infirmity of his tribulation so much the more intimate with God as he seemed more miserable. Something useful is tribulation; useful the surgeon's lancet rather than the devil's temptation. He became secure when his enemies were overthrown, pressure was removed, swelling grew out. This example therefore doth avail to this end, that we should fear felicity. Tribulation, he saith, and grief I found, and on the name of the Lord I called.

5. But it was done; I would say these words to those that have not done the like, in order that they should watch to keep their uncorruptness, and that while they take heed how a great one has fallen, they that be small should fear. But if any that hath already fallen heareth these words, and that hath in his conscience any evil thing; to the words of this Psalm let him advert; let him heed the greatness of the wound, but not despair of the majesty of the Physician. Sin with despair is certain death. Let no one therefore say, If already any evil thing I have done, already I am to be condemned: God pardoneth not such evil things, why add I not sins to sins? I will enjoy this world in pleasure, in wantonness, in wicked cupidity: now hope of amendment having been lost, let me have even what I see, if I cannot have what I believe. This Psalm then, while it maketh heedful those that have not believed, so doth not will them to be despaired of that have fallen. Whoever thou art that hast sinned, and hesitatest to do penance for thy sin, despairing of thy salvation, hear David groaning. To thee Nathan the prophet hath not been sent, David himself hath been sent to thee. Hear him crying, and with him cry: hear him groaning, and with him groan; hear him weeping, and mingle tears; hear him amended, and with him rejoice. If from thee sin could not be excluded, be not hope of pardon excluded. There was sent to that man Nathan the prophet, observe the king's humility. He rejected not

the words of him giving admonition, he said not, Darest thou speak to me, a king? An exalted king heard a prophet, let His humble people hear Christ.

6. Hear therefore these words, and say thou with him: (ver. 1.) Have pity upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy. He that imploreth great mercy, confesseth great misery. Let them seek a little mercy of Thee, that have sinned in ignorance: Have pity, he saith, upon me, after Thy great mercy. Relieve a deep wound after Thy great healing. Deep is what I have, but in the Almighty I take refuge. Of my own so deadly wound I should despair, unless I could find so great a Physician. Have pity upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy: and after the multitude of Thy pities, blot out my iniquity. What he saith, Blot out my iniquity, is this, Have pity upon me, O God. And what he saith, After the multitude of Thy pities, is this, After Thy great mercy. Because great is the mercy, many are the mercies; and of Thy great mercy, many are Thy pityings. Thou dost regard mockers to amend them, dost regard ignorant men, to teach them, dost regard men confessing to pardon. Did he this in ignorance? A certain man had done some, aye many evil things he had done; Mercy, he saith, I obtained, because ignorant I did it in unbelief. This David could not say, Ignorant I did it. For he was not ignorant, how very evil a thing was the touching of another's wife, and how very evil a thing was the killing of the husband, who knew not of it, and was not even angered. They obtain therefore the mercy of the Lord that have in ignorance done it; and they that have knowing done it, obtain not any mercy it may chance, but great mercy.

7. Ver. 2. More and more wash me from mine unrighteousness. What is, More and more wash? One much stained. More and more wash the sins of one knowing. Thou that hast washed off the sins of one ignorant. Not even thus is it to be despaired of Thy mercy. And from my delinquency purge Thou me. According to the manner in which He is physician, offer a recompense. He is God, offer sacrifice. What wilt thou give that thou mayest be purged? For see upon Whom thou callest; upon a Just One thou callest. He hateth sins, if He is just; He taketh vengeance upon sins, if He is just; thou wilt not be able to take away from the Lord God His justice: entreat mercy, but observe the justice: there is mercy to pardon the sinner, there is justice to punish the sin. What then? Thou askest mercy; shall sin

unpunished abide? Let David answer, let those that have fallen answer, answer with David, and say, No, Lord, no sin of mine shall be unpunished; I know the justice of Him, Whose mercy I ask: it shall not be unpunished, but for this reason I will not that Thou punish me, because I punish my sin: for this reason I beg that Thou pardon, because I acknowledge.

8. Ver. 3. For mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my delinquency is before me ever. I have not put behind my back what I have done, I look not at others, forgetful of myself, I pretend not to pull out a straw from my brother's eye, when there is a beam in my eye; my sin is before me, not behind me. For it was behind me when to me was sent the Prophet, and set before me the parable of the poor man's sheep. For saith Nathan the Prophet to David, "There was a certain rich man having very many sheep; but a poor man his neighbour had one little ewe sheep, which in his bosom and of his own food he was feeding: there came a stranger to the rich man, nothing from his flock he took, for the little ewe sheep of the poor man his neighbour he lusted; her he slew for the stranger: what doth he deserve?" But the other being angry doth pronounce sentence: then the king, evidently knowing not wherein he had been taken, declared the rich man deserving of death, and that the sheep be restored fourfold. Most sternly and most justly. But his sin was not yet before him, behind his back was what he had done: his own iniquity he did not yet acknowledge, and therefore another's he did not pardon. But the Prophet, being for this purpose sent, took from his back the sin, and before his eyes placed it, so that he might see that sentence so stern to have been pronounced against himself. For cutting and healing his heart's wound, he made a lancet of his tongue. This did the Lord to the Jews, when to Him they brought an adulterous woman, setting forth a snare of temptation, and into that which they had set forth themselves falling. In adultery, say they, this woman was taken, Moses hath commanded for such to be stoned; of this woman what dost Thou say? As though in a double trap they were trying to catch the Wisdom of God, so that if He should command to be killed, He should lose the character of gentleness; but if He should command to be let go, He should incur a charge as being a reviler of the law. What answered He then? He saith not, Kill: He saith not, Let go: but He saith, He that knoweth himself to be without sin, let him first cast a stone at her. Just is the law, which commandeth an adulteress to be killed:

but let this just law have ministers innocent. Ye heed whom ye bring to Me, heed also what ye are. They, when they had heard this, one after another went out. Remained the adulteress and the Lord; remained she wounded and He Physician; remained great misery and great mercy. They that brought blushed, but asked not pardon; she that was brought was confounded, and was healed. The Lord saith to her, Woman, hath no man condemned thee? And she, No man, Lord. And He, Neither will I condemn thee: go, now henceforward sin not. Did Christ ought against His law? No, for the Father had not without His Son given law. If heaven and earth, and all things that therein are, by Himself were made, how was law written without the Word of God? God did not then contrary to His law, because neither doth an emperor ought against his laws, when to them that have confessed he giveth a reprieve. Moses the minister of the Law, Christ the publisher of the Law. Moses stoneth as judge, Christ reprieveth as King. God then had pity on him after His great mercy, as here he asketh, as here he beggeth, as he crieth out and grieveth; what they bringing forth an adulteress would not do; their wounds at the shewing of the Physician they perceived, medicine from the Physician asked not. So there are many men that are not ashamed to sin, to do penance are ashamed. O incredible madness! At the wound itself thou dost not blush, at the bandage of the wound thou dost blush! When bare, is it not more foul and stinking? Take refuge then in the Physician, do penance, say, Mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my sin is before me ever.

9. Ver. 4. Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done. What is this? For before men was not another's wife debauched and husband slain? Did not all men know what David had done? What is, Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done. Because Thou alone art without sin. He is a just punisher that hath nothing in Him to be punished: He is a just reprover that hath nothing in Him to be reprov'd. Against Thee alone, he saith, have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. To whom he speaketh, brethren, to whom he speaketh, is difficult to understand. To God surely he speaketh, and it is evident that God the Father is not judged. What is, Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I

done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged? He seeth the future Judge to be judged, one just by sinners to be judged, and therein conquering, because in Him was nothing to be judged. For alone among men could truly say the God-Man, 'If ye have found in Me sin, say.' But perchance there was what escaped men, and they found not what was really there, but was not manifest. In another place He saith, Behold, there cometh the Prince of the world, being an acute observer of all sins; Behold, He saith, there cometh the Prince of this world, with death afflicting sinners, presiding over death: for, By the malice of the devil death came into the world. Behold, He saith, there cometh the Prince of this world: (He said these words close upon His Passion:) and in Me he shall find nothing, nothing of sin, nothing worthy of death, nothing worthy of condemnation. And as if it were said to Him, Why then dost Thou die? He continueth and saith, But that all men may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go hence. I suffer, He saith, undeserving, for men deserving, in order that them I may make deserving of My Life, for whom I undeservedly suffer their death. To Him then, having no sin, saith on the present occasion the Prophet David, Against Thee only have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. For Thou overcomest all men, all judges; and he that deemeth himself just, before Thee is unjust: Thou alone justly judgest, having been unjustly judged, That hast power to lay down Thy life, and hast power again to take it. Thou conquerest, then, when Thou art judged. All men Thou overcomest, because Thou art more than men, and by Thee were men made.

10. Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. (Ver. 5.) For, behold, in iniquities I was conceived. As though he were saying, They are conquered that have done what thou also David: for this is not a little evil and little sin, to wit, adultery and man-slaying. What of them that from the day that they were born of their mother's womb, have done no such thing? even to them dost thou ascribe some sins, in order that He may conquer all men when He beginneth to be judged. David hath taken upon him the person of mankind, and hath heeded the bonds of all men, hath considered the offspring of death, hath adverted to the origin of

iniquity, and he saith, For, behold, in iniquities I was conceived. Was David born of adultery; being born of Jesse, a righteous man, and his own wife? What is it that he saith himself to have been in iniquity conceived, except that iniquity is drawn from Adam? Even the very bond of death, with iniquity itself is engrained. No man is born without bringing punishment, bringing desert of punishment. A Prophet saith also in another place, No one is clean in Thy sight, not even an infant, whose life is of one day upon the earth. For we know both by the Baptism of Christ that sins are loosed, and that the Baptism of Christ availeth for remission of sins. If infants are every way innocent, why do mothers run with them when sick to the Church? What by that Baptism, what by that remission is put away? An innocent one I see that rather weeps than is angry. What doth Baptism wash off? what doth that Grace loose? There is loosed the offspring of sin. For if that infant could speak to thee, it would say, and if it had the understanding which David had, it would answer thee, Why heedest thou me, an infant? Thou dost not indeed see my actions: but I in iniquity have been conceived, And in sins hath my mother nourished me in the womb. Beside this bond of mortal concupiscence was Christ born without a male, of a virgin conceiving by the Holy Ghost. He cannot be said to have been conceived in iniquity, it cannot be said, In sins His mother nourished Him in the womb, to whom was said, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Virtue of the Highest shall overshadow thee. It is not therefore that men are conceived in iniquity, and in sins nourished in the womb by their mother, because it is sin to have to do with wives; but because that which is made is surely made of flesh deserving punishment. For the punishment of the flesh is death, and surely there is in it liability to death itself. Whence the Apostle spoke not of the body as if to die, but as if dead: The body indeed is dead, he saith, because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. How then without bond of sin is born that which is conceived and sown of a body dead because of sin? This chaste operation in a married person hath not sin, but the origin of sin draweth with it condign punishment. For there is no husband that, because he is an husband, is not subject to death, or that is subject to death for any other reason but because of sin. For even the Lord was subject to death, but not on account of sin: He took upon Him our punishment, and so looseth our guilt. With reason then, In Adam all die, but in Christ shall all be made alive. For, Through one man, saith the Apostle,

sin hath entered into this world, and through sin death, and so hath passed unto all men, in that all have sinned. Definite is the sentence: In Adam, he saith, all have sinned. Alone then could such an infant be innocent, as hath not been born of the work of Adam.

11. Ver. 6. For, behold, truth Thou hast loved: uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom, Thou hast manifested to me. "Truth thou hast loved;" that is, unpunished Thou hast not left even the sins of those whom Thou dost pardon. Truth Thou hast loved: so mercy Thou hast granted first, as that Thou shouldest also preserve truth. Thou pardonest one confessing, pardonest, but only if he punisheth himself: so there are preserved mercy and truth: mercy because man is set free; truth, because sin is punished. For, behold, truth Thou hast loved: uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou hast manifested to me. What hidden things? What uncertain things? Because God pardoneth even such. Nothing is so hidden, nothing so uncertain. For this uncertainty the Ninevites did penance, for they said, though after the threatenings of the Prophet, though after that cry, Three days and Nineve shall be overthrown: they said to themselves, Mercy must be implored; they said in this sort reasoning among themselves, "Who knoweth whether God may turn for the better His sentence, and have pity?" It was 'uncertain,' when it is said, Who knoweth? on an uncertainty they did penance, certain mercy they earned: they prostrated them in tears, in fastings, in sackcloth and ashes they prostrated them, groaned, wept, God spared. Nineve stood: was Nineve overthrown? One way indeed it seemeth to men, and another way it seemed to God. But I think that it was fulfilled that the Prophet had foretold. Regard what Nineve was, and see how it was overthrown; overthrown in evil, builded in good; just as Saul the persecutor was overthrown, Paul the preacher builded. Who would not say that this city, in which we now are, was happily overthrown, if all those madmen leaving their triflings were to run together to the Church with contrite heart, and were to call upon God's mercy for their past doings? Should we not say, Where is that Carthage? Because there is not what there was, it is overthrown: but if there is what there was not, it is builded. So is said to Jeremiah, Behold, I will give to thee to root up, to dig under, to overthrow, to destroy, and again, to build, and to plant. Thence is that voice of the Lord, I will smite and I will heal. He smiteth the rottenness of the deed, He

healeth the pain of the wound. Physicians do thus when they cut; they smite and heal; they arm themselves in order to strike, they carry steel, and come to cure. But because great were the sins of the Ninevites, they said, Who knoweth? This uncertainty had God disclosed to His servant David. For when he had said, before the Prophet standing and convicting him, I have sinned: straightway he heard from the Prophet, that is, from the Spirit of God Which was in the Prophet, 'Thy sin is put away from thee.' Uncertain and hidden things of His wisdom He manifested to him.

12. Ver. 7. Thou shalt sprinkle me, he saith, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed. Hyssop we know to be a herb humble but healing: to the rock it is said to adhere with roots. Thence in a mystery the similitude of cleansing the heart has been taken. Do thou also take hold, with the root of thy love, on thy Rock: be humble in thy humble God, in order that thou mayest be exalted in thy glorified God. Thou shalt be sprinkled with hyssop, the humility of Christ shall cleanse thee. Despise not the herb, attend to the efficacy of the medicine. Something further I will say, which we are wont to hear from physicians, or to experience in sick persons. Hyssop, they say, is proper for purging the lungs. In the lung is wont to be noted pride: for there is inflation, there breathing. It was said of Saul the persecutor as of Saul the proud, that he was going to bind Christians, breathing slaughter: he was breathing out slaughter, breathing out blood, his lung not yet cleansed. Hear also in this place one humbled, because with hyssop purged: Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me, that is, shalt cleanse me: and above snow I shall be whitened. Although, he saith, your sins shall have been like scarlet, like snow I will whiten. Out of such men Christ doth present to Himself a vesture without spot and wrinkle. Further, His vesture on the mount, which shone forth like whitened snow, signified the Church cleansed from every spot of sin.

13. But where is humility from hyssop? Hear what followeth: (ver. 8.) To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness, and bones humbled shall exult. To my hearing, he saith, Thou shalt give exultation and gladness: I will rejoice in hearing Thee, not in speaking against Thee. Thou hast sinned, why defendest thou thyself? Thou wilt speak: suffer thou; hear, yield to divine words, lest thou be put to confusion, and be still more

wounded: sin hath been committed, be it not defended: to confession let it come, not to defence. Thou engagest thyself as defender of thy sin, thou art conquered: no innocent patron hast thou engaged, thy defence is not profitable to thee. For who art thou that defendest thyself? Thou art meet to accuse thyself. Say not, either, I have done nothing; or, What great thing have I done? or, Other men as well have done. If in doing sin thou sayest thou hast done nothing, thou wilt be nothing, thou wilt receive nothing: God is ready to give indulgence, thou closest the door against thyself: He is ready to give, do not oppose the bar of defence, but open the bosom of confession. To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness. May He grant me Himself to say what I think. More happy are they that hear than they that speak. For he that learneth is humble, but he that teacheth laboureth that he be not proud, lest the inclination to please men to their hurt steal over him, lest he displease God that would please men. There is great dread in one teaching, my brethren, great is our trembling over these our words. Believe our heart which ye cannot see: Himself knoweth—Who, I pray, be merciful to us, Who be favourable to us!—with how much of that trembling we speak to you. But when we hear Himself suggesting any thing, and teaching within, we are without concern, without concern we rejoice: for we are under a Master; His glory we seek, Him teaching we laud: His truth delighteth us within, where no one maketh or heareth sound: there he said was his gladness and his exultation. To my hearing, he saith, Thou shalt give exultation and gladness. And therefore, because humble, he heareth. He that heareth, that heareth truly, and heareth well, heareth humble; for the glory is in Him from Whom he heareth what he heareth. After that he hath said, To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness, immediately he hath declared what hearing doth, Bones humbled shall exult. Humbled are the bones, the bones of one hearing have not haughtiness, have not swelling, which he that speaketh doth scarce conquer in himself. Thence also that great man was humble, than whom among those born of women no one greater hath arisen, he that so humbled himself, that he pronounced himself unworthy to loose the latchet of his Lord's shoe; that John Baptist, giving glory to his Master, and thus to his Friend; he saith, when he was thought to be Christ, and of this thing might have been proud, and have enlarged himself: (for he had not himself said he was Christ; but he might have accepted the mistake of men so thinking, of

themselves willing to confer this honour;) but he voided the false honour, in order that he might find true glory: and see the humility of the hearing: he saith, He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him. He made himself one standing and hearing, not one falling and speaking. He standeth, he saith, and heareth Him. Ye have heard the hearing; where is the exultation and gladness? Immediately he continueth, “Standeth and heareth Him, and with joy rejoiceth, because of the voice of the Bridegroom.”

To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness, and bones humbled shall exult.

14. Ver. 9. Turn Thou away Thy face from my sins, and all mine iniquities blot out. For now bones humbled exult, now with hyssop cleansed, humble I have become. Turn Thou away Thy face, not from me, but from my sins. For in another place praying he saith, Turn not away Thy face from me. He that would not that God's face be turned away from himself, would that God's face be turned away from his sins. For to sin, when God turneth not Himself away, he adverteth: if he adverteth, he animadverteth: Turn away Thy face from my sins, and all mine iniquities blot out. He is busied with that capital sin: he reckoneth on more, he would have all his iniquities to be blotted out: he relieth on the Physician's hand, on that great mercy, upon which he hath called in the beginning of the Psalm: All mine iniquities blot out. God turneth away His face, and so blotteth out, by 'turning away' His face, sins He blotteth out, by 'turning towards,' He writeth them. Thou hast heard of Him blotting out by turning away, hear of Him by turning towards, doing what? But the countenance of the Lord is upon men doing evil things, that He may destroy from the earth the remembrance of them: He shall destroy the remembrance of them, not by 'blotting out their sins.' But here he doth ask what? Turn away Thy face from my sins. Well he asketh. For he doth not himself turn away his face from his sins, saying, For my sin I acknowledge. With reason thou askest and well askest, that God turn away from thy sin, if thou from thence dost not turn away face: but if thou settest thy sin at thy back, God doth there set His face. Do thou turn sin before thy face, if thou wilt that God thence turn away His face; and then safely thou askest, and He heareth.

15. Ver. 10. A clean heart create in me, O God. Create he meant to say, ‘as it were begin something new;’ but, because repentant he was praying, that had committed some sin, which before he had committed, he was more innocent, he sheweth after what manner he hath said, ‘create.’ And a right spirit renew in my inner parts. By my doing, he saith, the uprightness of my spirit hath been made old and bowed. For he saith in another Psalm, They have bowed my soul. And when a man doth make himself stoop unto earthly lusts, he is ‘bowed’ in a manner, but when he is made erect for things above, upright is his heart made, in order that God may be good to him. For, How good is the God of Israel to the upright of heart! Moreover, brethren, listen. Sometimes God chastiseth in this world for his sin him that He pardoneth in the world to come. For even to David himself, to whom it had been already said by the Prophet, Thy sin is put away, there happened certain things which God had threatened for that very sin. For his son Abessalom against him waged bloody war, and many ways humbled his father. He was walking in grief, in the tribulation of his humiliation, so resigned to God, that, ascribing to Him all that was just, he confessed that he was suffering nothing undeservedly, having now an heart upright, to which God was not displeasing. A slanderous person and one throwing in his teeth harsh curses he patiently heard, one of the soldiers on the opposite side, that were with his unnatural son. And when he was heaping curses upon the king, one of the companions of David, enraged, would have gone and smitten him; but he is kept back by David. And he is kept back how? For that he said, God sent him to curse me. Acknowledging his guilt he embraced his penance, seeking glory not his own, praising the Lord in that good which he had, Praising the Lord in that which he was suffering, ‘blessing the Lord alway, ever His praise was in his mouth.’ Such are all the upright in heart: not those crooked persons who think themselves upright and God crooked: who when they do any evil thing, rejoice; when they suffer any evil thing, blaspheme; nay, if set in tribulation and scourging, they say from their distorted heart, “O God, what have I done to Thee?” Truly it is because they have done nothing to God, for they have done all to themselves. And an upright spirit, renew in my inner parts.

16. Ver. 11. Cast me not forth from Thy face. Turn away Thy face from my sins: and cast me not forth from Thy face. Whose face he feareth, upon the

face of the Same he calleth. Cast me not forth from Thy face, and Thy Holy Spirit take not away from me. For there is the Holy Spirit in one confessing. Even now to the gift of the Holy Spirit it belongeth, that what thou hast done displeaseth thee. The unclean spirit sins do please, the Holy One they displease. Though then thou still implore pardon, yet thou art joined to God on the other part, because the evil thing that thou hast committed displeaseth thee: for the same thing displeaseth both thee and Him. Now ye are two to assail thy fever, thou and the Physician. For the reason that there cannot be confession of sin, and punishment of sin, in a man of himself: when one is angry with himself, and is displeasing to himself, then it is not without the gift of the Holy Spirit, nor doth he say, Thy Holy Spirit give to me, but, Take not away from me. 'And, Thy Holy Spirit take not away from me.'

17. Ver. 12. Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation. Give back what I had, what by sinning I had lost: Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation: to wit, of Thy Christ. For who without Him can be made whole? Because even before that He was Son of Mary, In the beginning He was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and so by the holy fathers this is believed to have been the dispensation of flesh taken upon Him, which was to be, as is believed by us to have been done. Times are changed, not faith. Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation: and with Principal Spirit confirm me. Some have here understood the Trinity in God, Itself God, the dispensation of Flesh being excepted therefrom: since it is written, God is a Spirit. For that which is not body, and yet is, seemeth to exist in such sort as that it is spirit. Therefore some understand here the Trinity spoken of, In upright Spirit, the Son, in Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost, in Principal Spirit, Father. Whether then this be so, or whether upright Spirit He would have to be taken of man himself, when He saith, An upright spirit renew in my inner parts, which I have bowed and distorted by sinning, so that in that case the Holy Spirit be Himself the Principal Spirit; which also he would not have to be taken away from him, and thereby would have himself to be confirmed therein, it is not any heretical opinion.

18. But see what he annexeth: With Spirit, he saith, Principal confirm Thou me. Wherein confirm? Because Thou hast pardoned me, because I am secure, that what Thou hast forgiven is not to me ascribed, on this being made secure and with this grace confirmed, therefore I am not ungrateful. But I shall do what? (Ver. 13.) I would teach unrighteous men Thy ways. I would teach unrighteous men, being of unrighteous, that is, one that was myself an unrighteous man, now no longer unrighteous; the Holy Spirit not having been taken away from me, and I being confirmed with Principal Spirit, I would teach unrighteous men Thy ways. What ways wilt thou teach unrighteous men? And ungodly men to Thee shall be converted. If David's sin is counted for ungodliness, let not ungodly men despair of themselves, forasmuch as God hath spared an ungodly man; but let them take heed that to Him they be converted, that His ways they learn: but if David's deed is not counted for ungodliness, but this is properly called ungodliness, namely, to apostatise from God, not to worship one God, or never to have worshipped, or to have forsaken Him Whom one did worship, then what he saith hath the force of superabundance, And ungodly men shall to Thee be converted. So full art thou of the fatness of mercy, that for those converted to Thee, not only sinners of any sort, but even ungodly, there is no cause for despair. Wherefore? That believing on Him that justifieth an ungodly man, their faith may be counted for righteousness.

19. Ver. 14. Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health. The Latin translator hath expressed, though by a word not Latin, yet an accuracy from the Greek. For we all know that in Latin, 'sanguines' (bloods) are not spoken of, nor yet 'sanguina' (bloods in the neuter), nevertheless because the Greek translator hath thus used the plural number, not without reason, but because he found this in the original language the Hebrew, a godly translator hath preferred to use a word not Latin, rather than one not exact. Wherefore then hath he said in the plural number, From bloods? In many bloods, as in the origin of the sinful flesh, many sins he would have to be understood. The Apostle having regard to the very sins which come of the corruption of flesh and blood, saith, Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God. For doubtless, after the true faith of the same Apostle, that flesh shall rise again and shall itself gain incorruption, as He saith Himself, This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on

immortality. Because then this corruption is of sin, by the name thereof sins are called: in like manner as both that morsel of flesh and member which playeth in the mouth when we articulate words is called a tongue, and that is called a tongue which by the tongue is made, as we call one tongue the Greek, another the Latin; for the flesh is not diverse, but the sound. In the same manner, then, as the speech which is made by the tongue is called a tongue; so also the iniquity which is made by blood is called blood. Heeding, then, his many iniquities, as in the expression above, (ver. 9.) And all my iniquities blot out, and ascribing them to the corruption of flesh and blood, Free me, he saith, from bloods: that is, free me from iniquities, cleanse me from all corruption. For incorruption he desireth, who saith, Deliver me from bloods: because ‘flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God, nor corruption incorruption.’ Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health. He sheweth that when there hath been perfect health in that body, corruption in it there shall not be, which is implied in the name of flesh and blood: for thus is the perfect soundness of the body. For after what sort is that sound which slippeth, which hath need, which hath a kind of perpetual sickness of hunger and of thirst? These things then shall not be: because Meat is for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall make void both it and them. There shall be a form of body made perfect out of God, Death having been swallowed up into victory, no corruption remaining, no defect creeping over, being changed by no ages, by no toil wearied, so as that it be to be supported by food or any meat. But we shall not be without meat and drink: God Himself shall be our food and our drink. Such food alone restoreth, and faileth not. Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health. For in a manner now we are in that same health. Hear the Apostle: For by hope we have been made whole. And observe that he was speaking of actual health of body: In our own selves, he saith, we groan, awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body: for by hope we have been made whole: but hope which is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if for what we see not we hope, we by patience wait for it. Of him that shall have persevered unto the end is that very patience: he shall be made whole, this is the health which we have not yet, but are to have. Not yet is the substance, but certain hope. And my tongue shall exult of Thy righteousness.

20. Ver. 15. O Lord, my lips Thou shalt open, and my mouth shall tell of Thy praise. Thy praise, because I have been created: Thy praise, because sinning I have not been forsaken: Thy praise, because I have been admonished to confess: Thy praise, because in order that I might be secured I have been cleansed. My lips Thou shalt open, and my mouth shall tell of Thy praise.

21. Ver. 16. Because if Thou hadst willed sacrifice, I would have given it surely. David was living at that time when sacrifices of victim animals were offered to God, and he saw these times that were to be. Do we not perceive ourselves in these words? Those sacrifices were figurative, foretelling the One Saving Sacrifice. Not even we have been left without a Sacrifice to offer to God. For hear what he saith, having a concern for his sin, and wishing the evil thing which he hath done to be forgiven him: If Thou hadst willed, he saith, sacrifice, I would have given it surely. With holocausts Thou wilt not be delighted. Nothing shall we therefore offer? So shall we come to God? And whence shall we propitiate Him? Offer; certainly in thyself thou hast what thou mayest offer. Do not from without fetch frankincense, but say, In me are, O God, Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. Do not from without seek cattle to slay, thou hast in thyself what thou mayest kill. (Ver. 17.) Sacrifice to God is a spirit troubled, a heart contrite and humbled God despiseth not. Utterly he despiseth bull, he-goat, ram: now is not the time that these should be offered. They were offered when they indicated something, when they promised something; when the things promised come, the promises are taken away. A heart contrite and humbled God despiseth not. Ye know that God is high: if thou shalt have made thyself high, He will be far from thee; if thou shalt have humbled thyself, He will draw near to thee.

22. See who this is: David as one man was seeming to implore; see ye here our image and the type of the Church.

Ver. 18. Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion. With this Sion deal kindly. What is Sion? A city holy. What is a city holy? That which cannot be hidden, being upon a mountain established. Sion in prospect, because it hath prospect of something which it hopeth for. For Sion is interpreted 'prospect,' and Jerusalem, 'vision of peace.' Ye perceive then

yourselves to be in Sion and in Jerusalem, if being sure ye look for hope that is to be, and if ye have peace with God. And be the walls of Jerusalem builded. Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion, and be the walls of Jerusalem builded. For not to herself let Sion ascribe her merits: do Thou with her deal kindly, Be the walls of Jerusalem builded: be the battlements of our immortality laid, in faith and hope and charity.

23. Ver. 19. Then Thou shalt accept the sacrifice of righteousness. But now sacrifice for iniquity, to wit, a spirit troubled, and a heart humbled; then the sacrifice of righteousness, praises alone. For, Blessed they that dwell in Thy house, for ever and ever they shall praise Thee: for this is the sacrifice of righteousness. Oblations and holocausts. What are holocausts? A whole victim by fire consumed. When a whole beast was laid upon the altar with fire to be consumed, it was called a holocaust. May divine fire take us up whole, and that fervor catch us whole. What fervor? Neither is there that hideth himself from the heat thereof. What fervor? That whereof speaketh the Apostle; In spirit fervent. Be not merely our soul taken up by that divine fire of wisdom, but also our body; that it may earn there immortality; so be it lifted up for a holocaust, that death be swallowed into victory. Oblations and holocausts. Then shall they lay upon Thine altar calves. Whence calves? What shall He therein choose? Will it be the innocence of the new age, or necks freed from the yoke of the law?

24. The Psalm, in the name of Christ, is ended, though perchance not as we would, yet as we could. It remaineth in few words to address you, brethren, because of the many evil things amid which we live. For living in things human, we cannot withdraw from things human. With forbearance we must live amid evil men: because when we were evil, with forbearance good men have lived amid us. Not forgetting what we have been, we shall not despair of those that now are what we have been. Nevertheless, dearly beloved, in so great diversity of morals and so detestable a corruption, rule your houses, rule your children, rule your families. In like manner as to us it belongeth in the Church to speak with you, so to you it belongeth so to do in your houses, that ye may give a good account of them that have been committed to your charge. God loveth discipline. But it is a perverse and false harmlessness to give the rein to sins. Very much without profit, very

destructively doth the son experience leniency in his father, to the end that hereafter from God he may experience severity: and that not alone, but together with his careless father. But why! If he sinneth not himself, and doth not what his son doth: for that reason ought he not to restrain his son from that very wickedness? Is it perchance in order that the son may think that the father also would do such things, if he had not grown old? Sin which to thee is not displeasing in thy son, doth delight thee: but the age hath left thee, not the concupiscence. Most of all, my brethren, take heed to your sons that believe, for whom ye have engaged that they should be baptized, but perchance an evil son despiseth both the warnings of his father, and reproof, and severity; do thou fulfil thy part, God of him doth exact his.

PSALM 52

EXPOSITION

1. The Psalm of which we have undertaken to speak to your Love is short: but hath a title somewhat operose. Patiently therefore bear with us, until we unravel it, as best we may, as far as the Lord shall have aided us. For these titles must not in every case be omitted: since indeed it hath seemed good to the brethren, that the words which we say should be taken down not only with ear and heart, but also with pen: so that we are obliged to consider not only hearer, but also reader. Occasion was given to this Psalm by a certain action performed, which we have also caused to be read to you from the book of Kings. For Saul having been chosen king not to abide, but after the people's hard and evil heart, having been given for their reproof not for their profit, according to that text of holy Scripture which saith of God, Who maketh a hypocrite man to reign, because of the perverseness of the people: since therefore of such sort was Saul, he persecuted David, in whom God was prefiguring the kingdom of eternal salvation, and whom God had chosen to abide in his seed: inasmuch as indeed our King, King of ages with Whom we are to reign for everlasting, was to be from the seed of that same David after the flesh. Though then David God had elected and pre-elected and predestined to the kingdom, He would not have even David himself to hold the kingdom before that first He delivered him from them that persecuted him: in order that even in this very thing he might figure us, that is, His Body, of which Body the Head is Christ. For furthermore, if Himself our Head, without labour having been at first accomplished on the earth, chose not in heaven to reign, nor to raise up the Body, which from below He received, save by the way of tribulation; why dare the members expect, that they can be more fortunate than their Head? If the Master of the Family they have called Beelzebub, how much more His Household. Expect we not therefore a more easy way: wherein He hath gone before, go

we; wherein He hath led, follow we. For if from His steps we have strayed, we perish. In this David then, what was being prefigured ye see: kingdom evil in Saul, kingdom good in David: death in Saul, and life in David. For us nothing doth persecute but death, over which at the last we shall triumph, saying, Where, O Death, is thy contention? Where, O Death, is thy sting? What is it that I say; doth nothing persecute but death? Because, unless we are subject to death, there would be nothing which the enemy could do to us. For doth he to angels do any thing? Therefore even death itself, from which most of all we have persecution, whose contention is ended at the end, when we shall have risen again from the dead, as it was ended in our Head, so will be ended in us likewise, if we shall have been found just. For He having died hath been the slayer of death, and more in Him death hath died than Himself in death.

2. Secondly, even the name itself, if we heed, is not without mystery. For Saul is interpreted, ‘seeking;’ that is, earnest seeking. For how ought we to doubt that we to ourselves have made this death? For by man’s sin death hath been born. With reason then hath man himself for himself earnestly sought death, and thus seeking is a name of death. For as it is written, God made not death, neither is glad at the perdition of the living. For God hath created all things that they might be, and healthful hath made the nations of the whole world. And, as if thou wast enquiring, ‘whence death?’ But ungodly men with hands, he saith, and with words have called it to them, and counting it a friend, have melted away. Therefore, by seeking it earnestly they have melted away, and into death have fallen, counting it to be their friend: just as the people counted as a friend, and sought, a king that was an enemy. For the people wrung from the Lord to have a king, and there was given them Saul, as if they had been given up into their own hands, that with hands and words called to them death; and there was figured in Saul himself death itself. Therefore that seventeenth Psalm thus hath the title: In the day wherein the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said first, all his enemies: and afterwards, from the hand of Saul: because the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. What is, and from the hand of Saul? Forasmuch as He hath taken us forth from hell, and from the hand of death hath freed us.

3. When therefore Saul was persecuting the holy man David, David took refuge where he thought it to be safe: passing over by a certain Priest Achimelech, he received of him loaves. Wherein he figured also the character not only of a King but also of a Priest: because he ate the 'loaves of shewing,' which, as saith the Lord in the Gospel, it was not lawful to eat but for the priests alone. After this Saul began to seek him, and was angry with his men because no one would betray him to him. In this sort it is read in the Book of Kings. But there was there a certain Doeg, (when he had come to Achimelech the Priest, chief of the shepherds of Saul, an Edomite. Who when he was present, while Saul was angry with his men, because no one there would betray David, betrayed where he had seen him. Saul forthwith sent, brought forth the Priest and all that were of him, and commanded them to be slain. No one of the men of king Saul, not even at the king's command, dared to lay hand upon the Priests of the Lord: but he that had betrayed, like Judas, who retreated not from his purpose, and unto the end continued of that root to bring forth fruits, (of what kind but of such kind as an evil tree bringeth forth?) that Doeg slew with his own hand, at the king's commanding, the Priest and all that were of him: secondly, even the city of the Priests was taken by storm. We have found then this Doeg, and enemy to king David and the Priest Achimelech. One man is Doeg, but a class of men is Doeg: just as David is both the very body of king and priest, as it were one man and two characters, but yet one class of men. Further, in this time and in this age let us see these two classes, in order that either what we sing, or what we hear to be sung, may pertain to our profit. On one side let us see Doeg, on another the body of King and Priest, on another let us see the body of men against King and Priest.

4. In the first place to the names themselves give heed, how mystical they be. Doeg is interpreted 'motion:' Edomite is interpreted 'earthly.' Now see what class of men signifieth that Doeg, 'motion;' it is not, I say, one persevering for everlasting, but one to be made to change place. Earthly: why do ye look for any fruits from an earthly man? A heavenly man shall be for everlasting. There is then a kingdom earthly, as I will briefly say, and quickly will unfold, to-day in this age, where also the kingdom of heaven is sojourning. Its citizens hath each kingdom, kingdom earthly and kingdom heavenly, kingdom to be rooted up, and kingdom for everlasting to be

planted. Only in this world the citizens of each kingdom are mingled: the body of kingdom earthly, and the body of kingdom heavenly, are commingled. Kingdom heavenly groaneth amid the citizens of kingdom earthly, and sometimes (for even this must not be hushed) in a manner kingdom earthly doth exact service from citizens of the kingdom of heaven, and kingdom heavenly doth exact service from citizens of kingdom earthly. Both things to you from the Scripture of God we will prove. Daniel and the three children at Babylon were set over the king's affairs: Joseph in Egypt, next after the king, was set to govern the state, from which state the people of God was to be delivered: in that very republic Joseph in a manner was doing service, as were those three children, as was Daniel. It is evident then that kingdom earthly had made use to itself of citizens of kingdom heavenly for its purposes, that is, for the purposes of its kingdom, not for its evil deeds. What of the kingdom of heaven also, how doth it make use of citizens of kingdom earthly in this world for a time? Doth not the Apostle say of these men, that not chastely they were proclaiming the Gospel, but desiring earthly things they were preaching the kingdom of heaven, their own things they were seeking, and Christ they were proclaiming? And that ye may know that even these same men were taken for the work of the kingdom of heaven, like mercenary soldiers, the Apostle rejoicing of them saith, There are that through envy and strife preach Christ, not chastely, thinking themselves to stir up tribulation to my bonds. But why? Forasmuch as every way, whether by occasion or whether in truth, Christ is preached. And in this I rejoice, but also I will rejoice. Of such men also Christ preacheth, saying, The Pharisees and Scribes in the seat of Moses have sat: what things they say, do ye: but what things they do, do not ye: for they say, and do not. What things they say belong to David, but what things they do belong to Doeg. Through them hear me, them imitate not. These two races of men are to-day on the earth. Of these two races singeth this Psalm.

5. But the title of the Psalm hath: At the end, understanding of David, when there came Doeg the Edomite and told Saul, David hath come into the house of Abimelech: whereas we read that he had come into the house of Achimelech. And it may chance that we do not unreasonably suppose, that because of the similarity of a name and the difference of one syllable, or rather of one letter, the titles have been varied. In the manuscripts, however,

of the Psalms, when we looked into them, rather Abimelech we have found than Achimelech. And since in another place thou hast a most evident Psalm, intimating not a dissimilarity of name, but an utterly different name; when, for instance, David changed his face before king Achish, not before king Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed: and yet the title of the Psalm is thus written, When he changed his countenance in the presence of Abimelech—the very change of name maketh us the rather intent upon a mystery, lest thou shouldest pursue the quasi-facts of history, and despise the sacred veilings. When examined, the name in that Psalm, which is Abimelech, is found to be interpreted, My father's kingdom. But in what manner did David send away his father's kingdom, and then depart, except in the same manner as Christ sent away the Jews' kingdom, and to the Gentiles passed over? Hence perchance also the Prophetic Spirit, writing the title to this Psalm, willed not to say Achimelech, but Abimelech; because, when David came to his father's kingdom, then he was betrayed; that is, when our Lord Jesus Christ came to the Jews' kingdom established by His Father, whereof He saith, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof and righteousness," then He was betrayed to death, which the word Saul doth signify. But he was not slain, as neither Isaac, though he also was figuring our Lord's passion; nor yet was the figure maintained without blood, either in the former case of the ram, or in the latter of Achimelech the priest. For it behoved not them to be slain, whom then to rise it did not behove: but their life from danger of death, though with shedding of blood, Jesus in delivering, was the rather intimating the resurrection, which in this manner was being figured in them, because it was reserved for the true Lord. More on this point might be said, if in this Sermon we had undertaken to treat of the mysteries of those things that were performed.

6. Now, however, let us hear of those two kinds of men; since indeed from that title we have digressed; it may be somewhat tediously, and perchance in too many words, but yet as the Lord hath permitted. Observe ye two kinds of men; the one of men labouring, the other of those among whom they labour: the one of men thinking of earth, the other of heaven: the one of men weighing down their heart unto the deep, the other of men with Angels their heart conjoining: the one trusting in earthly things, wherein

this world aboundeth, the other confiding in heavenly things, which God, Who lieth not, hath promised. But mingled are these kinds of men. We see now the citizen of Jerusalem, citizen of the kingdom of heaven, have some office upon earth: to wit, one weareth purple, is a Magistrate, is Ædile, is Proconsul, is Emperour, doth direct the earthly republic: but he hath his heart above, if he is a Christian, if he is a believer, if he is godly, if he is despising those things wherein he is, and trusteth in that wherein he is not yet. Of which kind was that holy woman Esther, who, though she was wife of a king, incurred the danger of interceding for her countrymen: and when she was praying before God, where she could not lie, in her prayer said, that her royal ornaments were to her but as the cloth of a menstruous woman. Despair we not then of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven, when we see them engaged in any of Babylon's matters, doing something earthly in republic earthly: nor again let us forthwith congratulate all men that we see doing matters heavenly; because even the sons of pestilence sit sometimes in the seat of Moses, of whom is said, What things they say, do ye: but what things they do, do not: for they say, and do not. Those, amid earthly things, lift up heart unto heaven, these, amid heavenly words, trail heart upon earth. But there will come time of winnowing, when both are to be severed with greatest diligence, in order that no grain may pass over unto the heap of chaff that is to be burned, that not one single straw may pass over to the mass that is to be stored in the barn. So long as then now it is mingled, hear we thence our voice, that is, voice of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven: (for to this we ought to aspire, to bear with evil men here, rather than be borne with by good men:) and let us conjoin ourselves to this voice, both with ear and with tongue, and with heart and work. Which if we shall have done, we are here speaking in those things which we hear. Let us therefore speak first of the evil body of kingdom earthly.

7. Ver. 1. Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty? Observe, my brethren, the glorying of malignity, the glorying of evil men. Where is glorying? Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty? that is, he that in malice is mighty, why doth he glory? There is need that a man be mighty, but in goodness, not in malice. Is it any great thing to glory in malice? To build a house doth belong to few men, any ignorant man you please can pull down. To sow wheat, to dress the crop, to wait until it ripen, and in that fruit

on which one has laboured to rejoice, doth belong to few men: with one spark any man you please can burn all the crop. To breed an infant, when born to feed him, to educate, to bring him on to youth's estate, is a great task: to kill him in one moment of time any one you please is able. Therefore those things which are done for destruction, are most easily done. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord: he that glorieth, let him glory in goodness. Thou gloriest, because thou art mighty in evil. What art thou about to do, O mighty man, what art thou about to do, boasting thyself much? Thou art about to kill a man: this thing also a scorpion, this also one fever, this also a poisonous fungus can do. To this is thy mightiness reduced, that it be made equal to a poisonous fungus? This therefore do the good citizens of Jerusalem, who not in malice but in goodness glory: firstly, that not in themselves, but in the Lord they glory. Secondly, that those things which make for edification they earnestly do, and do such things as are strong to abide: but things which make for destruction they may do, for the discipline of men advancing, not for the oppression of the innocent. To this mightiness then that earthly body being compared, why may it not hear out of these words, Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty?

8. Ver. 2. In iniquity the whole day upon injustice hath thy tongue thought. "In iniquity the whole day," that is, in the whole of time, without weariness, without intermission, without cessation. And when thou doest not, thou thinkest; so that when any thing of evil is away from thy hands, from thy heart it is not away; either thou doest an evil thing, or while thou canst not do, thou sayest an evil thing, that is, thou evil-speakest: or when not even this thou canst do, thou willest and thinkest an evil thing. The whole day, then, that is, without intermission. We expect punishment to this man. Is he to himself a small punishment? Thou threatenest him: thou, when thou threatenest him, wilt send him whither? unto evil? Send him away unto himself. In order that thou mayest vent much rage, thou art going to give him into the power of beasts: unto himself he is worse than beasts. For a beast can mangle his body: of himself he cannot leave his heart whole. Within, against himself he doth rage of himself, and dost thou from without seek for stripes? Nay, pray God for him, that he may be set free from himself. Nevertheless in this Psalm, my brethren, there is not a prayer for evil men, or against evil men, but a prophecy of what is to result to evil

men. Think not therefore that the Psalm of ill-will saith any thing: for it is said in the spirit of prophecy.

9. There followeth then what? All thy might and all thy thought of iniquity all the day, and meditation of malignity in thy tongue without intermission, hath performed what, done what? (Ver. 3.) As with a sharp razor thou hast done deceit. See what do evil men to Saints, they scrape their hair. What is it that I have said? If there be such citizens of Jerusalem, that hear the voice of their Lord, of their King, saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: that hear the voice which but now from the Gospel hath been read, What doth it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and of himself make wreck: they despise all present good things, and above all life itself. And what is Doeg's razor to do to a man on this earth meditating on the kingdom of heaven, and about to be in the kingdom of heaven, having with him God, and about to abide with God? What is that razor to do? Hair it is to scrape, it is to make a man bald. And this belongeth to Christ, Who in the Place of a Scull was crucified. It maketh also the son of Core, which is interpreted baldness. For this hair signifieth a superfluity of things temporal. Which hairs indeed are not made by God superfluously on the body of men, but for a sort of ornament: yet because without feeling they are cut off, they that cleave to the Lord with their heart, so have these earthly things as they have hair. But sometimes even something of good with 'hair' is wrought, when thou breakest bread to the hungry, the poor without roof thou bringest into thy house; if thou shalt have seen one naked, thou coverest him: lastly, the Martyrs themselves also imitating the Lord, blood for the Church shedding, hearing that voice, As Christ laid down His life for us, so also ought we also to lay down for the brethren, in a certain way with their hair did good to us, that is, with those things which that razor can lop off or scrape. But that therefore even with the very hair some good can be done, even that woman a sinner intimated, who, when she had wept over the feet of the Lord, with her hair wiped what with tears she wetted. Signifying what? That when thou shalt have pitied any one, thou oughtest to relieve him also if thou canst. For when thou hast pity, thou sheddest as it were tears: when thou relievest, thou wipest with hair. And if this to any one, how much more to the feet of the Lord? The feet of the Lord are what? The holy Evangelists, whereof is said, How beautiful are the feet of them

that tell of peace, that tell of good things! Therefore like a razor let Doeg whet his tongue, let him whet deceit as much as he may: he will take away superfluous temporal things; will he necessary things everlasting?

10. Ver. 4. Thou hast loved malice above benignity. Before thee was benignity; herself thou shouldest have loved. For thou wast not going to expend any thing, nor wast thou going to fetch something to love by a distant voyage. Benignity is before thee, iniquity before thee: compare and choose. But perchance thou hast an eye wherewith thou seest malignity, and hast no eye wherewith thou seest benignity. Woe to the iniquitous heart. What is worse, it doth turn away itself, that it may not see what it is able to see. For what of such hath been said in another place? He would not understand that he might do good. For it is not said, he could not: but he would not, he saith, understand that he might do good, he closed his eyes from present light. And what followeth? Of iniquity he hath meditated in his bed; that is, in the inner secresy of his heart. Some reproach of this kind is heaped upon this Doeg the Edomite, a malignant body, a motion of earth, not abiding, not heavenly. Thou hast loved malignity above benignity. For wilt thou know how an evil man doth see both, and the former he doth rather choose, from the other doth turn himself away? Wherefore doth he cry out when he suffereth any thing unjustly? Wherefore doth he then exaggerate as much as he can the iniquity, and praise benignity, censuring him that hath wrought in him malignity above benignity? Be he then a rule to himself for seeing: out of himself he shall be judged. Moreover, if he do what is written, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; and, Whatsoever good things ye will that men should do unto you, these also do ye do unto them: at home he hath means of knowing, because what on himself he will not have to be done, he ought not to do to another. Thou hast loved malice above benignity. Iniquitously, inordinately, perversely thou wouldest raise water above oil: the water will be sunk, the oil will remain above. Thou wouldest under darkness place a light: the darkness will be put to flight, the light will remain. Above heaven thou wouldest place earth, by its weight the earth will fall into its place. Thou therefore wilt be sunk by loving malice above benignity. For never will malice overcome benignity. Thou hast loved malice above benignity: iniquity more than to speak of equity. Before thee is equity, before thee is iniquity: one tongue thou hast, whither

thou wilt thou turnest it: wherefore then rather to iniquity and not to equity? Food of bitterness dost thou not give to thy belly, and food of iniquity dost thou give to thy malignant tongue? As thou choosest whereon to live, so choose what thou mayest speak. Thou preferrest iniquity to equity, and preferrest malice to benignity; thou indeed preferrest, but above what can ever be but benignity and equity? But thou, by placing thyself in a manner upon those things which it is necessary should go beneath, wilt not make them to be above good things, but thou with them wilt be sunk unto evil things.

11. Ver. 5. Because of this there followeth in the Psalm, Thou hast loved all words of sinking under. Rescue therefore thyself, if thou canst, from sinking under. From shipwreck thou art fleeing, and dost embrace lead! If thou wilt not sink, catch at a plank, be borne on wood, let the Cross carry thee through. But now because thou art a Doeg the Edomite, a 'motion,' and 'of earth,' thou doest what? Thou hast loved all words of sinking-under, a tongue deceitful. This hath preceded, words of sinking-under have followed a tongue deceitful. What is a tongue deceitful? A minister of guile is a tongue deceitful, of men bearing one thing in heart, another thing from mouth bringing forth. But in these is overthrowing, in these sinking under.

12. Ver. 6. Wherefore God shall destroy thee at the end: though now thou seemest to flourish like grass in the field before the heat of the sun. For, All flesh is grass, and the brightness of man as the bloom of grass: the grass hath withered, and the bloom hath fallen down: but the word of the Lord abideth for everlasting. Behold that to which thou mayest bind thyself, to what 'abideth for everlasting.' For if to grass, and to the bloom of grass, thou shalt have bound thyself, since the grass shall wither, and the bloom shall fall down, God shall destroy thee at the end: and if not now, certainly at the end He shall destroy, when that winnowing shall have come, and the heap of chaff from the solid grain shall have been separated. Is not the solid grain for the barns, and the chaff for the fire? Shall not the whole of that Doeg stand at the left hand, when the Lord is to say, Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels? Therefore God shall destroy at the end: shall pluck thee out, and shall remove thee from thy dwelling. Now then this Doeg the Edomite is in a

dwelling: But a servant abideth not in the house for ever. Even he worketh something of good, even if not with his doings, at least with the words of God, so that in the Church, When he seeketh his own, he would say, at least, those things which are of Christ.

But He shall remove thee from thy dwelling. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, they have received their reward.” And thy root from the land of the living. Therefore in the land of the living we ought to have root. Be our root there. Out of sight is the root: fruits may be seen, root cannot be seen. Our root is our love, our fruits are our works: it is needful that thy works proceed from love, then is thy root in the land of the living. Then shall be rooted up that Doeg, nor any wise shall he be able there to abide, because neither more deeply there hath he fixed a root: but it shall be with him in like manner as it is with those seeds on the rock, which even if a root they throw out, yet, because moisture they have not, with the risen sun forthwith do wither. But, on the other hand, they that fix a root more deeply, hear from the Apostle what? I bow my knees for you to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye may be in love rooted and grounded. And because there now is root, That ye may be able, he saith, to comprehend what is the height, and breadth, and length, and depth: to know also the supereminent knowledge of the love of Christ, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God. Of such fruits so great a root is worthy, being so single, so budding, for buddings so deeply grounded. But truly this man’s root shall be rooted up from the land of the living.

13. Ver. 7. And the just shall see, and shall fear; and over him they shall laugh. Shall fear when? Shall laugh when? Let us therefore understand, and make a distinction between those two times of fearing and laughing, which have their several uses. For so long as we are in this world, not yet must we laugh, lest hereafter we mourn. We have read what is reserved at the end for this Doeg, we have read, and because we understand and believe, we see but fear. This, therefore, hath been said, The just shall see, and shall fear. So long as we see what will result at the end to evil men, wherefore do we fear? Because the Apostle hath said, In fear and trembling work out your own salvation: because it hath been said in a Psalm, Serve the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. Wherefore with fear? “Wherefore let

him that thinketh himself to stand, see that he fall not.” Wherefore with trembling? Because he saith in another place: Brethren, if a man shall have been overtaken in any delinquency, ye that are spiritual instruct such sort in the spirit of gentleness; heeding thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Therefore, the just that are now, that live of faith, so see this Doeg, what to him is to result, that nevertheless they fear also for themselves: for what they are to-day, they know; what to-morrow they are to be, they know not. Now, therefore, The just shall see, and they shall fear. But when shall they laugh? When iniquity shall have passed over; when it shall have flown over; as now to a great degree hath flown over the time uncertain; when shall have been put to flight the darkness of this world, wherein now we walk not but by the lamp of the Scriptures, and therefore fear as though in night. For we walk by prophecy; whereof saith the Apostle Peter, We have a more sure prophetic word, to which giving heed ye do well, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day shine, and the daystar arise in your hearts. So long then as by a lamp we walk, it is needful that with fear we should live. But when shall have come our day, that is, the manifestation of Christ, whereof the same Apostle saith, When Christ shall have appeared, your life, then ye also shall appear with Himself in glory, then the just shall laugh at that Doeg. For then is not the time for relieving: not as now, when thou seest a man unjustly living, thou desirest with him to strive that thou mayest amend him; because he that is unjust, being changed for the better, will be able to be just, in like manner as a just man, being changed for the worse, can be unjust. Therefore, neither for thyself presume, nor for him despair: and give diligence as much as thou canst, if thou art benign, if thou lovest not malice above benignity, that a man walking in evil way and erring thou mayest amend to the good way. But then, when shall have come the time of the Judgment, for amendment place there shall be none, but only for condemnation: and there shall be there penitence, but without fruit, because too late. Wilt thou that it be fruitful? be it not too late. To-day amend thee. Guilty thou art, He is Judge: amend the guilt, and thou shalt rejoice before the Judge. For to-day he exhorteth thee, lest He judge thee: and He that is to be thy Judge, is Himself to-day thy Advocate. Then, therefore, brethren, there remaineth a time for laughing. For that same derision of the unrighteous which is to be on the part of the just, the Book of Wisdom hath pointed out. For in her own, into whose souls wisdom doth

transport herself, she is to do what she hath spoken of, I was reprovng, and ye did not listen; I was speaking, and to my words ye attended not: and over your destruction I will laugh. This shall be done then by the just against this Doeg. But now let us see and fear, lest we be that which against him we say: and if that we were, that let us cease to be, in order that now fearing, hereafter we may laugh.

14. But what shall they then say that shall laugh? (Ver. 8.) And over him they shall laugh; and shall say, Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper. See ye the body earthly! As much as thou shalt have, so great shalt thou be, is a proverb of covetous men, of grasping men, of men oppressing the innocent, of men seizing upon other men's goods, of men denying things entrusted to their care. Of what sort is this proverb? As much as thou shalt have, so great shalt thou be; that is, as much as thou shalt have had of money, as much as thou shalt have gotten, by so much the more mighty shalt thou be. Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper. But hath trusted in the multitude of his riches. Let not a poor man, one perchance that is evil, say, I am not of this body. For he hath heard the Prophet saying, He hath trusted in the multitude of his riches: forthwith if he is poor, he heedeth his rags, he hath observed near him perchance a rich man among the people of God more richly apparelled, and he saith in his heart, Of this man he speaketh; doth he speak of me? Do not thence except thyself, do not separate thyself, unless thou shalt have seen and feared, in order that thou mayest hereafter laugh. For what doth it profit thee, if thou dost want means, and thou burnest with cupidity? When our Lord Jesus Christ to that rich man that was grieved, and that was departing from Him, had said, Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow Me: and great hopelessness for rich men foretold, so that He said, more easily could a camel pass through the eye of a needle, than a rich man enter into the kingdom of Heaven, were not forthwith the disciples grieved, saying with themselves, Who shall be able to be saved? Therefore when they were saying, Who shall be able to be saved? did they think of the few rich men, did there escape them so great a multitude of poor men? Could they not say to themselves, If it is hard, aye an impossible thing, that rich men should enter into the kingdom of heaven, as it is impossible that a camel should enter through the eye of a needle, let all poor

men enter into the kingdom of heaven, be the rich alone shut out? For how few are the rich men? But of poor men are thousands innumerable. For not the coats are we to look upon in the kingdom of heaven; but for every one's garment shall be reckoned the effulgence of righteousness: there shall be therefore poor men equal to Angels of God, clothed with the stoles of immortality, they shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father: what reason is there for us about a few rich men to be concerned, or distressed? This thought not the Apostles; but when the Lord had spoken this, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven: they saying to themselves, Who shall be able to be saved, meant what? Not means, but desires; for they saw even poor men themselves, even if not having money, yet to have covetousness. And that ye may know, that not money in a rich man, but covetousness is condemned, attend to what I say; Thou observest that rich man standing near thee, and perchance in him is money, and is not covetousness; in thee is not money, and is covetousness. A poor man full of sores, full of woe, licked by dogs, having no help, having no morsel, not having perchance a mere garment, was borne by the Angels unto Abraham's bosom. Ho! being a poor man, art thou glad now; for are even sores by thee to be desired? Is not thy patrimony soundness? There is not in this Lazarus the merit of poverty, but that of godliness. For thou seest who was borne up, thou seest not whither he was borne up. Who was borne up by Angels? A poor man, full of woe, full of sores. Whither was he borne up? Unto Abraham's bosom. Read the Scriptures, and thou shalt find Abraham to have been a rich man. In order that thou mayest know, that not riches are blamed; Abraham had much gold, silver, cattle, household, was a rich man, and unto his bosom Lazarus, a poor man, was borne up. Unto bosom of rich man, poor man: are not rather both unto God rich men, both in cupidity poor men?

15. What then in this Doeg doth the Scripture blame? It hath not said, Behold a man that was rich; but, Behold a man that hath not set God for his Helper, but hath trusted in the multitude of his riches. Not because he hath had riches, but because in them he hath trusted, and in God hath not trusted, therefore he is condemned, therefore is punished, therefore is moved from his dwelling, like that 'motion of earth,' as dust which the wind driveth

from the face of earth, therefore is rooted out the root of him from the land of the living. Are the rich men like this, of whom Paul speaketh; Charge the rich men of this world not proudly to be wise, as Doeg, nor to trust in uncertainty of riches, as himself hath 'trusted in the multitude of his riches:' but in the living God; not in the same manner as he did, That hath not set God for his Helper? Lastly, for them he doth charge what? Be they rich in good works, readily distribute, communicate. And what if they shall readily have distributed, if they shall have communicated to him that hath not? Shall they enter through the eye of a needle? They shall enter, evidently: for also for them already He hath Himself a camel entered. For He hath Himself first entered, Whom, like a camel, no man with the burden of the Passion had loaded, except Himself had laid Him down unto the earth. Because He hath also Himself said this, That which to men is impossible, to God is an easy thing. Be therefore this Doeg condemned, let just men fear for him now, let just men laugh over him hereafter. For deservedly is he condemned, that hath not set God for his helper; as thou dost, who perchance hast money, but on God art relying, not on money. And hath trusted in the multitude of his riches: hath been made like to them, who when they said, Blessed the people to whom these things are; that is, these things of earth, there rejoined forthwith he that derideth this Doeg, Blessed the people of whom is the Lord for their own God. For those things wherein they called the people blessed, the Psalm enumerateth. For they spake like strange children, like that Doeg the Edomite, that is, one earthly: Their mouth hath spoken vanity, their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. Whose own sons are as young plants firmly rooted in their youth: their daughters adorned, and decked as the similitude of a temple: their garners full, breaking forth from this unto this: their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings forth; their oxen fat; there is no falling of enclosure, nor going forth, nor cry in their streets. As it were great felicity they seem to have of earthly peace. But he that is earthly, is also a motion, that is, as dust which the wind driveth from the face of earth. Lastly, what in them is censured? Not that they have had these things; for even good men have these things; but what? To this attend: lest every where ye should censure rich men; and again, lest ye should rely on poverty and on indigence. For if we must not rely on riches, how much more we must not rely on poverty, but on the living God? Wherein then are these men noted? Because blessed they called

the people to whom these things are. Therefore are they strange children, therefore their mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. But thou, what? Blessed the people of whom is the Lord their own God.

16. Therefore that man having been condemned, that hath trusted in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity: for what more vain, that he that thinketh coin more to avail than God? Therefore that man having been condemned that said, blessed of the people to whom these things are: thou that sayest, Blessed the people of whom is the Lord their own God, dost think of thyself what? dost hope for thyself what? But I; now at length hear that body; (ver. 9.) But I am like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God. Not one man speaketh, but that olive fruit-bearing, whence have been pruned the proud branches, and the humble wild olive grafted in. Like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God, I have trusted in the mercy of God. He did what? In the multitude of his riches: therefore his root shall be plucked out from the land of the living. But I, because like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God, the root whereof is nourished, is not rooted out, have trusted in the mercy of God. But perchance now? For even herein men err sometimes. God indeed they worship, and are not now like to that Doeg: but though on God they rely, it is for temporal things nevertheless; so that they say to themselves, I worship my God, who will make me rich upon earth, who to me will give sons, who to me will give a wife. Such things indeed giveth none but God, but God would not have Himself for the sake of such things to be loved. For to this end oftentimes those things He giveth even to evil men, in order that some other thing good men of Him may learn to seek. In what manner then sayest thou, I have trusted in the mercy of God? Perchance for obtaining temporal things? Nay but, For everlasting and world without end. The expression, For everlasting, he willed to repeat by adding, world without end, in order that by there repeating he might affirm how rooted he was in the love of the kingdom of heaven, and in the hope of everlasting felicity.

17. Ver. 9. I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done. Hast done what? Doeg Thou hast condemned, David Thou hast crowned. I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done. Great confession,

Because Thou hast done! Hast done what? except these very things which above have been spoken of, that like an olive fruit-bearing in the house of God, I should trust in the mercy of God for everlasting and world without end? Thou hast done: an ungodly man cannot justify himself. But who is He that justifieth? Believing, he saith, on Him that justifieth the ungodly. For what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not received, as if of thyself thou hast? Be it far from me that I should so glory, saith he, that is opposed against Doeg, that beareth with Doeg upon earth, until he remove from his dwelling, and be rooted up from the land of the living. I glory not as if I have not received, but in God I glory. And I will confess to Thee because Thou hast done, that is, because Thou hast done not according to my merits, but according to Thy mercy. But I have done what? If thou recollectest, Before, I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But thou, what hast thou done? "But mercy I have obtained, because ignorant I did it." I will confess to thee for ever, because Thou hast done.

18. And I will look for Thy name, for it is pleasant. Bitter is the world, but Thy name is pleasant. Even if certain sweet things are in the world, yet with bitterness they are digested. Thy name is preferred, not only for greatness but also for pleasantness. For unjust men have told to me their delights, but it is not as Thy law, O Lord. For if there were nothing sweet to the Martyrs, they would not have suffered with equanimity so great bitterness of tribulations. Their bitterness by any one was experienced, their sweetness easily could no one taste. The name of God therefore is pleasant to men loving God above all pleasantnesses. I will look for Thy name, for it is pleasant. And to what dost Thou prove that it is pleasant? Give me a palate to which it is pleasant. Praise honey as much as thou art able, exaggerate the sweetness thereof with what words thou shalt have power: a man knowing not what honey is, unless he shall have tasted, what thou sayest knoweth not. Therefore the rather to the proof the Psalm inviting thee saith what? Taste and see that sweet is the Lord. Taste thou wilt not, and thou sayest, Is it pleasant? What is pleasant? If thou hast tasted, in thy fruit be it found, not in words alone, as it were only in leaves, lest by the curse of the Lord, to wither like that fig-tree thou shouldest deserve. Taste, he saith, and see, that sweet is the Lord. Taste and see: then ye shall see, if ye shall have

tasted. But to a man not tasting, how provest thou? By praising the pleasantness of the name of God, whatsoever things thou shalt have said are words: something else is taste. The words of His praise there hear even the ungodly, but none taste how sweet it is, but the Saints. Further, a man discerning the sweetness of the name of God, and wishing to unfold and wishing to shew the same, and not finding persons to whom he may unfold it; for to the Saints there is no need that he shew it, because they even of themselves taste and know, but the ungodly cannot discern what they will not taste: doth, I say, what, because of the sweetness of the name of God? He hath borne him forthwith away from the crowds of the ungodly. And I will look, he saith, for Thy name, for it is pleasant, in the sight of Thy Saints. Pleasant is Thy name, but not in the sight of the ungodly? I know how sweet a thing it is, but it is to them that have tasted.

PSALM 53

The present Volume carries the Work down to the end of Ps. 75, completing half the number of the Psalms. The whole of it, as well as a few Psalms at the end of the former and the beginning of the following volume, is translated by T. Scratton, Esq. M. A. of Ch. Ch. Oxford. A considerable portion of the Discourses on the remaining Psalms has been already translated, and it is hoped that the whole may be brought out at intervals not much exceeding half a year for each volume.

C. M.

Eve of St. John Baptist.

PSALM 53

Exposition

Of this Psalm we undertake to treat with you, as far as the Lord supplieth us. A brother biddeth us that we may have the will, and prayeth that we may have the power. If any thing in haste perchance I shall have passed over, He will supply it in you, that even to us deigneth to give what we shall be enabled to say. The title of it is: At the end, for Maeleth, understanding to David himself. For Maeleth, as we find in interpretations of Hebrew names, seemeth to say, For one travailing, or in pain. But who there is in this world that travaileth and is in pain, the faithful acknowledge, because thereof they are. Christ here travaileth, Christ here is in pain: the Head is above, the members below. For one not travailing nor in pain would not say, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Him, with whom when persecuting He was travailing, being converted, He made to travail. For he also was himself afterwards enlightened, and grafted on those members which he used to persecute; being pregnant with the same love, he said, My little children, of whom again I travail, until Christ be formed in you. For the members therefore of Christ, for His Body which is the Church, for that same One Man, that is, for that very unity, whereof the Head is above, this Psalm is sung. But this man groaneth and travaileth and is in pain. Wherefore, or amid whom, except that he hath received and learned from His Head, Who saith, Iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold? But if iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold, who shall remain to travail? It followeth, He that shall have persevered unto the end, the same shall be saved. How would it be a great thing to persevere, unless amid molestations, and temptations, and distractions, and scandals, men had to persevere? For no one is bid to endure good things. But forasmuch as for such an one it is said, and forasmuch as for such an one it is sung, let us see what it is. For his sake are rebuked here the men, amid whom he groaneth,

amid whom he is in pain, and the consolation of one in pain and travail at the end of the Psalm is drawn forth and expressed. Who are they, then, amid whom we travail and groan, if in the Body of Christ we are, if under Him, the Head, we live, if amongst His members we are counted? Who they are, hear ye.

2. Ver. 1. The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God. Such sort is it of men, amid whom is pained and groaneth the Body of Christ. If such is this sort of men, of not many do we travail; as far as seemeth to occur to our thoughts, very few there are; and a difficult thing it is to meet with a man that saith in his heart, There is no God; nevertheless, so few there are, that, fearing amid the many to say this, in their heart they say it, for that with mouth to say it they dare not. Not much then is that which we are bid to endure, hardly is it found: uncommon is that sort of men that say in their heart, There is no God. But, if it be examined in another sense, is not that found to be in more men, which we supposed to be in men few and uncommon, and almost in none? Let them come forth into the midst that live evil lives, let us look into the doings of profligate, daring, and wicked men, of whom there is a great multitude; who foster day by day their sins, who, their acts having been changed into habit, have even lost sense of shame: this is so great a multitude of men, that the Body of Christ, set amid them, scarce dareth to censure that which it is not constrained to commit, and deemeth it a great matter for itself that the integrity of innocence be preserved in not doing that which now, by habit, either it doth not dare to blame, or if it shall have dared, more readily there breaketh out the censure and recrimination of them that live evil lives, than the free voice of them that live good lives. And those men are such as say in their heart, There is no God. Such men I am confuting. Whence confuting? That their doings please God, they judge. He doth not therefore affirm, 'Some say,' but, 'The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God.' Which men do so far believe there is a God, that the same God they judge with what they do to be pleased. But if thou being wise dost perceive, how the unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God, if thou give heed, if thou understand, if thou examine; he that thinketh that evil doings please God, Him he doth not think to be God. For if God is, just He is; if just He is, injustice displeaseth Him, iniquity displeaseth. But thou, when thou thinkest that iniquity

pleaseth Him, dost deny God. For if God is one Whom iniquity displeaseth, but to thee God seemeth not to be one Whom iniquity displeaseth, and there is no God but one Whom iniquity displeaseth, when thou sayest in thy heart, God doth countenance my iniquities, nothing else thou sayest than, There is no God.

3. Let us advert also to that sense, which concerning Christ our Lord Himself, our Head Himself, doth present itself. For when Himself in form of a servant appeared on earth, they that crucified Him said, He is not God. Because Son of God He was, truly God He was. But they that are corrupted and have become abominable said what? He is not God: let us slay Him, He is not God. Thou hast the voice of these very men in the book of Wisdom. For after there had gone before the verse, The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God; as if reasons were required why the unwise man could say this, he hath subjoined, (ver. 2.) Corrupted they are, and abominable have become in their iniquities. Hear ye those corrupted men. For they have said with themselves, not rightly thinking: corruption beginneth with evil belief, thence it proceedeth to depraved morals, thence to the most flagrant iniquities, these are the grades. But what with themselves said they, thinking not rightly? A small thing and with tediousness is our life. From this evil belief followeth that which also the Apostle hath spoken of, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. But in the former passage more diffusely luxury itself is described: Let us crown us with roses, before they be withered; in every place let us leave the tokens of our gladness. After the more diffuse description of that luxury, what followeth? Let us slay the poor just man: this is therefore saying, He is not God. Soft words they seemed but now to say: Let us crown us with roses, before they be withered. What more delicate, what more soft? Wouldest thou expect, out of this softness, Crosses, swords? Wonder not, soft are even the roots of brambles; if any one handle them, he is not pricked: but that wherewith thou shalt be pricked from thence hath birth. Corrupted, therefore, are those men, and abominable have become in their iniquities. The unwise man hath said in his heart, He is not God. "If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross." Behold them openly saying, He is not God.

4. But in what manner amid them groaneth the Body of Christ? There have groaned amid them Apostles that then were, and disciples of Christ: to us in what respect do they belong? In what manner amid them do we travail? Still there are that say, Christ is not God. This say the heathens that have remained; this very thing say the Jews themselves, who for the testimony of their confusion every where have been diffused: this say also many heretics. For even the Arians have said, He is not God: Eunomians have said, He is not God. Add to this, brethren, that even they of whom a little before I have spoken, who live evil lives, do nothing else say than, He is not God. For when we say to them, that Christ is to come a Judge to the Judgment, which thing say the Scriptures that deceive not; yet they rather lending an ear to the Serpent suggesting, Thou shalt not die the death, which he had said in Paradise, contrary to the truth of God determining and saying, Thou shalt die the death; so do evil things, that they say to themselves, Christ shall come, and shall give indulgence to all. So then lying is He that hath said, He shall sever unrighteous men to the left hand, shall sever just men to the right hand: to just men shall say, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the foundation of the world: to ungodly men shall say, Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. How then to all shall He give indulgence? How shall He no one condemn? Therefore He lieth. This is to say, He is not God. See then that thou perchance lie not. For thou art a man, He God: for God is true, but every man a liar. But what say I of these men, O Body of Christ? Sever thyself from them meanwhile in heart and life, neither imitate, nor keep company, nor assent, nor approve them: but more, even rebuke them. For why dost thou give heed to them that say these words? Corrupted they are, and abominable have become in their iniquities: there is not one that doeth good.

5. Ver. 3. The Lord from Heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding and seeking after God. What is this? Corrupted they are, and abominable have become, all these that say, There is no God? And what? Did it escape God, that they were become such? Or indeed to us would their inward thought be opened, except by Him it were told? If then He understood, if then He knew, what is this which hath been said, that, From Heaven He hath looked forth upon the

sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding and seeking after God. For of one inquiring the words are, of one not knowing. God from Heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding or seeking after God. And as though He had found what He sought by looking upon, and by looking down from Heaven, He giveth sentence: (ver. 4.) All men have gone aside, together useless they have become: there is not one that doeth good, not so much as one. Two questions arise somewhat difficult: for if God looketh out from Heaven, in order that He may see if there is one understanding or seeking after God; there stealeth upon an unwise man the thought, that God knoweth not all things. This is one question: what is the other? If there is not one that doeth good, is not so much as one; who is he that travaileth amid bad men? The former question then is solved as followeth; oftentimes the Scripture speaketh in such manner, that what by the gift of God a creature doth, God is said to do: so that for instance, when thou hast pity upon a poor man, because by the gift of God thou art acting, God hath pity: when thou acknowledgest who thou art, because by aid of Him giving light thou art acting, if thou art such an one as to say, Thou shalt light my lamp, O Lord, my God, Thou shalt lighten my darkness; that which by aid of Him giving and doing thou hast acknowledged, He doth acknowledge. For whence is, The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know if ye love Him? What is, That He may know? That by His gift He may make you know. So then here also, God from heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding or seeking after God. Be He present Himself, and grant us that what He hath made our heart to conceive, He may also make it to bring forth. The Apostle saith, But we not the spirit of this world have received, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know what things by God have been given to us. By this Spirit then whereby we understand what things by God have been given to us, we distinguish between ourselves and them to whom these things have not been given, and from ourselves we understand them. For if we perceive that we could not have had any good thing except by the giving and bestowing of Him from Whom are all good things, at the same time we see that no such thing can they have to whom God hath not given. This distinguishing in us is of the Spirit of God; and by the means whereby we see this, God seeth; because this thing God doeth, that we should see. For hence has been said the

following also, For the Spirit searcheth all things, even the depth of God; not because He searcheth That knoweth all things, but because to thee hath been given the Spirit, which maketh thee also to search: and that which by His own gift thou doest, He is said to do; because without Him thou wouldest not do it: therefore God is said to do, when thou doest. By the gift of the Spirit of sons, they to whom hath been given the Spirit of God look out upon the sons of men, that they may see if there is one understanding or seeking after God: but because that by the gift of God and by the Spirit of God they do it, this God is said to do; as it were to look forth and see. But wherefore From heaven, if this is done by men? Because saith the Apostle, But our conversation is in the heavens. For whence doest thou this that thou mayest see, whence lookest forth that thou mayest perceive? Is it not in heart? If in heart thou doest this, Christian, see whether it is above thou hast thy heart. If above thou hast thy heart, from heaven upon earth thou art looking forth. And because this by the gift of God thou doest, God from heaven is looking forth upon the sons of men. The former question then, according to our measure, thus hath been solved.

6. What is that which looking forth we acknowledge? What is that which looking forth God acknowledgeth? What (because here He giveth it) doth He acknowledge? Hear what it is; that All have gone aside, together useless they have become: there is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. What then is that other question, but the same whereof a little before I have made mention? If, There is not one that doeth good, is not so much as one, no one remaineth to groan amid evil men. Stay, saith the Lord, do not hastily give judgment. I have given to men to do well; but of Me, He saith, not of themselves: for of themselves evil they are: sons of men they are, when they do evil; when well, My sons. For this thing God doth, out of sons of men He maketh sons of God: because out of Son of God He hath made Son of Man. See what this participation is: there hath been promised to us a participation of Divinity: He lieth that hath promised, if He is not first made partaker of mortality. For the Son of God hath been made partaker of mortality, in order that mortal man may be made partaker of divinity. He that hath promised that His good is to be shared with thee, first with thee hath shared thy evil: He that to thee hath promised divinity, sheweth in thee

love. Therefore take away that men are sons of God, there remaineth that they are sons of men: There is none that doeth good, is not so much as one.

7. Ver. 4. Shall not all know that work iniquity, that devour My people for the food of bread? Shall they not know? Shall it not to them be shewn? Say, menace, speak by the voice of one travailing and grieving. For Thy people is devoured for the food of bread. There is therefore here a people of God that is being devoured. Nay, There is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. We reply by the rule above. But this people that is devoured, this people that suffereth evil men, this that groaneth and travaileth amid evil men, now out of sons of men have been made sons of God: therefore are they devoured. For, The counsel of the needy man thou hast confounded, because the Lord is his hope. For oftentimes, in order that the people of God may be devoured, this very thing in it is despised, that it is the people of God. I will pillage, he saith, and despoil; if he is a Christian, what will he do to me? There speaketh for him He that speaketh for one travailing, and He doth menace them that are devouring, saying, Shall not all know, that work iniquity? For even he that was seeing a thief and was consenting with him, and with the adulterers was setting his portion, sitting against his brother was detracting, and against his mother's son was setting a stumbling-block, hath said in his heart, There is no God. Therefore this to him is said, These things thou hast done, and I kept silence: thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like thee: that is, I shall not be God, if I shall be like thee. But what followeth? I will convince thee, and will set thee before thy face. So here also, I will convince thee, and set thee before thy face. Thou wilt not now know so as thou shouldest be displeasing to thyself, thou shalt know so as thou mayest mourn. For God cannot but shew to the unrighteous their iniquity. If He is not to shew, who will they be that are to say, What hath profited us pride, and what hath boasting of riches bestowed upon us? For then shall they know, that now will not know. Shall not all know, that work iniquity, that devour My people for the food of bread? Why hath He added, for the food of bread? As it were as bread, they eat My people. For all other things which we eat, we can eat now these, now those; not always this vegetable, not always this flesh, not always these apples: but always bread. What is then, Devour My people for the food of

bread? Without intermission, without cessation they devour, That devour My people for the food of bread.

8. On God they have not called. He is comforting the man that groaneth, and chiefly by an admonition, lest by imitating evil men, who oftentimes prosper, they delight in evil doing. There is kept for thee that which to thee hath been promised: their hope is present, thine is future, but theirs is transient, thine sure; theirs false, thine true. For they, Upon God have not called. Do not daily such men ask of God? They do not ask of God. Give heed, if I am able to say this by the aid of God Himself. God gratuitously will have Himself to be worshipped, gratuitously will have Himself to be loved, that is chastely to be loved; not Himself to be loved for the reason that He giveth any thing besides Himself, but because He giveth Himself. He then that calleth upon God in order that He may be made rich, on God doth not call: for upon that He calleth which to himself he willeth to come. For what is to “call upon” but to call unto himself? Unto himself therefore to call, is the meaning of to call upon. For when thou sayest, O God, give me riches: thou wilt not that God Himself should come to thee, but wilt that riches should come to thee. What thou wilt to thee should come, upon the same thou callest. But if upon God thou wast calling, to thee He would Himself come, Himself would be thy riches. But now thou wouldest have coffer full, and conscience void: God filleth not coffer but breast. What do outward riches profit thee, if inward need presseth thee? Therefore those men that for the sake of worldly comforts, that for the sake of earthly good things, that for the sake of present life and earthly felicity, call upon God, do not call upon God.

9. For this reason what followeth concerning them? (Ver. 5.) There have they feared with fear, where there was no fear. For is there fear, if a man lose riches? There is no fear there, and yet in that case men are afraid. But if a man lose wisdom, truly there is fear, and in that case he is not afraid. Hear, distinguish, understand such men: there is entrusted to some one or other a bag, he will not give it back, for his own he counteth it, he thinketh not that it can be demanded back, already for his own he will keep it, he refuseth to give it back. Let him observe what he feareth to lose, and what he will not have: into jeopardy come money and fidelity; whichever is the

more valuable, therein the heavier loss is to be feared. But thou, that thou mayest keep gold, dost lose fidelity: with heavier loss thou art stricken, and thou of thy gain hast rejoiced: in that case thou hast feared with fear, where was no fear: give back the money: too little I say, 'give back;' lose the money, lest thou lose fidelity. Thou hast feared to give back money, and hast willed to lose fidelity. The Martyrs took not away property of other persons, but even their own they despised that they might not lose fidelity: and it was too little to lose money, when they were proscribed; they took also their life when they suffered: they lost life, in order that unto everlasting life they might find it. Therefore there they feared, where they ought to have been afraid. But they that of Christ have said, He is not God, have there feared where was no fear. For they said, If we shall have let Him go, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and kingdom. O folly and imprudence saying in its heart, He is not God! Thou hast feared to lose earth, thou hast lost Heaven: thou hast feared lest there should come the Romans, and take away from thee place and kingdom! Could they take away from thee God? What then remaineth? what but that thou confess, that thou hast willed to keep, and by keeping ill hast lost? For thou hast lost both place and nation by slaying Christ. For ye did will rather to slay Christ, than to lose place; and ye have lost place, and nation, and Christ. In fearing, they have slain Christ: but wherefore this? For God hath scattered the bones of them that please men. Willing to please men, they feared to lose their place. But Christ Himself, of Whom they said, He is not God, willed rather to displease such men, as they were: sons of men, not sons of God, He willed rather to displease. Thence were scattered their bones, His bones no one hath broken. They were confounded, for God hath despised them. In very deed, brethren, as far as regardeth them, great confusion hath come to them. In the place where they crucified the Lord, Whom for this cause they crucified, that they might not lose both place and nation, the Jews are not. God, therefore, hath despised them: and yet in despising He warned them to be converted. Let them now confess Christ, and say, He is God, of Whom they said, 'He is not God.' Let them return to the inheritance of their fathers, to the inheritance of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, let them possess with these very persons life eternal: though they have lost life temporal. Wherefore this? Because out of sons of men have been made sons of God. For so long as they remain, and will not, there is

not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. They were confounded, for God hath despised them. And as though to these very persons He were turned, He saith, (ver. 6.) Who shall give out of Sion salvation to Israel? O ye fools, ye revile, insult, buffet, besmear with spittings, with thorns ye crown, upon the Cross ye lift up; whom? Who shall give out of Sion salvation to Israel? Shall not That Same of Whom ye have said, 'He is not God?' In God's turning away the captivity of His people. For there turneth away the captivity of His people, no one but He that hath willed to be a captive in your own hands. But what men shall understand this thing? Jacob shall exult, and Israel shall rejoice. Israel; the true Jacob, and the true Israel, that younger, to whom the elder was servant, shall himself exult, for he shall himself understand.

PSALM 54

Exposition

1. The title of this Psalm hath fruit in the prolixity thereof, if it be understood: and because the Psalm is short, let us make up by tarrying over the title, our not having to tarry over the Psalm. For upon this dependeth every verse which is sung. If any one, therefore, observe that which on the front of the house is fixed, secure he will enter; and, when he shall have entered, he will not err. For this on the post itself is prominently marked, namely, in what manner within he may not be in error. The title thereof standeth thus: At the end, in hymns, understanding to David himself, when there came the Ziphites, and said to Saul, Behold, is not David hidden with us? That Saul was persecutor of the holy man David, very well we know: that Saul was bearing the figure of a temporal kingdom, not to life but to death belonging, this also to your Love we remember to have imparted. And also that David himself was bearing the figure of Christ, or of the Body of Christ, ye ought both to know and to call to mind, ye that have already learned. What then of the Ziphites? There was a certain village, Ziph, whereof the inhabitants were Ziphites, in whose country David had hidden himself, when Saul would find and slay him. These Ziphites then, when they had learned this, betrayed him to the king his persecutor, saying, Behold, is not David hidden with us? Of no good to them indeed was their betrayal, and to David himself of no harm. For their evil disposition was shewn: but Saul not even after their betrayal could seize David; but rather in a certain cave in that very country, when into his hands Saul had been given to slay, David spared him, and that which he had in his power he did not. But the other was seeking to do that which he had not in his power. Let them that have been Ziphites take heed: let us see those whom to us the Psalm presenteth to be understood by the occasion of those same men.

2. If we inquire then by what word is translated Ziphites, we find, Men flourishing. Flourishing then were certain enemies to holy David, flourishing before him hiding. We may find them in mankind, if we are willing to understand the Psalm. Let us find here at first David hiding, and we shall find his adversaries flourishing. Observe David hiding: For ye are dead, saith the Apostle to the members of Christ, and your life is hid with Christ in God. These men, therefore, that are hiding, when shall they be flourishing? When Christ, he saith, your life, shall have appeared, then ye also with Him shall appear in glory. When these men shall be flourishing, then shall be those Ziphites withering. For observe to what flower their glory is compared: All flesh is grass, and the honour of flesh as the flower of grass. What is the end? The grass hath withered, and the flower hath fallen off. Where then shall be David? See what followeth: But the Word of the Lord abideth for ever. These therefore are two sorts of men, which ye ought both to distinguish and to choose one of them. For what doth it profit thee to know, if thou art slow to choose? And indeed now the power of choosing lieth near thee: there shall come a time when thou shalt no more have the power of choosing, when no longer God shall defer the sentence of judgment. For who are these flourishing Ziphites, except that body of Doeg the Edomite; of whom already we have spoken to your Love a few days since: of whom it was said, Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper, but hath trusted in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity. These are the flourishing sons of the world, of whom but now ye have heard from the Gospel, that In their own generation they are more crafty than the children of light. For they too seem to look forward unto the future, whereto they know not whether they may come. Ye have heard what that steward did to his master, making for himself a store out of his master's property, and bestowing it upon his debtors, in order that when he should be removed from his stewardship, he might be received by them. And though he defrauded his master, yet his master praised his wit, not heeding his own loss, but his ingenuity. How much more ought we, Himself our Lord Jesus Christ admonishing, to make to ourselves friends of the Mammon of iniquity? For Mammon is interpreted riches. But our riches are in that place, where is our house eternal in the heavens. Again, money temporal they call riches, who except for a time cannot flourish, nor for everlasting from these do will to make to themselves friends, because true riches they know not.

These riches then to be riches iniquity alone doth count, flourishing as it does for a time like grass. These are the Ziphites, enemies of David, flourishing in the world.

3. These men sometimes are observed of the weak sons of light, and their feet totter, when they have seen evil men in felicity to flourish, and they say to themselves, 'Of what profit to me is innocence? What doth it advantage me that I serve God, that I keep His commandments, that I oppress no one, from no one plunder any thing, hurt no one, that what I can I bestow? behold, all these things I do, and they flourish, I toil.' But why! Wouldest thou also wish to be a Ziphite? They flourish in the world, wither in judgment, and after withering, into fire everlasting shall be cast: wouldest thou also choose this? Art thou ignorant of what He hath promised thee, Who to thee hath come, what in Himself here He displayed? If the flower of the Ziphites were to be desired, would not Himself thy Lord also in this world have flourished? Or indeed was there wanting to Him the power to flourish? Nay but here He chose rather amid the Ziphites to hide, and to say to Pontius Pilate, as if to one being himself also a flower of the Ziphites, and in suspicion about His kingdom, My kingdom is not of this world. Therefore here He was hidden: and all good men are hidden here, because their good is within, it is concealed, in the heart it is, where is faith, where charity, where hope, where their treasure is. Do these good things appear in the world? Both these good things are hidden, and the reward of these good things is hidden. But truly the dignity of the world is white, in what manner? It is bright for a time; will it alway be bright? It is grass in the winter, until the summer it is green. Let not that thing therefore be done in the mind, which in another Psalm we light on. For there a certain one confesseth that he almost fell himself, and that his steps slipped walking in the way of God, while he was beholding the flower, as it were, and felicity of the ungodly: and after that he understood what God was reserving for the wicked at the last, and what He that cannot deceive was promising to the just toiling, returning thanks for this understanding, he saith, How good is the God of Israel to the right in heart! Wherefore dost thou say this? But my own feet, he saith, were almost moved. For what reason? Because I was jealous toward sinners, beholding the peace of sinners. But his steps were strengthened after that he understood at the last. For that which in the same

Psalm a little after he saith, On this account labour is before me, is this; a great question to me hath arisen in my heart, wherefore men do evil, and in the world flourish, but many men do well, and in this world do labour. While this great question was before my eyes, and laborious to be investigated; there is labour, he saith, before me: until I enter into the Sanctuary of God, and understand at the last things. What are these last things? What but those things which we know already in the Gospel to have been foretold? For when the Son of Man shall be come, there shall be gathered before Him all nations, and He shall separate them, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; the sheep He shall set on the right hand, the goats on the left. Behold then shall these Ziphites be separated: flame followeth separation. Where is the flower of them that now on the left hand shall stand? Shall they not then groan? shall they not then be racked with a too late penitence, and say, Of what profit to us hath been pride, and what hath boasting of riches bestowed upon us? All these things have passed away like a shadow, O ye Ziphites, on the left hand standing, too late it repenteth you in the shadow to have flourished. Wherefore did ye not acknowledge David, whose hiding among you ye betrayed? For then if ye had been amended, that sorrow would not have been without fruit. For there is a sorrow with fruit, there is one without fruit: a sorrow with fruit is now when thyself thou accusest, when in thyself thou censurest thy evil customs, when them censured thou dost persecute, persecuted thou shuttest them out, and, after these have been shut out, thou art changed, putting off from thyself the old man, and putting on the new, choosing rather the reproach of Christ than the flower of the Ziphites. Moreover, if while holding thy good in secret, and hiding amid Ziphites, holding in secret also the promise of thy reward, there shall have chanced to thee any high place of the world, be not lifted up: for if lifted up thou shalt have been, thou wilt fall unto the flower of the Ziphites. For so it was with a certain holy woman, Esther, amid the then people of the Jews: though she was the wife of a foreign king, she so shared the danger of her countrymen, that she interceded with the king for her countrymen: she began to pray, and in the very prayer she confessed that all those royal deckings were to her but as the cloth of a menstruous woman. If these things women can do, cannot men? And if these things a Jewish woman could do, shall not the Christian Church be able? This therefore I would say to your Love. If riches flow in, set not your heart

upon them. Though they abound, and there follow thee the prosperity of the world, trust not thou in the sea, though it smile on thee. If riches flow in, if they abound, trample them, and depend upon thy God. For when they beneath thee thou shalt have put, and on Him shalt have depended, when they shall have been taken away thou wilt not fall. Let not perchance by thy thought evil and unchristian, that be done in thee which is spoken of in another Psalm, when there had been made mention of the flower of these Ziphites. Too deep, he saith, have become Thy thoughts. I say, it is said, Too deep have become Thy thoughts: a man unwise shall not know, and a fool shall not understand, these things. Shall not understand what? When there shall rise up sinners like grass, and all they that work iniquity shall have beheld, that they perish for ever and ever. They have been delighted with the flower of evil men: they have said with themselves, Behold evil men flourish, I suppose evil men God doth love; and being delighted with the temporal flower of iniquity, they turned themselves to iniquity, so that they perished. Not for a time, as they flourish, but for ever and ever. Whence this? Because a man unwise shall not know, and a fool shall not understand, these things; not entering into the Sanctuary of God, in order to ‘understand at the last things.’ And because somewhat difficult is this understanding, from thence beginneth this Psalm, namely, how David was hiding among the Ziphites, and was not delighted with the flower of the Ziphites; but chose rather amid them humility, in order that he might have with God hidden glory. What then to him is there being ascribed in this title? At the end, in hymns: that is, in praises. In what praises? The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. Withered in a manner did he seem, in the loss of all his substance? God forbid! Leaves had fallen; the root was living. Therefore, At the end in hymns. What is “Understanding to David himself?” Understanding against this, “A man unwise shall not know, and a fool shall not understand these things.” Understanding to David himself, when there came the Ziphites, and said to Saul, Behold, is not David hidden with us? And be he hidden with you, so long as he flourish not like you. Hear, therefore, the voice of him.

4. Ver. 1. O God, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me
Let the Church say this, hiding amid the Ziphites. Let the body Christian

say this, keeping secret the good of its morals, expecting in secret the reward of its merits, let it say this: O God, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me. Thou hast come, O Christ, humble Thou hast appeared, despised Thou hast been, scourged hast been, crucified hast been, slain hast been; but, on the third day hast risen, on the fortieth day into Heaven hast ascended: Thou sittest at the right hand of the Father, and no one seeth: Thy Spirit thence Thou hast sent, Which men that were worthy have received; fulfilled with Thy love, the praise of that very humility of Thine throughout the world and nations they have preached: Thy name I see to excel among mankind, but nevertheless as weak to us hast Thou been preached. For not even did that Teacher of the Gentiles say, that among us he knew any thing, Save Christ Jesus, and Him crucified; in order that of Him we might choose the reproach, rather than the glory of the flourishing Ziphites. Nevertheless, of Him he saith what? Although He died of weakness, yet He liveth of the power of God. He came then that He might die of weakness, He is to come that He may judge in the power of God: but through the weakness of the Cross His name hath been illustrious. Whosoever shall not have believed upon the name made illustrious through weakness, shall stand in awe at the Judge, when He shall have come in power. But, lest He that once was weak, when He shall have come strong, with that fan send us to the left hand; may He “save us in His name, and judge us in His virtue.” For who so rash as to have desired this, as to say to God, for instance, Judge me? Is it not wont to be said to men for a curse, “God judge thee?” So evidently it is a curse, if He judge thee in His virtue; and shall not have saved thee in His name: but when in name precedent He shall have saved thee, to thy health in virtue consequent He shall judge. Be thou without care: that judgment shall not to thee be punishment, but dividing. For in a certain Psalm thus is said: Judge me, O God, and divide my cause from the nation unholy. What is, Judge me? Divide me from the Ziphites, amid whom I lie hid; I have endured their flower, may there now come also my flowering. And their flower indeed hath been temporary, and the grass withering, it hath fallen off: but my flower shall be what? They that are planted in the House of the Lord, in the courts of the House of our God shall flourish. There remaineth therefore to us also flower, but that which falleth not, like the leaf of that tree planted beside waters, whereof is

said, “And His leaf shall not fall off.” O God, therefore, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me.

5. Ver. 2. O God, hearken to my prayer, in Thy ears receive the words of my mouth. Let the words of my mouth reach Thine ears, because it is not the flower of the Ziphites that I desire of Thee. In Thy ears receive the words of my mouth. Do Thou receive. For to the Ziphites even if there sound my prayer, they hear not, because they understand not. In temporal things to wit they rejoice, good things everlasting to desire they know not how. To Thee may my prayer attain, driven forth and darted out from the desire of Thy eternal blessings: to Thy ears I send it forth, aid it that it may reach, lest it fall short in the middle of the way, and fainting as it were it fall down. But even if there result not to me now the good things which I ask, I am secured nevertheless that hereafter they will come. For even in the case of transgressions a certain man is said to have asked of God, and not to have been hearkened to for his good. For privations of this world had inspired him to prayer, and being set in temporal tribulations he had wished that temporal tribulations should pass away, and there should return the flower of grass; and he saith, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? The very voice of Christ it is, but for His members’ sake. The words, he saith, of my transgressions I have cried to Thee throughout the day, and Thou hast not hearkened: and by night, and not for the sake of folly to me: that is, “and by night I have cried, and Thou hast not hearkened; and nevertheless in this very thing that Thou hast not hearkened, it is not for the sake of folly to me that Thou hast not hearkened, but rather for the sake of wisdom that Thou hast not hearkened, that I might perceive what of Thee I ought to ask. For those things I was asking which to my cost perchance I should have received.” Thou askest riches, O man; how many have been overset through their riches? Whence knowest thou whether to thee riches may profit? Have not many poor men more safely been in obscurity; having become rich men, so soon as they have begun to blaze forth, they have been a prey to the stronger? How much better they would have lain concealed, how much better they would have been unknown, that have begun to be inquired after not for the sake of what they were, but for the sake of what they had! In these temporal things therefore, brethren, we admonish and exhort you in the Lord, that ye ask not any thing as if it were a thing settled, but that

which God knoweth to be expedient for you. For what is expedient for you, ye know not at all. Sometimes that which ye think to be for you is against you, and that which ye think to be against you is for you. For sick ye are; do not dictate to the physician the medicines he may choose to set beside you. If the teacher of the Gentiles, Paul the Apostle, saith, For what we should pray for as we ought, we know not, how much more we? Who nevertheless, when he seemed to himself to pray wisely, namely, that from him should be taken away the thorn of the flesh, the angel of Satan, that did buffet him, in order that he might not in the greatness of the revelations be lifted up, heard from the Lord what? Was that done which he wished? Nay, in order to that being done which was expedient, He heard from the Lord, I say, what? Thrice, he saith, I besought the Lord that He would take it from me; and He said to me, My Grace sufficeth for thee: for virtue in weakness is made perfect. Salve to the wound I have applied; when I applied it I know, when it should be taken away I know. Let not a sick man draw back from the hands of the physician, let him not give advice to the physician. So it is with all these things temporal. There are tribulations; if well thou worshippest God, thou wilt know that He knoweth what is expedient for each man: there are prosperities; take the more heed, lest these same corrupt thy soul, so that it withdraw from Him that hath given these things. Therefore this man understanding saith what! O God, hearken to my prayer; in Thy ears receive the words of my mouth.

6. Ver. 3. For aliens have risen up against me. What aliens? Was not David himself a Jew of the tribe of Judah? But the very place Ziph belonged to the tribe of Judah; it was of the Jews. How then aliens? Not in city, not in tribe, not in kindred, but in flower. For wilt thou know of those aliens? In another Psalm, alien sons they have been called, whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. And he enumerateth the flower of the Ziphites. Of whom their sons are like young plants established in their youth: their daughters disposed and decked like the similitude of a temple: their garners full, breaking forth from this unto this: their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings out; their oxen fat: there is no falling of enclosure, nor going forth, nor cry in their streets. But see the Ziphites, see them for a time flourishing. Blessed they have called the people to whom these things are. With reason alien sons. Thou amid the Ziphites hiding

saidst what? Blessed the people whereof the Lord is its God. Out of this affection this prayer is being sent forth into the ears of the Lord, when it is said, In Thy ears receive the words of my mouth; for aliens have risen up against me.

7. And mighty men have sought after my soul. For in a new manner, my brethren, they would destroy the race of holy men, and the race of them that abstain from hoping in this world, all they that have hope in this world. Certainly commingled they are, certainly together they live. Very much to one another are opposed these two sorts: the one of those that place no hope but in things secular, and in temporal felicity, and the other of those that do firmly place their hope in the Lord God. And though concordant are these Ziphites, do not much trust to their concord: temptations are wanting; when there shall have come any temptation, so as that a person may be reprov'd for the flower of the world, I say not to thee he will quarrel with the Bishop, but not even to the Church Herself will he draw near, lest there fall any part of the grass. Wherefore have I said these words, brethren? Because now gladly ye all hear in the name of Christ, and according as ye understand, so ye shout out at the word; ye would not indeed shout at it unless ye understood. This your understanding ought to be fruitful. But whether it is fruitful, temptation doth try; lest suddenly when ye are said to be ours, through temptation ye be found aliens, and it be said, aliens have risen up against me, and mighty men have sought my soul. Be not that said which followeth, They have not set forth God before their face. For when will he set God before his face, before whose eyes there is nought but the world? namely, how he may have coin upon coin, how flocks may be increased, how barns may be filled, how it may be said to his soul, Thou hast many good things, be merry, feast, take thy fill. Doth he set before his face Him, that unto one so boasting and so blooming with the flower of the Ziphites saith, Fool, that is, "man not understanding," "man unwise," "This night shall be taken from thee thy soul; all these things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"

They have not set forth God before their face.

8. Ver. 4. For behold, God helpeth me. Even themselves know not themselves, amid whom I am hiding. But if they too were to set God before

their face, they would find in what manner God helpeth me. For all holy men are helped by God, but within, where no one seeth. For in like manner as the conscience of ungodly men is a great punishment, so a great joy is the very conscience of godly men. For our glory this is, saith the Apostle, the testimony of our conscience. In this doth glory that man within, not in the flower of the Ziphites without, that now saith, For behold God helpeth me. Surely though afar off are to be those things which He promiseth, this day have I a sweet and present help; to-day in my heart's joy I find that without cause certain say, Who doth shew to us good things? For there is signed upon us the light of Thy countenance, O Lord, Thou hast put pleasantness into my heart. Not into my vineyard, not into my flock, not into my cask, not into my table, but into my heart. For behold God helpeth me. How doth He help thee? And the Lord is the lifter up of my soul.

9. Ver. 5. Turn away evil things unto mine enemies. So however green they are, so however they flourish, for the fire they are being reserved. In Thy virtue destroy Thou them. Because to wit they flourish now, because to wit they spring up like grass: do not thou be a man unwise and foolish, so that by giving thought to these things thou perish for ever and ever. For, Turn Thou away evil things unto mine enemies. For if thou shalt have place in the body of David Himself, in His virtue He will destroy them. These men flourish in the felicity of the world, perish in the virtue of God. Not in the same manner as they flourish, do they also perish: for they flourish for a time, perish for everlasting: flourish in unreal good things, perish in real torments. In Thy virtue destroy Thou them, whom in Thy weakness Thou hast endured.

10. Ver. 6. Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Who can even understand this good thing of the heart, at another's speaking thereof, unless in himself he hath tasted it? What is, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee? Nevertheless, I will say on; let him receive that is able, as he is able: let him believe that is not able, and pray that he may be able. For ought we by any means so to pass over this verse as not to commend it to you? I say to your Love, my affection for it doth sufficiently invite me to speak something concerning it: and thanks I render to God, that with attention ye hear. But if I should observe you reluctant to hear, unwillingly on this verse I should hold my

peace, and yet in my heart, as far as the Lord would deign to grant, I should not hold my peace. May there come then unto my tongue that which in heart hath been conceived: may there be drawn forth in word that which in mind is kept: say we as we are able, what is, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. For what sacrifice here shall I take, brethren? or what worthily shall I offer to the Lord for His mercy? Victims shall I seek from flock of sheep, ram shall I select, for any bull in the herds shall I look out, frankincense indeed from the land of the Sabæans shall I bring? What shall I do? What offer; except that whereof He speaketh, Sacrifice of praise shall honour Me? Wherefore then voluntarily? Because truly I love that which I praise. I praise God, and in the self-same praise I rejoice: in the praise of Himself I rejoice, at Whom being praised, I blush not. For He is not praised in the same manner as by those who love the theatrical follies is praised either a charioteer, or a hunter, or actor of any kind, and by their praisers, other praisers are invited, are exhorted, to shout together: and when all have shouted, oftentimes, if their favourite is overcome, they are all put to the blush. Not so is our God: be He praised with the will, loved with charity: let it be gratuitous that He is loved and that He is praised. What is gratuitous? Himself for the sake of Himself, not for the sake of something else. For if thou praisest God in order that He may give thee something else, no longer freely dost thou love God. Thou wouldest blush, if thy wife for the sake of riches were to love thee, and perchance if poverty should befall thee, should begin to think of adultery. Seeing that therefore thou wouldest be loved by thy partner freely, wilt thou for any thing else love God? What reward art thou to receive of God, O covetous man? Not earth for thee, but Himself He keepeth, Who made heaven and earth. Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee: do it not of necessity. For if for the sake of any thing else thou praisest God, out of necessity thou praisest. If there were present to thee that which thou lovest, thou wouldest not praise God. See what I say: thou praisest God, for example, in order that He may give thee abundant money: if thou wert to have from any other quarter abundant money, not from God, wouldest thou praise God? If, therefore, because of money thou praisest God, not voluntarily thou sacrificest to God, but out of necessity thou sacrificest: because, beside Him, something else has thy love. Thence hath it been said, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Despise all things, to Himself give heed. These things also which He hath given, because of the Giver are good

things. For He giveth entirely, He giveth these temporal things: and to certain men to their good, to certain men to their harm, after the height and depth of His judgments. At the abyss of which judgments an Apostle stood in awe, saying, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who shall find out His ways, or who shall comprehend His counsels? He knoweth when He giveth, to whom He giveth; when He taketh away, and from whom He taketh away. Ask thou in this present time that which may profit thee hereafter, ask that which may help thee for eternity. But Himself without price love thou: because from Him thou findest not any thing that He may give better than Himself; or if thou findest a better thing, this ask thou. Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Wherefore voluntarily? Because gratis. What is gratis? And I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, for it is a good thing: for nothing else, but because a good thing it is. Doth he say, I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, because Thou givest me fruitful manors, because Thou givest me gold and silver, because Thou givest me extended riches, abundant money, most exalted dignity? Nay. But what? For it is a good thing. Nothing I find better than Thy name: therefore I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, for it is a good thing.

11. Ver. 7. For out of all tribulation Thou hast delivered me. For this cause I have perceived how good a thing is Thy name: for if this I were able before tribulations to acknowledge, perchance for me there had been no need of them. But tribulation hath been applied for admonition, admonition hath redounded to Thy praise. For I should not have understood where I was, except of my weakness I had been admonished. Out of all tribulations, therefore, Thou hast delivered me. And upon mine enemies mine eye hath looked back: upon those Ziphites mine eye hath looked back. Yea, their flower I have passed over in loftiness of heart, unto Thee I have come, and thence I have looked back upon them, and have seen that All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: as in a certain place is also said, I have seen the ungodly man to be exalted and raised up like the cedars of Lebanon: I passed by, and, lo! he was not. Wherefore he was not? Because thou hast passed by. What is, because thou hast passed by? Because not to no purpose hast thou heard Lift up thy heart; because not on earth, where thou wouldest have rotted, thou hast remained; because thou

hast lifted thy soul to God, and thou hast mounted beyond the cedars of Lebanon, and from that elevation hast observed: and Lo! he was not; and thou hast sought him, and there hath not been found place for him. No longer is labour before thee; because thou hast entered into the sanctuary of God, and hast understood for the last things. So also here thus he concludeth. And upon mine enemies mine eye hath looked back. This do ye therefore, brethren, with your souls; lift up your hearts, sharpen the edge of your mind, learn truly to love God, learn to despise the present world, learn voluntarily to sacrifice the offerings of praise; to the end that, mounting beyond the flower of the grass, ye may look back upon your enemies.

PSALM 55

Exposition

1. Of this Psalm the title is: At the end, in hymns, understanding to David himself. What the “end” is, we will briefly call to your recollection, because ye have known it. For the end of the Law is Christ, for righteousness unto every man believing. Be the attention therefore directed unto the End, directed unto Christ. Wherefore is He called the end? Because whatever we do, to Him we refer it, and when to Him we shall have come home, more to ask we shall not have. For there is an end spoken of which doth consume, there is an end spoken of which doth make perfect. In one sense, for instance, we understand it, when we hear, there is ended the food which was in eating; and in another sense we understand it, when we hear, there is ended the vesture which was in weaving: in each case we hear, there is ended; but the food so that it no longer is, the vesture so that it is perfected. Our end therefore ought to be our perfection, our perfection Christ. For in Him we are made perfect, because of Himself the Head the Members are we. And He hath been spoken of as the End of the Law, because without Him no one doth make perfect the Law. When therefore ye hear in the Psalms, At the end: (for many Psalms are thus superscribed:) be not your thought upon consuming, but upon consummation.

2. In hymns: in praises. For whether we are troubled and are straitened, or whether we rejoice and exult, He is to be praised, Who both in tribulations doth instruct, and in gladness doth comfort. For the praise of God from the heart and mouth of a Christian man ought not to depart; not that he may be praising in prosperity, and speaking evil in adversity; but after the manner that this Psalm doth prescribe, I will speak good of the Lord in every time, alway the praise of Him is in my mouth. Thou dost rejoice; acknowledge a Father indulging: thou art troubled; acknowledge a Father chastening.

Whether He indulge, or whether He chasten, He is instructing one for whom He is preparing an inheritance.

3. What then is, Understanding to David himself? David indeed was, as we know, a holy prophet, king of Israel, son of Jesse: but because out of his seed there came for our salvation after the flesh the Lord Jesus Christ, often under that name He is figured, and David instead of Christ is in a figure set down, because of the origin of the Flesh of the Same. For after some sort He is Son of David, after some sort the Lord He is of David; Son of David after the flesh, Lord of David after the divinity. For if by Him have been made all things, by Him also David himself hath been made, out of whose seed He came to men. Moreover, when the Lord had questioned the Jews, whose Son they affirmed Christ to be, they made answer, David's. (Where the Lord chides the Jews, when they said that He was the Son of David,) He saw that they had stayed at the flesh, and had lost sight of the divinity; and He reproveth them by propounding a question: How then doth David himself in spirit call Him Lord, The Lord hath said unto my Lord, Sit on My right hand, until I lay Thy foes beneath Thy feet? If then He in spirit calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son? A question He propounded; His being Son He denied not. Ye have heard Lord; say ye how He is his Son: ye have heard Son; say how He is Lord. This question the Catholic Faith solveth. How Lord? Because In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. How Son? Because The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Because then David in a figure is Christ, but Christ, as we have often reminded your Love, is both Head and Body; neither ought we to speak of ourselves as alien from Christ, of Whom we are members, nor to count ourselves as if we were any other thing: because The two shall be in one flesh. This is a great Sacrament, saith the Apostle, but I speak in regard of Christ and the Church. Because then whole Christ is Head and Body; when we hear, Understanding to David himself, understand we ourselves also in David. Let the members of Christ understand, and Christ in His members understand, and the members of Christ in Christ understand: because Head and Members are one Christ. The Head was in heaven, and was saying, Why dost thou persecute Me? We with Him are in heaven through hope, Himself is with us on earth through love. Therefore understanding to David himself. Be we admonished when we hear, and let

the Church understand: for there belongeth to us great diligence to understand in what evil we now are, and from what evil we desire to be delivered, remembering the Prayer of the Lord, where at the end we say, Deliver us from evil. Therefore amid many tribulations of this world, this Psalm complaineth somewhat of understanding. He lamenteth not with it, who hath not understanding. But furthermore, dearly beloved, we ought to remember, that after the image of God we have been made, and that not in any other part than in the understanding itself. For in many things by beasts we are surpassed: but when a man knoweth himself to have been made after the image of God, therein something in himself he acknowledgeth to be more than hath been given to dumb animals. But on consideration of all those things which a man hath, he findeth himself in this thing peculiarly distinguished from a dumb animal, in that he hath himself an understanding. Whence certain men despising in themselves that peculiar and especial thing which from their Maker they had received, the Maker Himself reproveth, saying, Do not become like horse and mule, in which there is no understanding. And in another place He speaketh of Man in honour set. In what honour, except that he is made after the image of God? Therefore, In honour set, he understood not, He saith; he hath been compared unto brutes without sense, and hath been made like unto them. Let us acknowledge therefore our honour, and let us understand. If we do understand, we see this not to be the region of rejoicing, but of groaning; not now of exulting, but as yet of lamenting. But even if certain exultation doth dwell in our hearts, not yet is it in substance, but in hope. Because of a thing promised we are glad, because we know He that promiseth doth not deceive us. Nevertheless, as regardeth the present time, in what evil, in what straits we are, hear ye; and if to this way ye keep, that which ye hear in yourselves acknowledge ye. For whosoever doth not yet hold to the path of godliness, wondereth that the members of David make such groanings. For he seeth not in himself those things. So long as in himself too those things he seeth not, not yet is he there: he feeleth not that which the body feeleth; because he is beside the body; let him be embodied, and he shall feel. Let him speak then, and let us hear, let us hear and speak.

4. Hear Thou, O God, my entreaty, and despise not my prayer: give heed unto me, and hearken unto me. Of one earnest, anxious, of one set in

tribulation, are these words. He is praying, suffering many things, from evil yearning to be delivered: it remaineth that we hear in what evil he is, and when he beginneth to speak, let us acknowledge there ourselves to be; in order that the tribulation being shared, we may conjoin prayer. (Ver. 2.) I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled. Where made sad, where troubled? In my exercise, he saith. Of evil men, whom he suffereth, he hath made mention, and the same suffering of evil men he hath called his exercise. Think ye not that without profit there are evil men in this world, and that no good God maketh of them. Every evil man either on this account liveth that he may be corrected, or on this account liveth that through him a good man may be exercised. O that therefore they that do now exercise us would be converted, and together with us be exercised! Nevertheless, so long as they are such as to exercise, let us not hate them: because in that wherein any one of them is evil, whether unto the end he is to persevere, we know not; and oftentimes when to thyself thou seemest to have been hating an enemy, thou hast been hating a brother, and knowest not. The devil and his angels in the holy Scriptures have been manifested to us, that for fire everlasting they have been destined. Of them only must amendment be despaired of: against whom we have a secret wrestling, for which wrestling the Apostle armeth us, saying, Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, that is, against men whom ye see, but against princes, and powers, and rulers of the world, of this darkness. Lest perchance when he had said, of the world, thou shouldest understand demons to be rulers of heaven and earth: he hath said, of the world, of this darkness: of the world he hath spoken, of the lovers of the world; of the world he hath spoken, of ungodly and unrighteous men: of the world he hath spoken, whereof saith the Gospel, And the world knew Him not. For if the world knew not Light, because Light shineth in darkness, and darkness comprehended It not; and this darkness itself, which comprehended not Light present, is called by the name of "the world;" then of this darkness they are the rulers. Concerning these same rulers therefore we have a definite sentence of Scripture, that from thence no return at all of any one of them is to be hoped for. But truly of the darknesses themselves of whom these are the rulers we are not sure, whether perchance they that were darkness may not be made light. For instance, to them that were lately made believers, saith the Apostle, Ye have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord: darkness in yourselves,

light in the Lord. Therefore, brethren, all evil men, while they are evil men, do exercise good men. For, behold, hear ye briefly and understand. If thou art a good man, thou wilt have no enemy but a bad man. Moreover, before thee this rule of goodness hath been set, that thou shouldest imitate the goodness of thy Father, Who maketh His sun to rise on good men and on evil men, and raineth on just men and unjust men. For thou hast not an enemy that God hath not. Thou indeed hast for enemy him that with thee hath been created: but He him that He hath created. Of enemies therefore of God, of evil men and unrighteous men, often in the Scriptures we read: and He spareth them, Who hath nothing that the enemy may lay to His charge, to Whom every enemy is ungrateful: for from Him he hath whatever of good he hath. For from Him he hath it in mercy, even whatever thing there is whereby he is troubled. For to this end he is troubled, that he be not proud; to this end he is troubled, in order that being humbled he may acknowledge the Highest. Thou therefore on thy enemy, whom hardly thou sufferest, hast bestowed what? If He hath him for enemy, That hath bestowed so great things on him, and maketh His sun to rise on good men and evil men, and raineth on just men and unjust men: thou that neither canst make the sun to rise, nor upon the lands make rain, canst thou not keep one thing for thine enemy, so that there may be to thee, Peace on earth to a man of good will? Therefore since this rule of Love for thee is fixed, that imitating the Father thou shouldest love an enemy: for, He saith, Love your enemies: in this precept how wouldest thou be exercised, if thou hadst no enemy to suffer? Thou seest then that he profiteth thee somewhat: and let God sparing evil men profit thee, so that thou shew mercy: because perchance thou too, if thou art a good man, out of an evil man hast been made a good man: and if God spared not evil men, not even thou wouldest be found to return thanks. May He therefore spare others, That hath spared thee also. For it were not right, when thou hadst passed through, to close up the way of godliness.

5. Whence then doth this man pray, set among evil men, with whose enmities he was being exercised? Why saith he, I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled? While he is extending his love so as to love enemies, he hath been affected with disgust, being bayed at all around by the enmities of many men, by the phrenzy of many, and under a sort of

human infirmity he hath sunk. He hath seen himself now begin to be pierced through with an evil suggestion of the devil, to bring on hatred against his enemies: wrestling against hatred in order to perfect love herself, in the very fight, and in the wrestling, he hath been troubled. For there is his voice also in another Psalm, Mine eye hath been troubled, because of anger. And what followeth there? I have waxen old among all mine enemies. As if in storm and waves he were beginning to sink, like Peter. For he doth trample the waves of this world, that loveth enemies. Christ on the sea was walking fearless, from Whose heart there could not by any means be taken away the love of an enemy; Who hanging on the Cross did say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Peter too would walk. He as Head, Peter as Body: because, Upon this rock, He saith, I will build My Church. He was bidden to walk, and he was walking by the Grace of Him bidding, not by his own strength. But when he saw the wind mighty, he feared; and then he began to sink, being troubled in his exercise. By what mighty wind? (Ver. 3.) By the voice of the enemy, and by the tribulation of the sinner. Therefore, in the same manner as he cried out on the waves, Lord, I perish, save me, a similar voice from this man hath preceded, Hearken Thou, O God, to my entreaty, and despise not my prayer: give heed unto me, and hearken unto me. Wherefore? For what sufferest thou? Of what dost thou groan? I have been made sad in my exercise. To be exercised indeed amid evil men Thou hast set me, but too much they have risen up, beyond my powers: calm Thou one troubled, stretch forth a hand to one sinking. I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled by the voice of the enemy, and by the tribulation of the sinner; for they have brought down upon me iniquity, and in anger they were shadowing me. Ye have heard of waves and winds: one as it were humbled they were insulting, and he was praying: on every side against him with the roar of insult they were raging, but he within was calling upon Him whom they did not see.

6. When some such thing is a Christian's lot to suffer, he ought not lightly, as if in hatred, to proceed against that man by whom he is suffering, and to will to conquer the wind; but to turn himself to prayer, that he lose not love. For we must not fear that a human enemy can do any thing. For what is he to do? To say many evil things, to hurl reproaches, to rage with revilings:

but to thee what? Rejoice, He saith, and exult, for your reward is great in the heavens. He on earth redoubleth reproaches, thou in heaven thy gains. But let him rage more, he might do yet something more: what is more secure than thou, to whom hath been said, Fear not them that kill the body, but the soul they cannot kill. What then is to be feared when thou sufferest an enemy? Lest thy love be troubled wherewith thou lovest an enemy. For that human enemy, being flesh and blood, desireth that which he seeth in thee. But another hidden enemy, ruler of this darkness, which thou sufferest in flesh and blood, is seeking the other hidden thing of thine; thy inward treasures to plunder and waste he is striving. Two enemies, therefore, set thou before thine eyes, the one open, and the other hidden: the open, a man; the hidden, the devil. This man is the same as thou art after human nature, but after faith and love not yet that which thou art, but will be able to be that which thou art. Since therefore there are two, the one see thou, the other perceive thou; the one love thou, of the other beware. For even that enemy, whom thou seest, would humble that thing in thee wherein he is conquered. For instance, if by thy riches he is conquered, poor he would make thee; if by thy honour he is conquered, humble he would make thee; if by thy powers he is conquered, weak he would make thee: to these things therefore he giveth heed, in thee either to throw down or to take away the things whereby he is conquered. That hidden enemy also from thee would take away that thing wherein he is conquered. For being man thou conquerest a man in human felicity, but the devil thou conquerest in love of an enemy. In like manner then, as a man goeth about to take away from thee, and to cut short, or to overthrow the felicity wherein he is conquered: so also the devil conquers a man by taking away that wherein he is conquered. But take care in heart to hold fast the love of an enemy, wherewith the devil is conquered of thee. Let a man rage as much as he can, let him take whatever he can; if he is loved that is openly raging, he hath been conquered who is secretly raging.

7. But this man being troubled and made sad was praying, his eye being disturbed as it were on account of anger. But the anger of a brother if it shall have been inveterate is then hatred. Anger doth trouble the eye, hatred doth quench it: anger is a straw, hatred is a beam. Sometimes thou hatest and chidest an angry man: in thee is hatred, in him whom thou chidest anger:

with reason to thee is said, Cast out first the beam from thine own eye, and so thou shalt see to cast out the straw from thy brother's eye. For that ye may know how much difference there is between anger and hatred: day by day men are angry with their sons, shew me them that hate their sons! This man being troubled was praying even when made sad, wrestling against all revilings of all revilers; not in order that he might conquer any one of them by giving back reviling, but that he might not hate any one of them. Hence he prayeth, hence asketh. From the voice of the enemy and from the tribulation of the sinner; for they have brought down upon me iniquity, and in anger they were shadowing me. (Ver. 4.) My heart hath been troubled in me. This is the same as elsewhere hath been said, Mine eye because of anger hath been troubled. And if eye hath been troubled, what followeth? And fear of death hath fallen upon me. Our life is love: if life is love, death is hatred. When a man hath begun to fear lest he should hate him that he was loving, it is death he is fearing; and a sharper death, and a more inward death, whereby soul is killed, not body. Thou didst mind a man raging against thee; what was he to do, against whom thine own Lord had given thee security, saying, Fear not them that kill the body? He by raging killeth body, thou by keeping hatred hast killed soul; and he the body of another, thou thine own soul. Fear, therefore, of death hath fallen upon me.

8. Ver. 5. Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and darkness have covered me. And I have said,—

He that hateth his brother, is in darkness until now. If love is light, hatred is darkness. And what saith to himself one set in that weakness and troubled in that exercise? (Ver. 6.) Who shall give me wings as to a dove, and I shall fly and shall rest? Either for death he was wishing, or for solitude he was longing. So long, he saith, as this is the work with me, as this command is given me, that I should love enemies, the revilings of these men, increasing and shadowing me, do derange mine eye, perturb my sight, penetrate my heart, slay my soul. I could wish to depart, but weak I am, lest by abiding I should add sins to sins: or at least may I be separated for a little space from mankind, lest my wound suffer from frequent blows, in order that when it hath been made whole it may be brought back to the exercise. This is what takes place, brethren, and there ariseth oftentimes in the mind of the servant of

God a longing for solitude, for no other reason than because of the multitude of tribulations and scandals, and he saith, Who shall give me wings? Doth he find himself without wings, or rather with bound wings? If they are wanting, be they given; if bound, be they loosed; because even he that looseth a bird's wings, either giveth, or giveth back to it its wings. For it had not as though its own them, wherewith it could not fly. Bound wings make a burden. Who, he saith, shall give me wings as to a dove, and I shall fly and shall rest? Shall rest, where? I have said there are two senses here: either, as saith the Apostle, To be dissolved and to be with Christ, for it is by far the best thing. For he too, although strong, although great, although in heart most stout; although in Christ a soldier invincible, in his exercise, as we read, was troubled, and he saith, Henceforth let not any one be vexatious to me. As though he were saying out of that Psalm, Weariness hath gotten hold on me because of sinners forsaking Thy law. Therefore a man oftentimes endeavoureth to amend men perverted, crooked, belonging indeed to his care, but men in whom there is but failure for all human pains and vigilance; amend he cannot, suffer them he must. Even he that amended cannot be, is thine, either by the fellowship of the human race, or oftentimes by Church Communion; he is within, what wilt thou do? whither wilt go? whither separate thyself, in order that these things thou mayest not suffer? But go to him, speak, exhort, coax, threaten, reprove. I have done all things, whatever powers I had I have expended and have drained, nothing I see have I prevailed; all my labour hath been spent out, sorrow hath remained. How then shall my heart rest from such men, except I say, Who shall give me wings? As to a dove, however, not as to a raven. A dove seeketh a flying away from troubles, but she loseth not love. For a dove as a type of love is set forth, and in her the plaint is loved. Nothing is so fond of plaints as a dove: day and night she complaineth, as though she were set here where she ought to complain. What then saith this lover? Revilings of men to bear I am unable, they roar, with phrensy are carried away, are inflamed with indignation, in anger they shadow me; to do good to them I am unable; O that I might rest somewhere, being separated from them in body, not in love; lest in me there should be troubled love itself: with my words and my speech no good can I do them, by praying for them perchance I shall do good. These words men say, but oftentimes they are so bound, that to fly they are not able. For perchance they are not bound with any birdlime, but are

bound by duty. But if they are bound with care and duty, and to leave it are unable, let them say, I was wishing to be dissolved and to be with Christ, for it is by far the best thing: to abide in the flesh is necessary because of you. A dove bound back by affection, not by cupidity, to fly away was not able because of duty to be fulfilled, not because of little merit. Nevertheless a longing in heart must needs be; nor doth any man suffer this longing, but he that hath begun to walk in that narrow way: in order that he may know that there are not wanting to the Church persecutions, even in this time, when a calm is seen in the Church, at least with respect to those persecutions, which our Martyrs have suffered. But there are not wanting persecutions, because a true saying is this, All that will godly to live in Christ, shall suffer persecution. Thou sufferest not persecution: thou wilt not godly to live in Christ. Dost thou will to prove that to be a true saying which hath been said? Begin godly to live in Christ. What is it, godly to live in Christ? So that this may belong to thy bowels, whereof the Apostle speaketh, Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? Other men's infirmities, other men's offences, were to him persecutions. Are they then wanting at this time? More do abound to them that mind these things. And oftentimes from afar a man is seen, and it is said of him, It is well with him; and he that saith it, is either tasting his own matters, and is not able to taste those of others; or of himself hath not whereof he may taste, and with another man tasting, nay devouring, he suffereth not. Let him begin therefore godly to live in Christ, and prove that which is said: he beginneth to long for wings, to go afar off, to flee and to abide in the desert.

9. For whence is it think ye, brethren, that the servants of God have thronged the deserts? If well with them it were amid men, would they withdraw from men? And yet what do even these same? Behold they go afar off fleeing, they abide in the desert: but do they one by one? There holdeth them love, so that with many they abide; and from these same many, there come forth some to exercise them. Because in every congregation of a multitude there must needs be found evil men. For God, that knoweth that we must be exercised, mingleth with us even men that are not to persevere; or certainly so counterfeit, as that they have not so much as begun that wherein they ought to persevere. For He knoweth that it is

necessary for us that we bear evil men, and the good there is in what we are should advance; let us love enemies, rebuke, chastise, excommunicate, with love from us even separate them. For see what saith the Apostle; But if any one obey not our word through the epistle, him mark ye, and be not mingled together with him. But let there not steal upon thee because of this thing indignation, and trouble thine eye. Not, he saith, as an enemy esteem him, but rebuke him as a brother, that he may blush. From him from whom he proclaimeth separation, he cutteth not off love. That eye liveth, thy life liveth. For love lost is thy death. This he hath feared to lose that hath said, Fear of death hath fallen upon me. Accordingly, lest I should lose the life of love, Who shall give me wings as to a dove, and I shall fly and shall rest? Whither art thou to go? whither to fly? where to rest? (Ver. 7.) Behold I have gone afar fleeing, and have abode in the desert. In what desert? Wherever thou shalt be, there will gather them together other men, the desert with thee they will seek, will attach themselves to thy life, thou canst not thrust back the society of brethren: there are mingled with thee also evil men; still exercise is thy due portion, Behold I have gone afar, and have abode in the desert. In what desert? It is perchance in the conscience, whither no man entereth, where no one is with thee, where thou art and God. For if in the desert, in any place, what wilt thou do with men gathering themselves together? For thou wilt not be able to be separated from mankind, so long as among men thou livest. Observe rather that Comforter, our Lord and King, our Ruler and Creator, created also among us: observe that with His Twelve He joined one man whom He was to suffer.

10. He saith, Behold I have gone afar fleeing, and have abode in the desert. Perchance that man, as I have said, hath fled unto his conscience, there some little desert he will have found where he may rest. But that love doth trouble him: alone he found himself in conscience, but not alone in charity: within he was comforted in conscience, but without tribulations left him not. Therefore in himself at peace, on others depending, when he was yet being troubled, he saith what?

Ver. 8. I was looking for him that should save me from weakness of mind and tempest. Sea there is, tempest there is: nothing for thee remaineth but to cry out, Lord, I perish. Let Him stretch forth hand, Who doth the waves

tread fearlessly, let Him relieve thy dread, let Him confirm in Himself thy security, let Him speak to thee within, and say to thee, Give heed to Me, what I have borne: an evil brother perchance thou art suffering, or an enemy without art suffering; which of these have I not suffered? There roared without Jews, within a disciple was betraying. There rageth therefore tempest, but He doth save men from weakness of mind, and tempest. Perchance thy ship is being troubled, because He in thee is sleeping. The sea was raging, the bark wherein the disciples were sailing was being tossed; but Christ was sleeping: at length it was seen by them that among them was sleeping the Ruler and Creator of winds; they drew near and awoke Christ; He commanded the winds, and there was a great calm. With reason then perchance thy heart is troubled, because thou hast forgotten Him on Whom thou hast believed: beyond endurance thou art suffering, because it hath not come into thy mind what for thee Christ hath borne. If unto thy mind cometh not Christ, He sleepeth: awake Christ, recall faith. For then in thee Christ is sleeping, if thou hast forgotten the sufferings of Christ: then in thee Christ is watching, if thou hast remembered the sufferings of Christ. But when with full heart thou shalt have considered what He hath suffered, wilt not thou too with equanimity endure? and perchance rejoicing, because thou hast been found in some likeness of the sufferings of thy King. When therefore on these things thinking thou hast begun to be comforted and to rejoice, He hath arisen, He hath commanded the winds; therefore there is a great calm. I was looking for Him that should save me from weakness of mind and tempest.

11. Ver. 9. Sink, O Lord, and divide the tongues of them. He is referring to men troubling him and shadowing him, and he hath wished this thing not of anger, brethren. They that have wickedly lifted up themselves, for them it is expedient that they be sunk. They that have wickedly conspired, it is expedient for them that their tongues should be divided: to good let them consent, and let their tongues agree together. But if to one purpose there were whispering against me, he saith, all mine enemies, let them lose their 'one purpose' in evil, divided be the tongues of them, let them not with themselves agree together. Sink, O Lord, and divide the tongues of them. Wherefore sink? Because themselves they have lifted up. Wherefore divide? Because for an evil thing they have united. Recollect that tower of

proud men made after the deluge: what said the proud men? Lest we perish in a deluge, let us make a lofty tower. In pride they were thinking themselves to be fortified, they builded up a lofty tower, and the Lord divided the tongues of them. Then they began not to understand one another; hence arose the beginning of many tongues. For before, one tongue there was: but one tongue for men agreeing was good, one tongue for humble men was good: but when that gathering together did into a union of pride fall headlong, God spared them, even though He divided the tongues, lest by understanding one another they should make a destructive unity. Through proud men, divided were the tongues; through humble Apostles, united were the tongues. Spirit of pride dispersed tongues, Spirit Holy united tongues. For when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, with the tongues of all men they spake, by all men they were understood: tongues dispersed, into one were united. Therefore if still they rage and are Gentiles, it is expedient for them divided to have their tongues. They would have one tongue; let them come to the Church; because even among the diversity of tongues of flesh, one is the tongue in faith of heart.

Sink, O Lord, and divide the tongues of them.

12. For I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city. With reason this man was seeking the desert, for he saw iniquity and contradiction in the city. There is a certain city turbulent: the same it was that was building a tower, the same was confounded and called Babylon, the same through innumerable nations dispersed: thence is gathered the Church into the desert of a good conscience. For he saw contradiction in the city. ‘Christ cometh.’—‘What Christ?’ thou contradictest.—‘Son of God.’—‘And hath God a Son?’ thou contradictest.—‘He was born of a Virgin, suffered, rose again.’—‘And whence is it possible for this to be done?’ thou contradictest.—Give heed at least to the glory of the Cross itself. Now on the brow of kings that Cross hath been fixed, over which enemies insulted. The effect hath proved the virtue. It hath subdued the world, not with steel, but with wood. The wood of the Cross deserving of insults hath seemed to enemies, and before the wood itself standing they were wagging the head, and saying, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. He was stretching forth His hands to a people unbelieving and contradicting. For if

just he is that of faith liveth, unjust he is that hath not faith. By that which here he saith iniquity, I understand unbelief. The Lord therefore was seeing in the city iniquity and contradiction, and was stretching forth His hands to a people unbelieving and contradicting: and nevertheless waiting for these same, He was saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Even now indeed there rage the remnant of that city, even now they contradict. From the brows of all men now He is stretching forth hands to the remnant unbelieving and contradicting. For I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city.

13. Ver. 10. Day and night there will compass it upon the walls thereof iniquity, and labour. "Upon the walls thereof;" upon the fortifications thereof, holding as it were the heads thereof, the noble men thereof. If that noble man were a Christian, not one would remain a pagan! Ofttimes men say, 'no one would remain a pagan, if he were a Christian.' Ofttimes men say, 'If he too were made a Christian, who would remain a pagan?' Because therefore not yet they are made Christians, as if walls they are of that city unbelieving and contradicting. How long shall these walls stand? Not always shall they stand. The Ark is going around the walls of Jericho: there shall come a time at the seventh going round of the Ark, when all the walls of the city unbelieving and contradicting shall fall. Until it come to pass, this man is being troubled in his exercise; and enduring the remains of men contradicting, he would choose wings for flying away, would choose the rest of the desert. Yea let him continue amid men contradicting, let him endure menaces, drink revilings, and look for Him that will save him from weakness of mind and tempest: let him look upon the Head, the pattern for his life, let him be made calm in hope, even if he is troubled in fact. Day and night there will compass it upon the walls thereof iniquity; and labour in the midst thereof and injustice. And for this reason labour is there, because iniquity is there: because injustice is there, therefore also labour is there. But let them hear him stretching forth hands. Come unto Me, all ye that labour. Ye cry, ye contradict, ye revile: He on the contrary, Come unto Me, all ye that labour, in your pride, and ye shall rest in My humility. Learn of Me, He saith, for meek I am and humble in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For whence do they labour, but because they are not meek and humble in heart? God humble was made, let man blush to be proud.

14. Ver. 11. There hath not failed from the streets thereof usury and deceit. Usury and deceit are not hidden at least, because they are evil things, but in public they rage. For he that in his house doth any evil thing, however for his evil thing doth blush: In the streets thereof usury and deceit. Money-lending even hath a profession, Money-lending also is called a science; a corporation is spoken of, a corporation as if necessary to the state, and of its profession it payeth revenue; so entirely indeed in the streets is that which should have been hidden. There is also another usury worse, when thou forgivest not that which to thee is owed; and the eye is disturbed in that verse of the prayer, Forgive us our debts, (as we too forgive our debtors). For what there wilt thou do, when thou art going to pray, and coming to that same verse? An insulting word thou hast heard: thou wouldest exact the punishment of condemnation. Do but consent to exact just so much as thou hast given, thou usurer of injuries! With the fist thou hast been smitten, slaying thou seekest. Evil usury! How wilt thou go to prayer? If thou shalt have left praying, which way wilt thou come round unto the Lord? Behold thou wilt say: Our Father, Which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth. Thou wilt say, Our daily bread give us to-day. Thou wilt come to, Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Even in that evil city let there abound these usuries; let them not enter the walls where the breast is smitten! What wilt thou do? because there thou and that verse are in the midst? Petitions for thee hath a heavenly Lawyer composed. He that knew what used there to be done, said to thee, "Otherwise thou shalt not obtain." Verily, verily, I say unto you, that if ye shall have forgiven men sins, they shall be forgiven you; but if ye shall not have forgiven sins unto men, neither will your Father forgive you. Who saith this? He that knoweth what there is being done, in the place whereat thou art standing to make request. See how Himself hath willed to be thy Advocate; Himself thy Lawyer, Himself the Assessor of the Father, Himself thy Judge hath said, "Otherwise thou shalt not receive." What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not receive, unless thou shalt speak; wilt not receive if falsely thou shalt speak. Therefore either thou must do and speak, or else what thou askest thou wilt not earn; because they that this do not do, are in the midst of those evil usuries. Be they engaged therein, that yet do idols either adore or desire: do not thou, O people of God, do not thou, O people of Christ, do not thou the Body of Him the

Head! Give heed to the bond of thy peace, give heed to the promise of thy life. For what doth it profit thee, that thou exactest for injuries which thou hast endured? doth vengeance refresh thee? Therefore, over the evil of another shalt thou rejoice? Thou hast suffered evil; pardon thou; be not ye two.

And there faileth not from the streets thereof usury and deceit.

15. Therefore for this reason thou wast seeking solitude and wings, for this reason thou art complaining, these things to bear thou art not able, namely, the contradiction and iniquity of this city. Rest thou in those things which with thee are within, and do not seek solitude. Hear also of these very things what he saith.

Ver. 12. For if an enemy had upbraided me. And indeed above he was 'troubled in his exercise' by the voice of the enemy and by the tribulation of the sinner, perhaps being placed in that city, that proud city that was building a tower, which was "sunk," that divided might be the tongues: give heed to his inward groaning because of perils from false brethren. For if an enemy had upbraided me, I would have undergone it assuredly, and if he that did hate me had over me great words spoken, that is, through pride had on me trampled, did magnify himself above me, did threaten me all in his power: I would hide myself assuredly from him. From him that is abroad, thou wouldest hide thyself where? Amid those that are within. But now see whether any thing else remaineth, but that thou seek solitude. (Ver. 13.) But thou, he saith, man of one mind, my guide and my friend. Perchance sometimes good counsel thou hast given, perchance sometimes thou hast gone before me, and some wholesome advice thou hast given me: in the Church of God together we have been. But thou, man of one mind, my guide and my friend, (ver. 14.) that together with me didst take sweet morsels. What are the sweet morsels? Not all they that are present know: but let them not be soured that do know, in order that they may be able to say to them that as yet know not: Taste ye and see, how sweet is the Lord.

Thou that together with me didst take sweet morsels. In the House of God we have walked with consent. Whence then dissention? Thou that wast within, hast become one without. He hath walked with me in the House of

God with consent: another house hath he set up against the House of God. Wherefore hath that been forsaken, wherein we have walked with consent? wherefore hath that been deserted, wherein together we did take sweet morsels?

16. Ver. 15. Let there come death upon them, and let them go down unto Hell living. How hath he cited and hath made us call to mind that first beginning of schism, when in that first people of the Jews certain proud men separated themselves, and would without have sacrificed? A new death upon them came: the earth opened herself, and swallowed them up alive. Let there come, he saith, death upon them, and let them go down into Hell living. What is living? knowing that they are perishing, and yet perishing. Hear of living men perishing and being swallowed up in a gulph of the earth, that is, being swallowed up in the voraciousness of earthly desires. Thou sayest to a man, What aileth thee, brother? Brethren we are, one God we invoke, in one Christ we believe, one Gospel we hear, one Psalm we sing, one Amen we respond, one Hallelujah we sound, one Easter we celebrate: why art thou without and I am within? Ofttimes one straitened, and perceiving how true are the charges which are made, saith, May God requite our ancestors! Therefore alive he perisheth. In the next place thou continuest and thus givest warning. At least let the evil of separation stand alone, why dost thou adjoin thereto that of rebaptism? Acknowledge in me what thou hast; and if thou hatest me, Christ in me spare thou. And this evil thing doth frequently and very greatly displease them. Truly, say they, it is ill done; O that it were possible not to have it done: but what have we to do with the statutes of our ancestors? Let them go down unto Hell living. If being dead thou shouldest go down, what thou wert doing thou wouldest not know; but when thou knowest that to be an evil thing which thou doest, and nevertheless doest it, dost thou not alive go down unto the lower places? And why is it that a gulph of the earth swallowed up alive the rulers themselves for the most part, but the people that with them consented, fire falling from heaven consumed? It is on this account that this Psalm referring to this punishment, with the people hath begun, and with the leaders hath concluded. Let there come death upon them, it hath said, because of them upon whom there came fire from Heaven; and immediately hath continued, Let them go down unto Hell living, because of the leaders

whom a gulf of the earth swallowed up. For how should they have descended unto Hell living, of whom it had said, Let there come death upon them? If already upon them death had come, how alive unto the lower places did they descend? Therefore with the lesser ones he hath begun, with the greater he hath concluded. Let there come death upon them, that have consented and have followed. What of those leaders and princes? Let them go down unto Hell living; because they themselves have the Scriptures in their hands, and know well by daily reading how the Church Catholic through the whole world is so spread, that in a word all contradiction is void; and that there cannot be found any support for their schism they know well: therefore unto the lower places living they go down, because the evil which they do, evil to be they know. But the former a fire of divine indignation consumed. For being inflamed with desire of strife, from their evil leaders they would not depart. There came upon fire a fire, upon the heat of dissension the heat of consuming. Let there come death upon them and let them go down unto Hell living. For naughtiness is in their lodgings, in the midst of them. In their lodgings, wherein they tarry and pass away. For here they are not alway to be: and nevertheless in defence of a temporal animosity they are fighting so fiercely. In their lodgings is iniquity; in the midst of them is iniquity: no part of them is so near the middle of them as their heart.

17. Ver. 16. Therefore to the Lord I have cried out. The Body of Christ and the oneness of Christ in anguish, in weariness, in uneasiness, in the tribulation of its exercise, that One Man, Oneness in One Body set, when He was wearying His soul in crying out from the ends of the earth; saith, From the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried out, when My heart was being vexed. Himself one, but a oneness that One! and Himself one, not in one place one, but from the ends of the earth is crying as one. How from the ends of the earth should there cry one, except in many there were one? I to the Lord have cried out. Rightly do thou cry out to the Lord, cry not to Donatus: lest for thee he be instead of the Lord a lord, that under the Lord would not be a fellowservant. I to the Lord have cried out: and the Lord hath heard me.

18. Ver. 18. In evening, in morning, at noon-day I will recount and will tell forth, and He shall hearken to my voice. Do thou proclaim glad tidings, keep not secret that which thou hast received, in evening of things gone by, in morning of things to be, at noon-day of things ever to be. Therefore to that which he saith in evening belongeth that which he recounteth: to that which he saith, in morning, belongeth that which he telleth forth: to that which he saith at noon-day, belongeth that wherein his voice is hearkened to. For the end is at noon-day; that is to say, whence there is no going down unto setting. For at noon-day there is light full high, the splendour of wisdom, the fervour of love. In evening and in morning and at noon-day. In evening, the Lord on the Cross; in morning, in Resurrection; at noon-day, in Ascension. I will recount in evening the patience of Him dying, I will tell forth in morning the life of Him rising, I will pray that He hearken at noon-day sitting at the right hand of the Father. He shall hearken to my voice, That intercedeth for us. How great is the security of this man? How great the consolation, how great the refuge ‘from weakness of mind and tempest,’ against evil men, against ungodly men both without and within, and in the case of those that are without though they had been within.

19. Therefore, my Brethren, those that in the very congregation of these walls ye see to be rebellious men, proud, seeking their own, lifted up; not having a zeal for God that is chaste, sound, quiet, but ascribing to themselves much; ready for dissension, but not finding opportunity; are the very chaff of the Lord’s floor. From hence these few men the wind of pride hath dislodged: the whole floor will not fly, save when He at the last shall winnow. But what shall we do, save with this man sing, with this man pray, with this man mourn and say securely, (ver. 18.) He shall redeem in peace my soul. Against them that love not peace: in peace He shall redeem my soul. “Because with those that hated peace I was peace-making.” He shall redeem in peace my soul, from those that draw near to me. For from those that are afar from me, it is an easy case: not so soon doth he deceive me that saith, Come, pray to an idol: he is very far from me. Art thou a Christian? A Christian, he saith. Out of a neighbouring place he is my adversary, he is at hand. He shall redeem in peace my soul, from those that draw near to me: for in many things they were with me. Wherefore have I said, draw near to me? Because in many things they were with me. In this verse two

propositions occur. In many things they were with me. Baptism we had both of us, in that they were with me: the Gospel we both read, they were in that with me: the festivals of martyrs we celebrated, they were there with me: Easter's solemnity we attended, they were there with me. But not entirely with me: in schism not with me, in heresy not with me. In many things with me, in few things not with me. But in these few things wherein not with me, there is no profit to them of the many things wherein they were with me. For see, brethren, how many things hath recounted the Apostle Paul: one thing, he hath said, if it shall have been wanting, in vain are those things. If with the tongues of men and of angels I shall speak, he saith, if I have all prophecy, and all faith, and all knowledge; if mountains I shall remove, if I shall bestow all my goods upon the poor, if I shall deliver my body even so that it be burned. How many things he hath enumerated! To all these many things let there be wanting one thing, charity; the former in number are more, the latter in weight is greater. Therefore in all Sacraments they are with me, in one charity not with me: In many things they were with me. Again, by a different expression: For in many things they were with me. They that themselves have separated from me, with me they were, not in few things, but in many things. For throughout the whole world few are the grains, many are the chaffs. Therefore he saith what? In chaff with me they were, in wheat with me they were not. And the chaff is nearly related to the wheat, from one seed it goeth forth, in one field is rooted, with one rain is nourished, the same reaper it suffereth, the same threshing sustaineth, the same winnowing awaiteth, not into one barn entereth. For in many things they were with me.

20. (Ver. 19.) God will hear me, and He shall humble them That is before ages. For they rely on some leader or other of theirs that hath begun but yesterday. He shall humble them That is before ages. For even if with reference to time Christ is of Mary the Virgin, nevertheless before ages "In the beginning He is the Word, and the Word with God, and the Word God." He shall humble them, That is before ages. For to them is no changing: of them I speak to whom is no changing. He knew of some to persevere, and in the perseverance of their own wickedness to die. For we see them, and to them is no changing: they that die in that same perverseness, in that same schism, to them is no changing. God shall humble them, shall humble them

in damnation, because they are exalted in dissension. To them is no changing, because they are not changed for the better, but for the worse: neither while they are here, nor in the resurrection. For all we shall rise again, but not all shall be changed. Wherefore? Because To them is no changing: and they have not feared God. My brethren, one remedy there is: let them fear God, let them forsake Donatus. Thou sayest to him, Thou art perishing in schism; it must needs be that God should requite those evil things: thou wilt come unto damnation; flatter not thyself with thy words, follow not a blind guide: for a blind man leading a blind man, together into a ditch do they fall. What is that to me? he saith: as I have lived yesterday, so also to-day: what my parents were, the same also am I. Thou fearest not God: give fear to God: let him think that all these things are true which are read, that the faithfulness of Christ is that which cannot be broken: how in heresy shall he remain in the face of so great evidentness of the holy Catholic Church, which God hath diffused throughout the whole world; which before He diffused, He promised, foretold, hath so manifested as He promised? Therefore let them beware and mark that fear not God.

Ver. 20. He stretcheth forth His hand in requiting.

21. They have polluted His Testament. Read the testament which they have polluted: "In thy seed shall be blessed all nations." They have polluted His Testament. Thou against these words of the Testator sayest what? The Africa of holy Donatus hath alone deserved this grace, in him hath remained the Church of Christ. Say at least the Church of Donatus. Wherefore addest thou, of Christ? Of whom it is said, In thy seed shall be blessed all nations. After Donatus wilt thou go? Set aside Christ, and then secede. See therefore what followeth: They have polluted His Testament. What Testament? To Abraham have been spoken the promises, and to his seed. The Apostle saith, Nevertheless, a man's testament confirmed no one maketh void, or superaddeth to: to Abraham have been spoken the promises, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as if in many; but as if in one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. In this Christ, therefore, what Testament hath been promised? In thy seed shall be blessed all nations. Thou that hast given up the unity of all nations, and in a part hast remained, hast polluted His Testament. That which therefore hath befallen thee, to be

banished, to be from the inheritance separated, is of the anger of God. For attend to that which followeth: They have polluted His Testament; (they have been divided, because of the anger of His countenance.) What do ye look for, by what clearer mark should heretics be pointed out? They have been divided, because of the anger of His countenance.

22. Ver. 22. And His heart hath drawn near. Of whom do we understand it, except of Him, by the anger of whom they have been divided? How hath His heart drawn near? In such sort, that we may understand His will. For by heretics hath been vindicated the Catholic Church, and by those that evil think have been proved those that think well. For many things lay hid in the Scriptures: and when heretics had been cut off, with questions they troubled the Church of God: then those things were opened which lay hid, and the will of God was understood. Thence is said in another Psalm, A congregation of bulls amid the cows of the people, in order that they might be excluded that have been proved with silver. For let them be excluded, He hath said, let them come forth, let them appear. Whence even in silver-working men are called ‘excluders,’ that is, pressers out of form from the sort of confusion of the lump. Therefore many men that very excellently could the Scriptures understand and expound, were hidden among the people of God: but they did not declare the solution of difficult questions, when no reviler again urged them. For was the Trinity perfectly treated of before the Arians snarled thereat? Was repentance perfectly treated of before the Novatians opposed? So not perfectly of Baptism was it treated, before rebaptizers set without contradicted; nor of the very oneness of Christ were the doctrines clearly stated which have been stated, save after that this separation began to press upon the weak: in order that they that knew how to treat of and solve these questions, (lest the weak should perish vexed with the questions of the ungodly,) by their discourses and disputations should bring out unto open day the dark things of the Law. Therefore they have been divided because of the anger of His countenance, and unto us for understanding His heart hath drawn near. Therefore perceive ye that which in another Psalm He hath mentioned, “Congregation of bulls,” that is, of proud smiters with horns, “amid the cows of the people.” What doth he speak of as cows? Souls easy to be led astray. Why this? “In order that those may be excluded,” that is, may appear, that were

lying hid, “that have been proved with silver.” What is, “with silver?” With the saying of God. The sayings of God are sayings chaste, silver with fire tried, the thing approved of the earth, purged seven times so much. This obscure sense see in what manner the Apostle bringeth out into light; It is needful, he saith, that also heresies there be, in order that men proved may be made manifest among you. What is “men proved?” Proved with silver, proved with the word. What is, “may be made manifest?” May be brought out. Wherefore this? Because of heretics. What is, because of heretics? Because of the “congregation of bulls amid the cows of the people.” So therefore these also have been divided because of the anger of His countenance, and His heart hath drawn near.

23. Ver. 21. His discourses have been softened above oil, and themselves are darts. For certain things in the Scriptures were seeming hard, while they were obscure; when explained, they have been softened. For even the first heresy in the disciples of Christ, as it were from the hardness of His discourse arose. For when He said, Except a man shall have eaten My flesh and shall have drunk My blood, he shall not have life in himself: they, not understanding, said to one another, Hard is this discourse, who can hear it? Saying that, Hard is this discourse, they separated from Him: He remained with the others, the twelve. When they had intimated to Him, that by His discourse they had been scandalized, Will ye also, He saith, choose to go? Then Peter, The Word of life eternal Thou hast: to whom shall we go? Attend, we beseech you, and ye little ones learn godliness. Did Peter by any means at that time understand the secret of that discourse of the Lord? Not yet he understood: but that good were the words which he understood not, godly he believed. Therefore if hard is a discourse, and not yet is understood, be it hard to an ungodly man, but to thee be it by godliness softened: for whenever it is solved, it both will become for thee oil, and even unto the bones it will penetrate.

24. Furthermore, just as Peter, after their having been scandalized by the hardness, as they thought, of the discourse of the Lord, even then said, The Word of life eternal Thou hast: to whom shall we go? so he hath added, (ver. 22.) Cast upon the Lord thy care, and He shall Himself nourish thee up. A little one thou art, not yet thou understandest the secret things of

words: perchance from thee the bread is hidden, and as yet with milk thou must be fed: be not angry with the breasts: they will make thee fit for the table, for which now little fitted thou art. Behold by the division of heretics many hard things have been softened: His discourses that were hard have been softened above oil, and they are themselves darts. They have armed men preaching the Gospel: and the very discourses are aimed at the breast of every one that heareth, by men instant in season and out of season: by those discourses, by those words, as though by arrows, hearts of men unto the love of peace are smitten. Hard they were, and soft they have been made. Being softened they have not lost their virtue, but into darts have been converted. His discourses have been softened above oil: and themselves, the softened discourses, themselves are darts. But thou not yet perchance art fitted to be armed with these darts, and not yet for thee hath shone out that which in discourse perchance is obscure and hard. Cast upon the Lord thy care, and Himself shall nourish thee up. Upon the Lord cast thyself. Behold thou wilt cast thyself upon the Lord, let no one put himself in the place of the Lord. Cast upon the Lord thy care. See in what manner that great soldier of Christ would not that upon himself the care of little ones should be cast: Hath by any means Paul for you been crucified, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? What did he say to them after that, Cast upon the Lord your care, and Himself shall nourish you up? But now a little one would cast his care upon the Lord, and some one or other meeteth him and saith, I will take thee in. He meeteth as it were a ship tossed by the waves, and he saith, I will take her in. Do thou also make answer, A harbour I seek, not a rock. Cast upon the Lord thy care, and Himself shall nourish thee up. And see, a harbour doth take thee in: He shall not give for everlasting tossing to the just man. Thou art seeming to toss in that sea, but a harbour taketh thee in. Do thou only before that thou enter into the harbour break not away from the anchor. The ship is tossing at anchor, but not afar from the land is she driven, nor for everlasting will she toss, even if for a time she toss. For to tossing belong the words above: I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled. I was looking for Him that should make me safe from weakness of mind and tempest. Tossing he speaketh, but not for everlasting he shall toss: for to an anchor he is bound, the anchor is his hope. He shall not give for everlasting tossing to the just man.

25. But to the others what?

Ver. 23. But Thou, O God, shalt bring them down unto the pit of corruption. The pit of corruption is the darkness of sinking under. Thou shalt bring them down, he saith, unto the pit of corruption: because, when blind leadeth blind, they both fall into a ditch. God bringeth them down into the pit of corruption, not because He is the author of their own guilt, but because He is Himself the judge of their iniquities. For God hath delivered them unto the desires of their heart. For they have loved darkness, and not light; they have loved blindness, and not seeing. For behold the Lord Jesus hath shone out to the whole world, let them sing in unity with the whole world: For there is not one that can hide himself from the heat of Him. But they passing over from the whole to a part, from the body to a wound, from life to a limb cut off, shall meet with what, but going into the pit of corruption?

26. Men of bloods and of deceitfulness. Men of bloods, because of slayings he calleth them: and O that they were corporal and not spiritual slayings. For blood from the flesh going forth, is seen and shuddered at: who seeth the blood of the heart in a man rebaptized? Those deaths require other eyes. Although even about these visible deaths Circumcelliones armed every where remain not quiet. And if of these visible deaths we think, there are men of bloods. Give heed to the armed man, whether he is a man of peace and not of blood. If at least a club only he were to carry, well; but he carrieth a sling, carrieth an axe, carrieth stones, carrieth lances: and carrying these weapons, wherever they may they scour, for the blood of innocent men they thirst. Therefore even with regard to these visible deaths there are men of bloods. But even of them let us say, O that such deaths alone they perpetrated, and souls they slew not. These that are men of bloods and of deceit, let them not suppose that we thus wrongly understand men of bloods, of them that kill souls: they themselves of their Maximianists have so understood it. For when they condemned them, in the very sentence of their Council they have set down these words: Swift are the feet of them to shed the blood (of the proclaimers), tribulation and calamity are in the ways of them, and the way of peace they have not known. This of the Maximianists they have said. But I ask of them, when have the Maximianists shed the body's blood; not because they too would not shed,

if there were so great a multitude as could shed, but because of the fear in their minority rather they have suffered somewhat from others, than have themselves at any time done any such thing. Therefore I question the Donatist and say: In thy Council thou hast set down of the Maximianists, Swift are the feet of them to shed blood. Shew me one of whom the Maximianists have hurt so much as a finger! What other thing to me is he to answer, than that which I say? They that have separated themselves from unity, and who slay souls by leading astray, spiritually, not carnally, do shed blood. Very well thou hast expounded, but in thy exposition acknowledge their own deeds. Men of bloods and of deceitfulness. In guile is deceitfulness, in dissimulation, in seduction. What therefore of those very men that have been divided because of the anger of His countenance? They are themselves men of bloods and of deceit.

27. But of them he saith what? They shall not halve their days. What is, They shall not halve their days? They shall not make progress as much as they think: within the time which they expect, they shall perish. For he is that partridge, whereof hath been said, In the half of his days they shall leave him, and in his last days he shall be an unwise one. They make progress, but for a time. For what saith the Apostle? But evil men and seducers shall make progress for the worse, themselves erring, and other men into error driving. But a blind man leading a blind man, together into a ditch they fall. Deservedly they fall into the pit of corruption. What therefore saith he? They shall make progress for the worse: not however for long. For a little before he hath said, But further they shall not make progress: that is, shall not halve their days. Let the Apostle proceed and tell wherefore: For the madness of them shall be manifest to all men, as also was that of the others.

Men of bloods and of deceit shall not halve their days. But I in Thee will hope, O Lord. But deservedly they shall not halve their days, because in man they have hoped. But I from days temporal have reached unto day eternal. Wherefore? Because in Thee I have hoped, O Lord.

PSALM 56

Exposition

A discourse to the people of Carthage.

Just as when we are going to enter into any house, we look on the title to see whose it is and to whom it belongeth, lest perchance inopportunately we burst into a place whereunto we ought not; and again, in order that we may not through timidity withdraw from that which we ought to enter: as if in a word we were to read, These estates belong to such an one or to such an one: so on the lintel of this Psalm we have inscribed, At the end, for the people that from holy men were put afar off, to David himself, at the inscription of the Title, when the Allophyli held him in Gath. Let us therefore take knowledge of the people that from holy men were put afar off at the inscription of the Title. For this doth belong to that David whom now ye know how to understand spiritually. For there is here commended to our notice no other than He of Whom hath been said, The end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every man believing. Therefore when thou hearest at the end, unto Christ give heed, lest tarrying in the way thou arrive not at the end. For whatever that place is where beneath thou shalt have stood, before that thou shalt have come home unto Christ, the divine discourse saith to thee nothing but, draw near, not yet is the place where there is security. There is one place where a most sure standing-ground is established; there is a rock whereon a House doth stand up so secure as that it feareth not the rain of the tempest. For the floods have beat against that House, and it hath not fallen, for it had been founded upon a Rock: but the Rock was Christ. Under the name of David Christ is figured: because of Him hath been said, He that hath been made of the seed of David after the flesh.

2. Who are then the people that from holy men were put afar off at the inscription of the Title? Let the Title itself declare to us that people. For there was written a certain title at the Passion of the Lord, when the Lord was crucified: there was in that place a Title inscribed in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin, The King of the Jews; in three tongues as though by three witnesses the Title was confirmed: because in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall stand every word. When the Jews had read this Title, they were indignant, and they said to Pilate, Write not, King of the Jews, but that He said Himself that He was King of the Jews. Write thou that He said Himself, they said; not that the thing was which He said. But because in another Psalm it is truly said, For the Inscription of the Title corrupt thou not, Pilate answered, What I have written I have written: as though he were saying, I corrupt not truth, even if ye love falsehood. Because therefore in that cursed one the Jews had indignation, saying, We have no king but Cæsar alone; from offence at the Title they were put afar off from holy men. Let them draw near to holy men, and cleave unto the holy One that confess and desire to have Christ for King: be they put afar off from holy men that gainsaying the Title repudiated God for King, and chose man for king. Every people therefore that with human kingdom is pleased, rejecting the Lord from being King over them—to whom reigning every man is subject in such sort that he too may himself reign over his passions—every such people, I say, is put afar off from holy men. Do not, therefore, brethren, in the Jews alone remark this thing. There were given in them as it were primitive examples, to the end that in that same people might shine forth that thing whereof every man should beware. There is indeed also a Cæsar, a human king, for men in things human, but another King there is for things divine: one king for life temporal, another King for life eternal; one king earthly, another King heavenly: king earthly under King heavenly, King heavenly over all things. It is not therefore because they said they had Cæsar for king, that they sinned; but because Christ for King they would not have. And now many men Christ for King, in Heaven sitting, and every where reigning, will not have: and these are they that trouble us. Against such men this Psalm strengtheneth us. For it must needs be that such men we suffer even unto the end: whom we should not suffer, unless for us it were expedient. For every temptation is probation, and the effect of every probation hath its fruit. Because a man for the most part even to his own

self is unknown: what he may bear, or what he may not bear, he knoweth not: and sometimes presumeth that he may bear that which he is not able, and sometimes despaireth of himself to be able to bear that which he is able: there cometh up temptation like a sort of inquisition, and a man is found out by himself; because he lay hid even to himself, but to his Maker he lay not hid. Furthermore, Peter presumed of something which in him was not yet, that even unto death he with the Lord Jesus Christ would persevere: his own powers Peter knew not, but the Lord knew. That he was not fitted replied He that had formed him, He that even to him that had been formed by Himself meet powers would give, what not yet He had given, knew: he that not yet had received knew not: there came on temptation; he denied, wept, received. Since therefore we know not what we should ask, as though not having, and for what we should give thanks as if receiving, need there is always that with temptations and tribulations we be educated in this world: but troubled we cannot be, except by those that have been put afar off from holy men. This farness, brethren, understand ye to be of heart, not of the body. For oftentimes it cometh to pass that he that in body afar is estranged from thee, is joined to thee, because he loveth that which thou lovest; and oftentimes it cometh to pass that one standing beside thee is joined to thee, because he loveth that which thou lovest: and oftentimes it cometh to pass that one standing beside thee, because that he loveth the world, while thou lovest God, is afar from thee.

3. What therefore meaneth, that which to the title itself still belongeth, namely, that the Allophyli held him in Geth? Geth was a certain city of the Allophyli, that is, of strangers, to wit, of people afar from holy men. All they that refuse Christ for King become strangers. Wherefore strangers are they made? Because even that vine, though by Him planted, when it had become sour what heard it? Wherefore hast thou been turned into sourness, O alien vine? It hath not been said, My vine: because if Mine, sweet; if sour, not Mine; if not Mine, surely alien. There held him, then, Allophyli in Geth. We find indeed, brethren, David himself, son of Jesse, king of Israel, to have been in a strange land among the Allophyli, when he was being sought by Saul, and was in that city and with the king of that city, but that there he was detained we read not. Therefore our David, the Lord Jesus Christ out of the seed of that David, not alone they held, but there hold Him

still Allophyli in Geth. Of Geth we have said that it is a city. But the interpretation of this name, if asked for, signifieth 'press.' Christ inasmuch as He is the Head, the Saviour of the Body, He that was born of a Virgin, crucified, that now to us displayeth the pattern of our resurrection in the resurrection of His flesh, that sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and for us intercedeth, is also here, but in His Body which is the Church. The Body is conjoined to the Head thereof, the Head for the Body is crying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And the Head in the Body thereof after the Apostle's saying, And together hath raised us again, and together hath made us to sit in heavenly places. And we there are sitting, and Himself is here labouring; we there are sitting after hope, and He here is with us after charity. This bond as it were of one man maketh two to be in one flesh, Bride and Bridegroom. Whence also the Lord Himself saith, Therefore now not two, but one flesh. How therefore here is He held in Geth? Held in a winepress is His Body, that is, His Church. What is, in a winepress? In pressings. But in a winepress fruitful is the pressing. A grape on the vine sustaineth no pressing, whole it seemeth, but nothing thence floweth: it is thrown into a winepress, is trodden, is pressed; harm seemeth to be done to the grape, but this harm is not barren; nay, if no harm had been applied, barren it would have remained.

4. Let whatsoever holy men therefore that are suffering pressing from those that have been put afar off from the saints, give heed to this Psalm, let them perceive here themselves, let them speak what here is spoken, that suffer what here is spoken of. Surely let him that suffereth not, speak not; I bind not to the speaking, him that I see out of suffering. But let him beware, that when he would be afar from suffering, he be not put afar off from holy men. Let each one therefore think of his enemy; if Christian he is, the world to him is an enemy. Private enmities therefore let no one think of, when about to hear the words of this Psalm: Know ye that for us the wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against princes and powers, and spiritual things of wickedness, that is, against the devil and his angels; because even when we suffer men that annoy us, he is instigating, he is inflaming, as it were his vessels he is moving. Let us give heed therefore to two enemies, him whom we see, and him whom we see not; man we see, the devil we see not; man

let us love, of the devil beware; for man pray, against the devil pray, and let us say to God,

Ver. 1. Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down. Fear not because man hath trodden thee down: have thou wine, a grape thou hast become in order that thou shouldest be trodden. Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down: all day long warring he hath troubled me, every one that hath been put afar off from the saints. But why should not here be understood even the devil himself? Is it because mention is made of 'man?' doth therefore the Gospel err, because it hath said, A man that is an enemy hath done this? But by a kind of figure may he also be called a man, and yet not be a man. Whether therefore it was him whom he that said these words was beholding, or whether it was the people and each one that was put afar off from holy men, through which kind the devil troubleth the people of God, who cleave to holy men, who cleave to the Holy One, who cleave to the King, at the title of which King being indignant they were as though beaten back, and put afar off: let him say, Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down: and let him faint not in this treading down, knowing Him on Whom he is calling, and by Whose example he hath been made strong. The first cluster in the winefat pressed is Christ. When that cluster by passion was pressed out, there flowed that whence the cup inebriating is how passing beautiful! Let His Body likewise say, looking upon its Head, Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down: all day long warring he hath troubled me. All day long, at all times. Let no one say to himself, There have been troubles in our fathers' time, in our time there are not. If thou supposest thyself not to have troubles, not yet hast thou begun to be a Christian. And where is the voice of the Apostle, But even all that will live godly in Christ, persecutions shall suffer. If therefore thou sufferest not any persecution for Christ, take heed lest not yet thou hast begun godly to live in Christ. But when thou hast begun godly to live in Christ, thou hast entered into the winepress; make ready thyself for pressings: but be not thou dry, lest from the pressing nothing go forth.

5. Ver. 2. Mine enemies have trodden me down all day long. They that have been put afar off from holy men, these are mine enemies. All day long: already it hath been said, From the height of the day. What meaneth, from

the height of the day? Perchance it is a high thing to understand. And no wonder, because the height of the day it is. For perchance they for this reason have been put afar off from holy men, because they were not able to penetrate the height of the day, whereof the Apostles are twelve shining hours. Therefore they that crucified Him, as if man, in the day have erred. But why have they suffered darkness, so that they should be put afar off from holy men? Because on high the day was shining, Him in the height hidden they knew not. For if they had known, never the Lord of Glory would they have crucified. Therefore from this height of day starting back and put afar off from holy men, they have been made enemies, that trouble and tread down as it were a grape in a winepress. There is also another sense. From the height of the day mine enemies have trodden me down all day long, that is, at all times. From the height of the day, that is, from pride temporal. For when they tread down, high they are: humble are they that are trodden down, high are they that tread down. But fear not the height of men treading down: of the day the height is, temporal it is, not eternal.

6. Ver. 3. For many men that war against me, shall fear. Shall fear when? When the day shall have passed away, wherein they are high. For for a time high they are, when the time of their height is finished they will fear. But I in Thee will hope, O Lord. He saith not, But I will not fear: but, Many men, that war against me, shall fear. When there shall have come that day of Judgment, then shall mourn for themselves all the tribes of the earth. When there shall have appeared the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, then secure shall be all holy men. For that thing shall come which they hoped for, which they longed for, the coming whereof they prayed for: but to those men no place for repentance shall remain, because in that time wherein fruitful might have been repentance, their heart they hardened against a warning Lord. Shall they too raise up a wall against a judging God? The godliness of this man do thou indeed acknowledge, and if in that Body thou art, imitate him. When he had said, Many men, that war against me, shall fear: he did not continue, 'But I will not fear:' lest to his own powers ascribing his not fearing, he too should be amid high temporal things, and through pride temporal he should not deserve to come to rest everlasting: rather he hath made thee to perceive whence he shall not fear. But I, he saith, in thee will hope, O Lord: he hath not spoken of his confidence: but of the cause of his

confidence. For if I shall not fear, I may also by hardness of heart not fear, for many men by too much pride fear nothing. Let your love attend. One thing is soundness of body, another thing is torpor of body, another thing is immortality of body. Perfect soundness indeed is immortality: but by a sort of mode of speaking, that is called soundness which we have in this life. When he is not sick, a man is called sound; and when the physician hath made examination, sound he pronounceth him: and when any one hath begun to be sick, that same soundness is disturbed; and when it is healed, to the same soundness he returneth. To three states as it were of the body give heed and examine, soundness, torpor, immortality. Soundness hath no sickness, but nevertheless, when it is touched and molested, it feeleth pain. But torpor hath no pain, hath lost sense of pain, by so much the more insensible as it is worse. Again, immortality hath no pain, for swallowed up is all corruption, and this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal hath put on immortality. There is therefore no pain in a body immortal, no pain in a body torpid. Let not a torpid man deem himself forthwith immortal: nearer immortality is the soundness of a man in pain, than the torpor of a man not feeling. Thou findest therefore a man proud in the most excessive vapouring, that hath persuaded himself to fear nothing: mightier dost thou deem him than that man, that saith, Without fightings, within fears: mightier than the Head Himself our Lord God, Who said, Sorrowful is My Soul even unto death? This man is not more mighty: be not thou pleased with his torpor: not with immortality hath he been clothed, but of feeling stripped. But do thou keep thy soul not without affection; for they have been blamed that are without affection: and say thou with the feeling of soundness, Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If to this man there reached not offence, to wit the perdition of every weak man, while being as it were stiff and without pain would he seem to be the better? Far be it: torpor there would be, not calmness. Evidently, brethren, when we shall have come to that place, to that seat, to that blessedness, to an heavenly country, where our soul may be filled with security, be filled with rest and everlasting felicity, no pain there shall be; because cause for pain there shall not be. Many men, he saith, that war against me, shall fear. And those very torpid men that now nothing do fear, shall fear sometime. For there shall come so great terror as shall break and

crush all hardness. Many men that war against me, shall fear. But I in Thee will hope, O Lord.

7. Ver. 4. In God I will praise my discourses, in God I have hoped: I will not fear what flesh doeth to me. Wherefore? Because in God I will praise my discourses. If in thyself thou praisest thy discourses: I say not that thou art not to fear; it is impossible that thou have not to fear. For thy discourses either false thou wilt have, and therefore thine own, because false: or if thy discourses shall be true, and thou shalt deem thyself not to have them from God, but of thyself to speak; true they will be, but thou wilt be false: but if thou shalt have known that thou canst say nothing true in the wisdom of God, in the faith of the Truth, save that which from Him thou hast received, of Whom is said, For what hast thou, which thou hast not received? Then in God thou art praising thy discourses, in order that in God thou mayest be praised by the discourses of God. For if whatever in thee is of God, is honoured by thee; thou also, having been made by God, wilt be honoured in God: but if whatever in thee is of God, thou shalt have honoured as though thine own, not of God; in like manner as that people was put afar off from holy men, so thou wilt be put afar off from the Holy One. Therefore, In God I will praise my discourses: if in God, wherefore mine? Both in God, and mine. In God, because from Himself: mine, because I have received. Himself hath willed them to be mine, Who hath given, by loving Him of Whom they are: because from Him to me they are, mine they have been made. For whence, Our daily bread give us this day? How ours? How give? By asking from Him thou wilt not be empty, by confessing it to be thine, thou wilt not be ungrateful. For if thou say not thine, thou hast not received: again, if thou say thine, so as if from thee be that which thou callest thine, thou lovest that which thou hadst received, because ungrateful thou art to Him from Whom thou hadst received. In God, therefore, I will praise discourses, because there He is Himself the fountain of true discourses: Mine, because, thirsting, I have drawn near and have drunk. In God I will praise my discourses, in God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me. Wast thou not the same that a little before wast saying, Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down; all day long warring he hath troubled me? How therefore here, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me? What shall he do to thee? Thou thyself a little before hast said, Hath trodden

me down, hath troubled me. Nothing shall he do, when these things he shall do? He hath had regard to the wine which floweth from treading, and hath made answer, Evidently he hath trodden down, evidently hath troubled; but what to me shall he do? A grape I was, wine I shall be: In God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me.

8. Ver. 5. All day long my words they abhorred. Thus they are, ye know. Speak truth, preach truth, proclaim Christ to the heathen, proclaim the Church to heretics, proclaim to all men salvation: they contradict, they abhor my words. But when my words they abhor, whom think ye they abhor, save Him in Whom I shall praise my discourses? All day long my words they abhorred. Let this at least suffice, let them abhor words, no farther let them proceed, censure, reject! Be it far from them! Why should I say this? When words they reject, when words they hate, those words which from the fount of truth flow forth, what would they do to him through whom the very words are spoken? what but that which followeth, Against me all the counsels of them are for evil? If the bread itself they hate, how spare they the basket wherein it is ministered? Against me all the counsels of them are for evil. If so even against the Lord Himself, let not the Body disdain that which hath gone before in the Head, to the end that the Body may cleave to the Head. Despised hath been thy Lord, and wilt thou have thyself be honoured by those men that have been put afar off from holy men? Do not for thyself wish to claim that which in Him hath not gone before. The disciple is not greater than his Master; the servant is not greater than his Lord. If the Master of the family they have called Beelzebub, how much more them of His household? Against me all the counsels of them are for evil.

9. Ver. 6. They shall sojourn, and shall hide. To sojourn is to be in a strange land. Sojourners is a term used of those then that live in a country not their own. Every man in this life is a foreigner: in which life ye see that with flesh we are covered round, through which flesh the heart cannot be seen. Therefore the Apostle saith, Do not before the time judge any thing, until the Lord come, and He shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and shall manifest the thoughts of the heart; and then praise shall be to each one from God. Before that this be done, in this sojourning of fleshly life every

one carrieth his own heart, and every heart to every other heart is shut. Furthermore, those men of whom the counsels are against this man for evil, shall sojourn, and shall hide: because in this foreign abode they are, and carry flesh, they hide guile in heart; whatsoever of evil they think, they hide. Wherefore? Because as yet this life is a foreign one. Let them hide; that shall appear which they hide, and they too will not be hidden. There is also in this hidden thing another interpretation, which perchance will be more approved of. For out of those men that have been put afar off from holy men, there creep in certain false brethren, and they cause worse tribulations to the Body of Christ; because they are not altogether avoided as if entirely aliens. From these same men the Apostle, calling to mind weightier perils, when he was enumerating many sufferings of his, and was saying, By perils of rivers, by perils of robbers, by perils from mine own people, by perils from the nations, by perils in the city, by perils in the desert, by perils in the sea: by perils, he saith, in false brethren. These men are exceeding dangerous, of whom is said in another Psalm, And they were entering in, in order that they might see. They were entering in, in order that they might see, and no one saith, Go not in to see. For he goeth in as though thine, he is not guarded against as an alien. Those men, therefore, shall sojourn and shall hide. For thus they go into the great house, not there to abide; therefore they shall sojourn. For such sinners the Lord willing to be considered as servants, after that Gospel interpretation, whereby Every one that doeth sin is the servant of sin, saith, The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth for ever. He that goeth in as a son, will not sojourn, because he shall continue even unto the end: he that goeth in as a servant, deceitful, sinful, to the eye giving heed, seeking what he may carry off, seeking what he may accuse, or what he may find fault with, in order to sojourn goeth in, not to inhabit and continue. Not even those men nevertheless let us fear, brethren: (ver. 4.) In God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me. Even if they sojourn, even if they go in, even if they feign, even if they hide, flesh they are: do thou in the Lord hope, nothing to thee shall flesh do. But he bringeth in tribulation, bringeth in treading down. There is added wine, because the grape is pressed: thy tribulation will not be unfruitful: another seeth thee, imitateth thee: because thou also in order that thou mightest learn to bear such a man, to thy Head hast looked up, that first cluster, unto whom there hath come in a man that

he might see, hath sojourned, and hath hidden, to wit, the traitor Judas. All men, therefore, that with false heart go in, sojourning and hiding, do not thou fear: the father of these same men, Judas, with thy Lord hath been: and He indeed knew him; although Judas the traitor was sojourning and hiding, nevertheless, the heart of him was open to the Lord of all: knowingly He chose one man, whereby He might give comfort to thee that wouldest not know whom thou shouldest avoid. For He might have not chosen Judas, because He knew Judas: for He saith to His disciples, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one out of you is a devil? Therefore even a devil was chosen. Or if chosen he was not, how is it that He hath chosen twelve and not rather eleven? Chosen even he is, but for another purpose. Chosen were eleven for the work of probation, chosen one for the work of temptation. Whence could He give an example to thee, that wouldest not know what men thou shouldest avoid as evil, of what men thou shouldest beware as false and artificial, sojourning and hiding, except He say to thee, Behold, with Myself I have had one of those very men! There hath gone before an example, I have borne, to suffer I have willed that which I knew, in order that to thee knowing not I might give consolation. That which to Me he hath done, the same he will do to thee also: in order that he may be able to do much, in order that he may make much havoc, he will accuse, false charges he will allege. Suppose falsehoods prevail; shall they any wise against thee prevail, and against Me not have prevailed? Against Me surely they have prevailed, but heaven from Me they have not taken. His flesh when buried had false witnesses to endure: too little it was to suffer then in the judgment, He suffered them in the tomb. They received money to speak falsely; they said, When we were sleeping, there came His disciples and took Him away. Furthermore, so blind were the Jews, that they believed a saying altogether incredible: they believed witnesses sleeping. Either it was false that they slept, and lying men they should not have believed: or it was true that they slept, and that which was done they knew not. They shall sojourn and shall hide. Let them sojourn and hide, to do what? In God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me.

10. Ver. 6. These same men shall mark my heel. For they shall sojourn and hide in such sort, that they may mark where a man slippeth. Intent they are upon the heel, to see when a slip may chance to be made; in order that they

may detain the foot for a fall, or trip up the foot for a stumble; certes that they may find that which they may accuse. And what man so walketh, that no where he slippeth? For example, how speedily is a slip made even in tongue? For it is written, Whosoever in tongue stumbleth not, the same is a perfect man. What man I pray would dare himself to call or deem perfect? Therefore it must needs be that every one slip in tongue. But let them that shall sojourn and shall hide, carp at all words, seeking somewhere to make snares and knotty false accusations, wherein they are themselves entangled before those whom they strive to entangle: in order that they may themselves be taken and perish before that they catch other men in order to destroy them. For a man runneth back unto his heart, and thence runneth back to God, and knoweth how to say, In God I will praise my discourses. Whatever good thing I have said, whatever true thing I have said, of God I have said it, and from God have said it: whatever other thing perchance I have said, which to have said I ought not, as a man I have said, but under God I have said. He that strengtheneth one walking, doth menace one straying, forgive one acknowledging, recalleth the tongue, recalleth him that slipped. For a just man seven times shall fall, and shall rise again; but ungodly men shall be made weak in evil things. Let not therefore any one of us fear cunning pursuers, carpers at words, tellers almost of syllables, and breakers of commandments. He is minding what in thee he may convict; in order to believe in Christ through thee, he is not minding. Attend thou unto the discourses of him whom thou blamest, whether perchance he may teach thee something to thy health. And what, he saith, shall he be able to teach to my health, that hath so slipped in word? This very thing perchance he is teaching thee to thy health, that thou be not a carper at words, but a gatherer of precepts. Themselves shall mark my heel.

11. As my soul hath undergone. I speak of that which I have undergone. He was speaking as one experienced: As my soul hath undergone. They shall sojourn and hide. Let my soul undergo all men, men without barking, men within hiding, let it undergo. From without coming, like a river cometh temptation: on the Rock let it find thee, let it strike against, not throw thee down; the house hath been founded upon a Rock. Within he is, he shall sojourn and hide: suppose chaff is near thee, let there come in the treading

of oxen, let there come in the roller of temptations; thou art cleansed, the other is crushed.

12. As my soul hath undergone: (ver. 7.) for nothing Thou shalt save them. He hath taught us even for these very men to pray. However they shall sojourn and hide, however deceitful they be, however dissemblers and liars in wait they be; do thou pray for them, and do not say, Shall God amend even such a man, so evil, so perverse? Do not despair: give heed to Him Whom thou askest, not him for whom thou askest. The greatness of the disease seest thou, the might of the Physician seest thou not? They shall sojourn and hide: as my soul hath undergone. Undergo, pray: and there is done what? For nothing Thou shalt save them. Thou shalt make them safe so as that nothing to Thee it may be, that is, so that no labour to Thee it may be. With men they are despaired of, but Thou with a word dost heal; Thou wilt not toil in healing, though we are astounded in looking on. There is another sense in this verse, For nothing Thou shalt save them: with not any merits of their going before Thou shalt save them. I that before was a blasphemer, he saith, and a persecutor, and injurious; he received letters in order that wherever he might find Christians, he might bind and lead away. Certes in order that he might bind and lead away, at first he was sojourning and was hiding. Therefore of this man not any good merits had gone before, nay, such things had gone before on account of which he would be condemned: nothing of good he brought in, and saved was he. For nothing Thou shalt save them. They shall not bring to Thee he-goats, rams, bulls, not gifts and spices shall they bring Thee in Thy temple, not any thing of the drink-offering of a good conscience do they pour thereon; all in them is rough, all foul, all to be detested: and though they to Thee bring nothing whereby they may be saved; For nothing Thou shalt save them, that is, with the free gift of Thy Grace. What had that robber brought to the cross? From the lurking place to the judgment, from the judgment unto the tree, from the tree unto Paradise. 'He believed, wherefore he spake.' But even that very faith who did give, but He that beside him hung? For nothing Thou shalt save them.

13. In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down. Thou art angry and dost bring down, dost rage and save, dost terrify and call. For what is, In anger

the peoples Thou shalt bring down? Thou fillest with tribulations all things, in order that being set in tribulations men may fly to Thee, lest by pleasures and a wrong security they be seduced. From Thee anger is seen, but that of a father. A father is angry with a son, the despiser of his injunctions: being angry with him he boxeth him, striketh, pulleth the ear, with hand draggeth, to school leadeth. In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down. How many men have entered, how many men have filled the House of the Lord, in the anger of Him brought down, that is, by tribulations terrified and with faith filled? For to this end tribulation stirreth up; in order to empty the vessel which is full of wickedness, so as that it may be filled with grace. In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down.

14. Ver. 8. O God, my life I have told out to Thee. For that I live hath been Thy doing, and for this reason I tell out my life to Thee. But did not God know that which He had given? What is that which thou tellest out to Him? Wilt thou teach God? Far be it. Therefore why saith he, I have told out to Thee? Is it perchance because it profiteth Thee that I have told out my life? And what doth it profit God? To the advantage of God it doth profit. I have told out to God my life, because that life hath been God's doing. In like manner as his life Paul the Apostle did tell out, saying, I that before was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, he shall tell out his life. But mercy I have obtained. He hath told out his life, not for himself but for Him: because he hath told it out in such sort, that in Him men believe, not for his own advantages, but for the advantages of Him. For what saith that same Paul? Therefore Christ hath died, and hath risen, in order that he that liveth, no more for himself may live, but for Him that for all men hath died. If therefore thou livest, and livest not by thyself, because that thou shouldest live He hath granted: tell out thy life, not for thyself, but for Him; not thine own things seeking, not for thyself living, but for Him That for all men hath died. For of certain reprobate men what saith the same Apostle? For all men seek their own things, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. If for this reason thou tellest out thy life, in order that it may profit thee, and other men it may not profit; for thyself thou tellest it out, not for God; but if so thou tellest out thy life, in order that other men also thou mayest invite to receive life, which thou too hast received, thou tellest out thy life to Him from Whom thou hast received, and thou shalt have a reward more ample,

because even out of that which thou hast received, not ungrateful thou hast shewn thyself. O God, my life I have told out to Thee. Thou hast put my tears in Thy sight. Thou hast hearkened to me imploring Thee. As also in Thy promise. Because as Thou hadst promised this thing, so Thou hast done. Thou hast said Thou wouldest hearken to one weeping. I have believed, I have wept, I have been hearkened unto; I have found Thee merciful in promising, true in repaying. As also in Thy promise.

15. Ver. 9. Turned be mine enemies backward. This thing to these very men is profitable, no ill to these men he is wishing. For to go before they are willing, therefore to be amended they are not willing. Thou warnest thine enemy to live well, that he amend himself: he scorneth, he rejecteth thy word: "Behold him that adviseth me; behold him from whom I am to hear the commandments whereby I shall live!" To go before thee he willeth, and in going before is not amended. He mindeth not that thy words are not thine, he mindeth not that thy life to God thou tellest out, not to thyself. In going before therefore he is not amended: it is a good thing for him that he be turned backward, and follow him whom to go before he willed. The Lord to His disciples was speaking of His Passion that was to be. Peter shuddered, and saith, Far be it, O Lord, there shall not be done this thing: he that a little before had said, Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God, having confessed God, feared for Him to die, as if but a man. But the Lord Who so came that He might suffer, (for we could not otherwise be saved unless with His blood we were redeemed,) a little before had praised the confession of Peter, and had said, Because to thee flesh and blood hath not revealed this thing, but My Father Which is in the heavens; therefore thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not overcome Her: and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. See ye after what sort He followed up a confession true, godly, full of confidence, because he said, Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God. But immediately when the Lord beginneth to speak of His Passion, he feared lest He should perish by death, whereas we ourselves should perish unless He died; and he saith, Far be it, O Lord, this thing shall not be done. And the Lord, to him to whom a little before He had said, Blessed thou art, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, saith, Go back behind, Satan, an offence thou art to Me. Why therefore Satan is he, that a little before was

blessed, and a Rock? For thou savourest not the things which are of God, He saith, but those things which are of man. A little before [he savoured] the things which are of God: “because not flesh and blood hath revealed to thee, but My Father Which is in the Heavens.” When in God he was praising his discourse, not Satan but Peter, from petra: but when of himself and out of human infirmity, carnal love of man, which would be for an impediment to his own salvation, and that of the rest, Satan he is called. Why? Because to go before the Lord he willed, and to the Leader heavenly, earthly counsel to give. Far be it, O Lord, this thing shall not be done. Thou sayest, Far be it, and thou sayest, O Lord: surely if Lord He is, in power He doeth: if Master He is, He knoweth what He doeth, He knoweth what He teacheth: but thou willest to lead thy Leader, teach thy Master, command thy Lord, choose for God: much thou goest before, go back behind. Did not this too profit these enemies? Turned be Mine enemies backward; but let them not remain backward. For this reason let them be turned backward, lest they go before; but so that they follow, not so that they remain. Turned be Mine enemies backward.

16. Ver. 9. In whatsoever day I shall have called upon Thee, behold I have known that my God art Thou. A great knowledge. He saith not, I have known that God Thou art: but, That my God art Thou. For thine He is, when thee He succoureth: thine He is, when thou to Him art not an alien. Whence is said, Blessed the people of whom is the Lord the God of the same. Wherefore of whom is? For of whom is He not? Of all things indeed God He is: but of those men the God peculiarly He is said to be, that love Him, that hold Him, that possess Him, that worship Him, as though belonging to His own House: the great family of Him are they, redeemed by the great blood of the Only Son. How great a thing hath God given to us, that His own we should be, and He should be ours! But in truth foreigners afar have been put from holy men, sons alien they are. See what of them is said in another Psalm: O Lord, deliver me, he saith, from the hand of alien sons, of whom the mouth hath spoken vanity, and the right hand of them is a right hand of iniquity. And see the height of these same; but it is ‘the height of the day,’ that is, pride temporal. Of whom their sons, he saith, are as young plants firmly rooted, the daughters of them adorned as the similitude of a temple. The felicity of the present world he is describing,

wherein men erring, and counting it as some great matter, the felicity true and everlasting seek not. Thence therefore these are sons alien, not sons of God: Of whom their sons, he saith, are as young plants firmly rooted, their daughters adorned as the similitude of a temple: their garners full, belching forth out of this unto this: their oxen fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings out: there is not falling of wall, nor going over, nor cry in the streets of them. And what followeth? Blessed they have called the people to whom these things are. But who have called them? Sons alien, of whom the mouth hath spoken vanity. Thou, what sayest thou? Blessed the people, of whom the Lord is the God of the same. He hath taken from among them all other things which God giveth, and hath given God Himself. For all those things, brethren, of which the sons alien have made mention, God giveth; but even to aliens He giveth, but even to evil men giveth, but even to blasphemers giveth, He that maketh His sun to rise upon good men and upon evil men, and raineth upon just men and upon unjust men. Sometimes these things to good men He giveth, sometimes giveth not: and to evil men sometimes giveth, sometimes giveth not: for good men however He keepeth Himself, but for evil men fire everlasting. There is therefore an evil thing which He giveth not to good men, and there is a good thing which He giveth not to evil men: there are certain middle things, both good things and evil things, which He giveth both to good men and to evil men.

17. Let us therefore love God, brethren, purely and chastely. There is not a chaste heart, if God for reward it worshipping. How so? Reward of the worship of God shall not we have? We shall have evidently, but it is God Himself Whom we worship. Himself for us a reward shall be, because we shall see Him as He is. Observe that a reward thou shalt obtain. To His lovers our Lord Jesus Christ saith what? He that loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him. What therefore wilt Thou give him? And I will manifest Myself to him. If thou lovest not, too little it is: if thou lovest, if thou sighest, if freely thou worshippest Him, by Whom freely thou hast been bought; for thou hadst not deserved of Him that He should redeem thee; if upon consideration of His benefits towards thee thou sighest, and unquiet hast thy heart with longing for Him; do not beside Him ask any thing from Him, He is Himself sufficient for thee. Howsoever covetous thou art,

sufficient for thee is God. For avarice sought to possess the whole earth, add also Heaven: more is He that hath made heaven and earth. I will tell you, brethren: in these human alliances consider a chaste heart, of what sort it is towards God: certainly human alliances are of such sort, that a man doth not love his wife, that loveth her because of her portion: a woman her husband doth not chaste love, that for these reasons loveth him, because something he hath given, or because much he hath given. Both a rich man is a husband, and one that hath become a poor man is a husband. How many men proscribed, by chaste wives have been the more beloved! Proved have been many chaste marriages by the misfortunes of husbands: that the wives might not be supposed to love any other object more than their husband, not only have they not forsaken, but the more have they obeyed. If therefore a husband of flesh freely is loved, if chaste he is loved; and a wife of flesh freely is loved, if chaste she is loved; in what manner must God be loved, the true and truth-speaking Husband of the soul, making fruitful unto the offspring of everlasting life, and not suffering us to be barren? Him, therefore, so let us love, as that any other thing besides Himself be not loved: and there takes place in us that which we have spoken of, that which we have sung, because even here the voice is ours: In whatsoever day I shall have called upon Thee, behold, I have known that my God art Thou. This is to call upon God, freely to call upon Him. Furthermore, of certain men hath been said what? Upon the Lord they have not called. The Lord they seemed as it were to call unto themselves; and they besought Him about inheritances, about increasing money, about lengthening this life, about the rest of temporal things: and concerning them the Scripture saith what? Upon the Lord they have not called. Therefore there followeth what? There they have feared with fear, where there was no fear. What is, where there was no fear? Lest money should be stolen from them, lest any thing in their house should be made less; lastly, lest they should have less of years in this life, than they hoped for themselves: but there have they trembled with fear, where there was no fear. Such men they are as were those Jews: If we shall have let Him live, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and nation. There they have feared a fear, where there was no fear. Behold, I have known that my God art Thou. Great riches of heart, great light of the eye interior, great confidence of security! Behold, I have known that my God art Thou.

18. Ver. 10. In God I will praise the word, in the Lord I will praise the discourse: (ver. 11.) in God I have hoped, I will not fear what man doeth unto me. Now this is the very sense which above hath been repeated.

19. Ver. 12. In me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. "Vow ye, and render to the Lord your God." What vow, what render? Perchance those animals which were offered at the altars aforetime? No such thing offer thou: in thyself is what thou mayest vow and render. From the heart's coffer bring forth the incense of praise; from the store of a good conscience bring forth the sacrifice of faith. Whatsoever thing thou bringest forth, kindle with love. In thyself be the vows, which thou mayest render of praise to God. Of what praise? For what hath He granted thee? (Ver. 13.) For Thou hast rescued my soul from death. This is that very life which he telleth out to Him: O God, my life I have told out to Thee. For I was what? Dead. Through myself I was dead: through Thee I am what? Alive. Therefore in me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. Behold I love my God: no one doth tear Him from me: that which to Him I may give, no one doth tear from me, because in the heart it is shut up. With reason is said with that former confidence, What should man do unto me? Let man rage, let him be permitted to rage, be permitted to accomplish that which he attempteth: what is he to take away? Gold, silver, cattle, men servants, maid servants, estates, houses, let him take away all things: doth he by any means take away the vows, which are in me, which I may render of praise to God? The tempter was permitted to tempt a holy man, Job; in one moment of time he took away all things: whatever of possessions he had had, he carried off: took away inheritance, slew heirs; and this not little by little, but in a crowd, at one blow, at one swoop, so that all things were on a sudden announced: when all was taken away, alone there remained Job, but in him were vows of praise, which he might render to God, in him evidently there were: the coffer of his holy breast the thieving devil had not rifled, full he was of that wherefrom he might sacrifice. Hear what he had, hear what he brought forth: The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. O riches interior, whither thief doth not draw near! God Himself had given that whereof He was receiving; He had Himself enriched him with that whereof to Him he was offering that which He loved. Praise from

thee God requireth, thy confession God requireth. But from thy field wilt thou give any thing? He hath Himself rained in order that thou mayest have. From thy coffer wilt thou give any thing? He hath Himself put in that which thou art to give. What wilt thou give, which from Him thou hast not received? For what hast thou which thou hast not received? From the heart wilt thou give? He too hath given faith, hope, and charity: this thou must bring forth: this thou must sacrifice. But evidently all the other things the enemy is able to take away against thy will; this to take away he is not able, unless thou be willing. These things a man will lose even against his will: and wishing to have gold, will lose gold; and wishing to have house, will lose house: faith no one will lose, except him that shall have despised her.

20. In me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee: (ver. 13.) because Thou hast rescued my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from slipping: that I may be pleasing before God in the light of the living. With reason he is not pleasing to alien sons, that are put afar off from holy men, because they have not the light of the living, whence they may see that which to God is pleasing. Light of the living, is light of the immortal, light of holy men. He that is not in darkness, is pleasing in the light of the living. A man is observed, and the things which belong to him; no one knoweth of what sort he is: God seeth of what sort he is. Sometimes even the devil himself he escapeth; except he tempt, he findeth not: just as concerning that man of whom just now I have made mention. God knew him, and bore witness to him: the devil knew him not, and therefore had said, Doth Job by any means worship God for nought? See to what a proof the enemy challengeth: there is perfection. See what the enemy throweth out for reproach: he saw a man serving God, in all things obeying, all things doing well; and because a rich man he was, and his house most prosperous, this thing he throweth out for reproach, that for this reason he worshippeth God, because He had given to him all these things: Doth Job by any means worship God for nought? For this was true light, this the light of the living, that gratis he should worship God. God saw in the heart of His servant His gratuitous worship. For that heart was pleasing in the sight of the Lord in the light of the living: the devil's sight he escaped, because in darkness he was. God admitted the tempter, not in order that He might Himself know that which He did know, but in order that to us to be known and imitated He

might set it forth. Admitted was the tempter; he took away every thing, there remained the man bereft of possessions, bereft of family, bereft of children, full of God. A wife certainly was left. Merciful do ye deem the devil, that he left him a wife? He knew through whom he had deceived Adam. He had left a help-mate for himself, not a comforter for the husband. He, therefore, being full of God, in whom vows there were, which he might render of praise, in order that he might shew that gratis he did worship God, not because so great things he had received; even with the loss of all things was a man of such sort, because Him that had given all things, he lost not: The Lord hath given, he saith, the Lord hath taken away; as hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the Name of the Lord blessed. Moreover, with wound smitten from head even unto feet, whole nevertheless within, he made answer to the woman tempting, out of the light of the living, out of the light of his heart: thou hast spoken as though one of the unwise women, that is, as though one that hath not the light of the living. For the light of the living is wisdom, and the darkness of unwise men is folly. Thou hast spoken as though one of the unwise women: my flesh thou seest, the light of my heart thou seest not. For she then might more have loved her husband, if the interior beauty she had known, and had beheld the place where he was beautiful before the eyes of God: because in Him were vows which he might render of praise to God. How entirely the enemy had forborne to invade that patrimony! How whole was that which he was possessing, and that because of which yet more to be possessed he hoped for, being to go on from virtues unto virtue. Therefore, brethren, to this end let all these things serve us, that God gratis we love, in Him hope always, neither man nor devil fear. Neither the one nor the other doeth any thing, except when it is permitted: permitted for no other reason can it be, except because it doth profit us. Let us endure evil men, let us be good men: because even we have been evil. Even as nothing God shall save men, of whom we dare to despair. Therefore of no one let us despair, for all men whom we suffer let us pray, from God let us never depart. Our patrimony let Him be, our hope let Him be, our safety let Him be. He is Himself here a comforter, there a remunerator, every where Maker-alive, and of life the Giver, not of another life, but of that whereof hath been said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: in order that both here in the light of faith, and there in the light of

sight, as it were in the light of the living, in the sight of the Lord we may be pleasing.

PSALM 57

Exposition

1. We have heard in the Gospel just now, brethren, how loveth us our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God with the Father, Man with us, out of our own selves, now at the right hand of the Father; ye have heard how much He loveth us. For the measure of His own love He hath even Himself prescribed, and upon us hath laid it, saying that His commandment is, that we should love one another. And that we should not inquire doubting and fretting how much we ought to love one another, and how much that perfect love is which is pleasing to God, (for that is perfect than which greater there cannot be,) He hath Himself expressed, hath taught, and He saith, Greater love than this no one hath, than that a man should lay down his life for his friends. He hath Himself done that which He taught; the Apostles have done that which from Him they learned, and by us that it be done they have preached. Let us also do thus; because even if we are not what He was, in respect of this, that He created us, what He was nevertheless we are, in respect of that which He was made because of us. And if He alone had done, perchance no one of us ought to dare to imitate Him: for in such sort He was Man, as that God also He was: but in that Man He was, servants have imitated Lord, and disciples Master; and they have done that have gone before us in His own Family, our fathers indeed, but nevertheless our fellow-servants; nor would God command that we should do this, if impossible He judged it, that this by man should be done. But considering thy weakness, dost thou faint under the command? be comforted in the example. But even the example for thee is a great thing. There is present He that furnished the example, to furnish also aid. Let us hear therefore in this Psalm; for opportunely it chanceth, even by His provision, that therewith doth harmonize the Gospel, which commendeth to us the love of Christ, Who His life hath laid down for us, in order that we also our life for the

brethren should lay down. It hath accorded and harmonized with this Psalm, so that we may see in what manner our Lord Himself His life hath laid down for us. For this Psalm the Passion of the Same doth sing. And since whole Christ is Head and Body, which truth well ye know I doubt not: the Head is our Saviour Himself, Who suffered under Pontius Pilate; Who now after that He hath risen again from the dead, is sitting at the right hand of the Father: but the Body of Him is the Church, not this or that, but in the whole world spread abroad; nor that only which now is among men that are living in the present life, but in those also belonging to it, that have been before us, and in those that are to be after us, even unto the end of the world. For the whole Church consisting of all faithful men, because all faithful men are members of Christ, hath that Head established in the Heavens that governeth His Body: and if separated It is in sight, yet joined It is in love. Because therefore whole Christ is Head and Its Body, therefore in all the Psalms let us so hear the words of the Head, as that we hear also the words of the Body. For He would not speak separately, because He would not be separated, saying, Behold, with you I am even unto the consummation of the world. If with us He is, He speaketh in us, speaketh of us, speaketh through us; because we also speak in Him: and therefore the truth we speak, because in Him we speak. For whenever in ourselves and out of ourselves we shall have willed to speak, in a lie we shall remain.

2. Because then this Psalm is singing of the Passion of the Lord, see what is the title that it hath: at the end. The end is Christ. Why hath He been called end? Not as one that consumeth, but one that consummateth. For to consume, is to destroy: to consummate, to perfect. For whatever we speak of as ended, from the word 'end' we derive our expression. But in one sense we say, the bread hath been ended; in another sense we say, the coat hath been ended: there hath been ended the bread which was being eaten, there hath been ended the coat which was being woven: the bread then hath been ended so that it is consumed; the coat hath been ended so that it is perfected; the end therefore of our purpose is Christ: because however much we attempt, in Him we are made perfect, and by Him are made perfect, and this is our perfection, that unto Him we come home: but when unto Him thou shalt have come home, more thou seekest not; thy end He is. For in like manner the end of thy life is the place whither thou art tending,

to which when thou shalt have arrived, then thou wilt stay: so the end of thy study, of thy purpose, of thy attempt, of thy intention, is He to Whom thou art tending, unto Whom when thou shalt have come home, more thou wilt not desire, because nothing better thou wilt have. He therefore Himself both an example of living to us hath set forth in this life, and the reward of living He will give us in a future life.

3. At the end, corrupt not, for David himself, for the inscription of the title; when he fled from the face of Saul into a cavern. We referring to holy Scripture, do find indeed how holy David, that king of Israel, from whom too the Psalter of David hath received the name thereof, had suffered for persecutor Saul the king of his own people, as many of you know that have either read or have heard the Scriptures. King David had then for persecutor Saul: and whereas the one was most gentle, the other most ferocious: the one mild, the other envious; the one patient, the other cruel; the one beneficent, the other ungrateful: he endured him with so much mildness, that when he had gotten him into his hands, him he touched not, hurt not. For David himself received power from the Lord God, so that if he would he might have killed Saul: and he chose to spare rather than to slay. But the other, not even by such a benefit was overcome, so as to cease to persecute. We find therefore at that time, when Saul was persecuting David, the king now rejected pursuing the future and predestinated king, that David himself fled from the face of Saul into a cavern. What reference hath this to Christ? If all things which then were being done, were figures of things future, we find there Christ, and by far in the greatest degree. For this, corrupt not for the inscription of the title, I see not how it belongeth to that David. For not any title was inscribed over David himself which Saul would corrupt. But we see in the Passion of the Lord that there had been written a title, King of the Jews: in order that this title might put to the blush these very men, seeing that from their King they withheld not their hands. For in them Saul was, in Christ David was. For Christ, as saith the Apostolic Gospel, is, as we know, as we confess, of the seed of David after the flesh; for after the Godhead He is above David, above all men, above heaven and earth, above angels, above all things visible and invisible; because all things through Him were made, and without Him was not any thing made: nevertheless, having deigned to be made Man out of the seed of David, to us He came;

because of the tribe of David He was born, whence the Virgin Mary who bore Christ. The title therefore inscribed is this, King of the Jews. Saul, as we said, was the people of the Jews; David was Christ. The Jews were indignant, because there had been inscribed for title, King of the Jews: it shamed them Him to have for King Whom to crucify they were able. For they saw not that the very Cross, whereon they nailed Him, would be on the brows of kings. When therefore they were indignant because of that title, they went to Pilate the judge, to whom they had given up Christ to be slain; and they said to him, Write not so, King of the Jews, but write that He said Himself that He was King of the Jews. And because already it had been sung through the Holy Spirit, Unto the end, corrupt not, for the inscription of the title: Pilate answered them, What I have written, I have written: why do ye suggest to me falsehood? I corrupt not truth.

4. We have heard what meaneth, corrupt not for the inscription of the title. What therefore is, When he fled from the face of Saul into a cavern? Which thing indeed the former David also did: but because in him we find not the inscription of the title, in the latter let us find the flight into the cavern. For that cavern wherein David hid himself did figure somewhat. But wherefore hid he himself? It was in order that he might be concealed and not be found. What is to be hidden in a cavern? To be hidden in earth. For he that fleeth into a cavern, with earth is covered so that he may not be seen. But Jesus did carry earth, flesh which He had received from earth: and in it He concealed Himself, in order that by Jews He might not be discovered as God. For if they had known, never the Lord of glory would they have crucified. Why therefore the Lord of glory found they not? Because in a cavern He had hidden Himself, that is, the flesh's weakness to their eyes He presented, but the Majesty of the Godhead in the body's clothing, as though in a hiding-place of the earth, He hid. They therefore, not knowing the God, crucified the Man. Neither die could He except in Man; nor be crucified could He except in Man; because not even held could He be except in Man. He offered to men wrongly seeking, earth; He kept for men rightly seeking, life. He fled therefore after the flesh into a cavern from the face of Saul. But if this also thou wouldest understand in this way; to wit, that the Lord fled from the face of Saul, because He suffered; even unto that point He concealed Himself from the Jews, as actually to die. For however much the

Jews were raging against Him, until He died, they still were thinking that He might be delivered, and shew by some miracle that He was the Son of God. This thing foretold had been in the book of Wisdom: With death most shameful let us condemn Him; for there shall be respect to Him out of His discourse: for if truly Son of God He is, He will take Him up and will deliver Him from the hands of adversaries. Because therefore He was being crucified, and was not delivered, they believed Him not to be Son of God. Wherefore reviling Him hanging on the Tree, and shaking their head, they did say to Him, If Son of God Thou art, come down from the Cross. Other men He hath saved, Himself to save He is not able. These words they were saying as it is in the same book of Wisdom, these things they thought and erred; for there blinded them their malice. For what great matter was it from the Cross to come down, to Him, for Whom an easy thing it was from the Tomb to rise again? But wherefore even unto death willed He to be patient? It was in order that He might flee from the face of Saul into a cavern. For a cavern may be understood as a lower part of the earth. And certainly, as is manifest and certain to all, His Body in a Tomb was laid, which was cut out in a Rock. This Tomb therefore was the Cavern; thither He fled from the face of Saul. For so long the Jews did persecute Him, even until He was laid in a cavern. Whence prove we that so long they persecuted Him, until therein He was laid? Even when dead, and, on the Cross hanging, with lance they wounded Him. But when shrouded, the funeral celebrated, He was laid in a cavern, no longer had they any thing which to the Flesh they might do. Rose therefore the Lord again out of that cavern unhurt, uncorrupt, from that place whither He had fled from the face of Saul: concealing Himself from ungodly men, whom Saul prefigured, but shewing Himself to His members. For the members of Him rising again by His members were handled: for the members of Him, the Apostles, touched Him rising again and believed; and behold nothing profited the persecution of Saul. Hear we therefore now the Psalm; because concerning the title thereof enough we have spoken, as far as the Lord hath deigned to give.

5. Ver. 1. Have pity on me, O God, have pity on me, for in Thee hath trusted my Soul. Christ in the Passion saith, Have pity on Me, O God. To God, God saith, Have pity on Me! He that with the Father hath pity on thee, in thee crieth, Have pity on Me. For that part of Him which is crying, Have pity on

Me, is thine: from thee this He received, for the sake of thee, that thou shouldest be delivered, with Flesh He was clothed. The flesh itself crieth: Have pity on Me, O God, have pity on Me: Man himself, soul and flesh. For whole Man did the Word take upon Him, and whole Man the Word became. Let it not therefore be thought that there Soul was not, because the Evangelist thus saith; The Word was made flesh, and dwelled in us. For man is called flesh, as in another place saith the Scripture, And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Shall anywise flesh alone see, and shall Soul not be there? Again saith our Lord Himself of men, As Thou hast given to Him power of all flesh. Had He anywise over flesh alone received power, and not most chiefly over souls, which in the first place He delivered? Therefore there was soul, there was flesh, there whole man; and whole man with the Word, and the Word with Man, and Man the Word, one Man, and Word and Man one God. Let him say therefore, Have pity on me, O God, have pity on me. Let us not be afraid at the words of one asking pity and holding out pity. For this cause He asketh, because He holdeth it out: for this reason He became Man, because pitiful He was, not so as that He would be born by the necessity of His lot, but so that He might deliver us from the lot of our necessity. Have pity on me, O God, have pity on me; because in Thee hath trusted my soul. Thou hearest the Master praying, learn thou to pray. For to this end He prayed, in order that He might teach how to pray: because to this end He suffered, in order that He might teach how to suffer; to this end He rose again, in order that He might teach how to hope for rising again.

6. And in the shadow of Thy wings I will hope, until iniquity pass over. This now evidently whole Christ doth say: here is also our voice. For not yet hath passed over, still rife is iniquity. And in the end our Lord Himself said there should be an abounding of iniquity: And since iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall have persevered unto the end, the same shall be saved. But who shall persevere even unto the end, even until iniquity pass over? He that shall have been in the Body of Christ, he that shall have been in the members of Christ, and from the Head shall have learned the patience of persevering. Thou passest away, and behold passed are thy temptations; and thou goest into another life whither have gone holy men, if holy thou hast been. Into another life have

gone Martyrs; if Martyr thou shalt have been, thou also goest into another life. Because thou hast passed away hence, hath by any means iniquity therefore passed away? There are born other unrighteous men, as there die some unrighteous men. In like manner therefore as some unrighteous men die and others are born: so some just men go, and others are born. Even unto the end of the world neither iniquity will be wanting to oppress, nor righteousness to suffer. And in the shadow of Thy wings I will hope, until iniquity pass over: that is, Thou shalt protect me, and in order that by the heat of iniquity I dry not up, Thou shalt afford a shelter for me.

7. Ver. 2. I will cry to God most high. If most high He is, how heareth He thee crying? Confidence hath been engendered by experience: to God, he saith, Who hath done good to me. If before that I was seeking Him, He did good to me, when I cry shall He not hearken to me? For good to us the Lord God hath done in sending to us our Saviour Jesus Christ, that He might die for our offences, and rise again for our justification. For what sort of men hath He willed His Son to die? For ungodly men. But ungodly men were not seeking God, and have been sought of God. For He is Most High in such sort, as that not far from Him is our misery and our groaning: because “near is the Lord to them that have bruised the heart.” I will cry to God most high, God that hath done good to me.

8. Ver. 3. He hath sent from heaven and hath saved me. Now the Man Himself, now the Flesh Itself, now the Son of God after His partaking of ourselves, of Him it is manifest, how He was saved, and sent hath from heaven the Father and hath saved Him, hath sent from heaven, and hath raised Him again: but in order that ye may know, that also the Lord Himself hath raised again Himself; both truths are written in Scripture, both that the Father hath raised Him again, and that Himself Himself hath raised again. Hear we how the Father hath raised Him again: the Apostle saith, He hath been made, he saith, obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: wherefore God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name. Ye have heard of the Father raising again and exalting the Son; hear ye how that He too Himself His flesh hath raised again. Under the figure of a temple He saith to the Jews, Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But the Evangelist hath explained to us what it

was that He said: But this, he saith, He spake of the Temple of His Body. Now therefore out of the person of one praying, out of the person of a man, out of the person of the flesh, He saith, He hath sent from heaven, and hath saved me.

9. He hath given unto reproach those that trampled on me. Them that have trampled on Him, that over Him dead have insulted, that Him as though man have crucified, because God they perceived not, them He hath given unto reproach. See ye whether it has not been so done. The thing we do not believe as yet to come, but fulfilled we acknowledge it. The Jews raged against Christ, they were overbearing against Christ. Where? In the city of Jerusalem. For where they reigned, there they were puffed up, there their necks they lifted up. After the Passion of the Lord thence they were rooted out; and they lost the kingdom, wherein Christ for King they would not acknowledge. In what manner they have been given unto reproach, see ye: dispersed they have been throughout all nations, no where having a settlement, no where a sure abode. But for this reason still Jews they are, in order that our books they may carry to their confusion. For whenever we wish to shew Christ prophesied of, we produce to the heathen these writings. And lest perchance men hard of belief should say that we Christians have composed these books, so that together with the Gospel which we have preached we have forged the Prophet, through whom there might seem to be foretold that which we preach: by this we convince them; namely, that all the very writings wherein Christ hath been prophesied are with the Jews, all these very writings the Jews have. We produce documents from enemies, to confound other enemies. In what sort of reproach therefore are the Jews? A document the Jew carrieth, wherefrom a Christian may believe. Our librarians they have become, just as slaves are wont behind their masters to carry documents, in such sort that these faint in carrying, those profit by reading. Unto such a reproach have been given the Jews: and there hath been fulfilled that which so long before hath been foretold, He hath given unto reproach those that trampled on me. But how great a reproach it is, brethren, that this verse they should read, and themselves being blind should look upon their mirror! For in the same manner the Jews appear in the holy Scripture which they carry, as appeareth

the face of a blind man in a mirror: by other men it is seen, by himself not seen. He hath given unto reproach those that trampled on me.

10. Thou wast inquiring perhaps when he said, He hath sent from heaven and hath saved me. What hath He sent from heaven? Whom hath He sent from heaven? An Angel hath He sent, to save Christ, and through a servant is the Lord saved? For all Angels are creatures serving Christ. For obedience there might have been sent Angels, for service they might have been sent, not for succour: as is written, Angels ministered unto Him, not like men merciful to one indigent, but like subjects to One Omnipotent. What therefore hath He sent from heaven, and hath saved me? Now we hear in another verse what from heaven He hath sent. He hath sent from heaven His mercy and His truth. For what purpose? And hath drawn out my soul from the midst of the lions' whelps. Hath sent, he saith, from heaven His mercy and His truth: and Christ Himself saith, I am Truth. There was sent therefore Truth, that it should draw out my soul hence from the midst of the lions' whelps: there was sent mercy. Christ Himself we find to be both mercy and truth; mercy in suffering with us, and truth in requiting us. This is the same that a little before I said, namely, that He Himself Himself did raise again. For if Truth raised again Christ, and if Truth did draw forth the Soul of Christ from the midst of the lions' whelps; in like manner as merciful He was in dying for us, so true He was in rising again to justify us. For He had said that He was about to rise again, and the Truth could not lie, and being Truth and truth speaking, therefore true scars He shewed, because true wounds He endured. These scars the disciples held, handled, made evident to themselves: he cried out who thrust fingers into the pierced side, and saith, My Lord and my God. In mercy for him He had died, and in truth unto him had risen again. He hath sent from Heaven His mercy and His truth: and hath drawn out my soul from the midst of the lions' whelps. Who are the lions' whelps? That lesser people, unto evil deceived, unto evil led away by the chiefs of the Jews: so that these are lions, those lions' whelps. All roared, all slew. For we are to hear even here the slaying of these very men, presently in the following verses of this Psalm.

11. And hath drawn out, he saith, my soul from the midst of the lions' whelps. Why sayest thou, And hath drawn out my soul? For what hadst

thou suffered, that thy soul should be drawn out? I have slept troubled. Christ hath intimated His death. Assuredly of old David we read that he fled into a cavern, nevertheless not that he slept in a cavern. Another David is in a cavern, another David there is that saith, I have slept troubled. We see the perturbation of Him, not that He was troubled, but that they were troubling. For 'troubled' He called Himself, after the notion of the men that were raging, not after the conscience of Him That gave way. They thought that they had disturbed Him, thought they had overcome, but He 'slept troubled.' So calm had been this disturbed one, that when He willed He slept. No one sleepeth disturbed: all men that are perturbed either from sleep are roused, or else are not suffered to go off to sleep. But He disturbed was, and slept. Great is the humility of Him disturbed, great the power of Him sleeping. By what power came it that He slept? From that whereof He speaketh Himself, Power I have of laying down My life, and power of taking it: no one taketh it from Me; but I do it lay down, and again I take it. They disturbed, and He slept. The type of which thing Adam bore, when God sent upon him a slumber, in order that out of his side He might make a help-mate for him. For was it that He could not make a wife for the first man even out of the side of one awake? Or did He for this reason will him to sleep, that he might not feel when a rib was being taken away from him? In a word, who doth sleep so soundly, as that when a bone is plucked from him he would not awake? He that could without pain take away a rib from one sleeping, could do so from one awake also. But why willed he to do it to one sleeping? Because to Christ sleeping on the Cross there was made a wife out of His side. For smitten was His side as He hung, with a lance, and there flowed forth the Sacraments of the Church. I have slept, he saith, troubled. And in another Psalm he manifesteth this thing, in the place where he saith, I Myself have slept; and, sleep I have taken. There He expresseth His power. He might even there have said, I have slept: as He hath said here. But what is, I Myself have slept? It is, Because I have willed, I have slept. They have not driven me unwilling unto sleep; but of mine own will I have slept, after the saying above quoted, Power I have of laying down My life, and power I have of taking it again. Wherefore there He continueth and saith, I have slept, and sleep I have taken, and have risen up, because the Lord shall sustain me.

12. I have slept troubled. Whence troubled? Who troubling? Let us see in what manner He brandeth an evil conscience upon the Jews, wishing to excuse themselves of the slaying of the Lord. For to this end, as the Gospel speaketh, to the judge they delivered Him, that they might not themselves seem to have killed Him. For when at that time Pilate the judge had said to them, Take ye Him, and after your Law judge Him: they made answer, For us it is not lawful to kill any man. To kill is not lawful, is it lawful to deliver to be killed? For which doth slay? He that hath yielded on hearing an outcry, or he that by outcry hath extorted that He should be slain? Let the Lord Himself give testimony by whom He was slain, whether by that Pilate who unwillingly slew Him, whence also he scourged Him, and with garment of shame clothed Him, and when scourged brought Him forth before their eyes, in order that at all events being satiated with the punishment of His stripes, that He should be slain they should not extort. Therefore also when he saw them persevere, as we read, he washed his hands, and said, Innocent I am of the blood of this Just One. Consider whether he was innocent, that did so much as yield to men clamouring; nevertheless, much more guilty they were that by clamour willed to slay Him. But let us question and hear the Lord, to whom He doth ascribe His death, for that He hath said, I have slept troubled. Let us question Him, and say, since Thou hast slept troubled, who have persecuted Thee? who have slain Thee? was it perchance Pilate, who to soldiers gave Thee, on the Tree to be hanged, with nails to be pierced? Hear who they were, (ver. 5.) Sons of men. Of them He speaketh, whom for persecutors He suffered. But how did they slay, that steel bare not? They that sword drew not, that made no assault upon Him to slay; whence slew they? Their teeth are arms and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Do not consider the unarmed hands, but the mouth armed: from thence the sword proceeded, wherewith Christ was to be slain: in like manner also as from the mouth of Christ, that wherewith the Jews were to be slain. For He hath a sword twice whetted: and rising again He hath smitten them, and hath severed from them those whom He would make His faithful people. They an evil sword, He a good sword: they evil arrows, He good arrows. For He hath Himself also arrows good, words good, whence He pierceth the faithful heart, in order that He may be loved. Therefore of one kind are their arrows, and of another kind their sword. Sons of men, their teeth are arms and arrows, and their tongue

a sharp sabre. Tongue of sons of men is a sharp sabre, and their teeth arms and arrows. When therefore did they smite, save when they clamoured, Crucify, crucify?

13. And what have they done to Thee, O Lord? Let the Prophet here exult! For above, all those verses the Lord was speaking: a Prophet indeed, but in the person of the Lord, because in the Prophet is the Lord. And whenever there speaketh the Prophet in his own person, the Lord Himself speaketh through Him, That to him dictateth the truth which he speaketh. Now therefore in the person of the Prophet, hear ye, my brethren. This Prophet hath in spirit seen the Lord humbled, slain, scourged, with buffets smitten, beaten with palms of hands, with spittle defiled, with thorns crowned, on the tree hanged: them raging, Him bearing; them exulting, Him as if conquered, he hath seen in spirit: and then after all that humiliation, and their fury, Him to have risen again, and all those things which the raging Jews had done to have been made void; and elated with joy, as though he were seeing it come to pass, (ver. 6.) Be exalted, he saith, above the Heavens, O God. Man on the Cross, and above the Heavens, God. Let them continue on the earth raging, Thou in Heaven be judging. Where are they that were raging? where are their teeth, the arms and arrows? Have not “the stripes of them been made the arrows of infants?” For in another place a Psalm this saith, desiring to prove them vainly to have raged, and vainly unto phrensies to have been driven headlong: for nothing they were able to do to Christ when for the time crucified, and afterwards when He was rising again, and in Heaven was sitting: the arrows of infants have the stripes of them been made. How do infants make to themselves arrows? Of reeds? But what arrows? or what powers? or what bows? or what wound? Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory. Wherefore exalted above the Heavens, O God? Brethren, God exalted above the Heavens we see not, but we believe: but above all the earth His glory to be not only we believe, but also see. But what kind of madness heretics are afflicted with, I pray you observe. They being cut off from the bond of the Church of Christ, and to a part holding, the whole losing, will not communicate with the whole earth, where is spread abroad the glory of Christ. But we Catholics are in all the earth, because with all the world we communicate, wherever the Glory of Christ is spread abroad. For we see

that which then was sung, now fulfilled. There hath been exalted above the Heavens our God, and above all the earth the Glory of the Same. O heretical insanity! That which thou seest not thou believest with me, that which thou seest thou deniest: thou believest with me in Christ exalted above the Heavens, a thing which we see not; and deniest His Glory over all the earth, a thing which we see. Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy Glory.

14. He returneth to the words of the Lord: and the Lord Himself beginneth to recount to us, as though speaking to us, the Prophet also exulting and saying, Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy Glory. Himself also strengtheneth us, as though saying to us, What could they do to Me, that have persecuted Me? But wherefore doth He speak to us? Because they do so to us too. But they do nothing who in like manner may persecute us. For let your Love see the Lord speaking to us, and exhorting us by His example; A trap they have prepared for My feet, and have bowed down My Soul. They wished to bring It down as if from Heaven, and to the lower places to weigh It down: They have bowed My Soul: they have digged before My face a pit and themselves have fallen into it. Me have they hurt or themselves? Behold He hath been exalted above the Heavens, God, and behold above all the earth the Glory of the Same: the kingdom of Christ we see, where is the kingdom of the Jews? Since therefore they did that which to have done they ought not, there hath been done in their case that which to have suffered they ought: themselves have dug a ditch, and themselves have fallen into it. For their persecuting Christ, to Christ did no hurt, but to themselves did hurt. And do not suppose, brethren, that themselves alone hath this befallen. Every one that prepareth a pit for his brother, it must needs be that himself fall into it. Take heed, my brethren, have Christian eyes, be not deceived with things visible. For perchance to some one of you, because I have said this, there hath come to mind some man that hath chosen to play a cheat upon his brother, and hath chosen to contrive some snares for him, and he hath contrived, and succeeded, and the brother hath fallen into his snares, and he hath been spoiled, or hath been oppressed, either by prison, or by false witness, or overreached by some wicked accusation: but in this case is seen the one oppressed, the other to have oppressed: the one overcome, the other to have

overcome: and a false thing is thought that which we have said, namely, that whosoever shall have prepared a pit for his brother, doth himself fall into it. I call upon you, as being Christians, that ye take an example from things which we have already experienced. Heathens have persecuted Martyrs, and Martyrs have been taken, have been bound, into prison have been thrust, to beasts given over, some with steel smitten, others with fire consumed; have they conquered that were persecuting, and conquered have been the Martyrs? Far be it. Look for the glory of the Martyrs with God, look for the pit of the heathen in a delved conscience: for there is the pit wherein falleth an ungodly man, even an evil conscience. For supposest thou him into no pit to have fallen, who the light of Christ hath lost, and with blindness hath been smitten? If he fell not into a pit, he would see before him: he knoweth not where he goeth, in like manner as when he that walketh in a road hath fallen into a pit, he hath lost the road. Ye see, then, all evil-doers to have lost the way, having been involved in misdeed. But now thee he hath betrayed perchance into the hands of a robber, or into the hands of some unjust man, or of a judge imposed upon by him, and thou art in oppression, he is rejoicing, he exulting. Do not, I have already said, do not have the eyes of heathens: Christian eyes have thou. Thou seest him that exulteth; that very exultation is the pit of him. For better is the heaviness of one suffering unjust things, than the rejoicing of one doing unjust things. The very rejoicing of one doing unjust things, is that same pit; into it when a man shall have fallen, eyes he loseth. For thyself thou grieveest, because thou hast lost a garment; and for him thou grieveest not, because he hath lost faith. Which of you with more grievous loss hath been smitten? Behold he slayeth, thou art slain: he liveth, thou art dead. Far be it! Where is the faith of Christians? where is he that dieth for a time? Let him hear his Lord: He that believeth in Me, though he die, is living. Therefore, he that believeth not, though he live, is dead. They have dug before my face a pit, and themselves have fallen into it. All evil men it must needs be that this befall.

15. But the patience of good men with preparation of heart accepteth the will of God: and glorieth in tribulations, saying that which followeth: (ver. 7.) Prepared is my heart, O God, I will sing and play. What hath he done to me? He hath prepared a pit, my heart is prepared. He hath prepared pit to deceive, shall I not prepare heart to suffer? He hath prepared pit to oppress,

shall I not prepare heart to endure? Therefore he shall fall into it, but I will sing and play. Hear the heart prepared in an Apostle, because he hath imitated his Lord: We glory, he saith, in tribulations: because tribulation worketh patience: patience probation, probation hope, but hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Which hath been given to us. He was in oppressions, in chains, in prisons, in stripes, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in every wasting of toils and pains, and he was saying, We glory in tribulations. Whence, but that prepared was his heart? Therefore he was singing and playing. Prepared is my heart, O God, prepared my heart; I will sing and play.

16. Ver. 8. Rise up, my glory. He that had fled from the face of Saul into a cavern, saith, Rise up, my glory: glorified be Jesus after His Passion. Rise up, psaltery and harp. He calleth upon what to rise? Two organs I see: but Body of Christ one I see, one flesh hath risen again, and two organs have risen. The one organ then is the psaltery, the other the harp. Organs is the word used for all instruments of musicians. Not only is that called an organ, which is great, and blown into with bellows; but whatsoever is adapted to playing and is corporeal, whereof for an instrument the player maketh use, is said to be an organ. But distinguished from one another are these organs; and I would, as far as the Lord granteth me, point out to you, both in what manner they are distinguished, and wherefore distinguished, and wherefore to both is said, Rise up. Already we have said, one flesh of the Lord hath risen again; and there is said, Rise up psaltery and harp. The psaltery is an organ, which indeed is carried in the hands of one that striketh it, and hath strings stretched, but that place whence the strings receive sound, that hollow wood which hangeth suspended, and when touched resoundeth because it is filled with air, this the psaltery hath in the upper part. But the harp hath this sort of wood hollow and sounding on the lower part. Therefore in a psaltery the strings receive their sound from above, but in a harp the strings receive sound from a lower part: this difference there is between psaltery and harp. What therefore do these two organs figure to us? For Christ the Lord our God is waking up His psaltery and His harp; and He saith, I will rise up at the dawn. I suppose that here ye now perceive the Lord rising. We have read thereof in the Gospel: see the hour of the

Resurrection. How long through shadows was Christ being sought? He hath shone, be He acknowledged; at the dawn He rose again. But what is psaltery? what is harp? Through His flesh two kinds of deeds the Lord hath wrought, miracles and sufferings: miracles from above have been, sufferings from below have been. But those miracles which He did were divine; but through Body He did them, through flesh He did them. The flesh therefore working things divine, is the psaltery: the flesh suffering things human is the harp. Let the psaltery sound, let the blind be enlightened, let the deaf hear, let the paralytics be braced to strength, the lame walk, the sick rise up, the dead rise again; this is the sound of the Psaltery. Let there sound also the harp, let Him hunger, thirst, sleep, be held, scourged, derided, crucified, buried. When therefore thou seest in that Flesh certain things to have sounded from above, certain things from the lower part, one flesh hath risen again, and in one flesh we acknowledge both psaltery and harp. And these two kinds of things done have fulfilled the Gospel, and it is preached in the nations: for both the miracles and the sufferings of the Lord are preached.

17. Therefore there hath risen psaltery and harp in the dawn, and he confesseth to the Lord; and saith what? (ver. 9.) I will confess to Thee among the peoples, O Lord, and will play to Thee among the nations: (ver. 10.) for magnified even unto the Heavens hath been Thy mercy, and even unto the clouds Thy truth. Heavens above clouds, and clouds below heavens: and nevertheless to this nearest heaven belong clouds. But sometimes clouds rest upon the mountains, even so far in the nearest air are they rolled. But a Heaven above there is, the habitations of Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers. This therefore may perchance seem to be what should have been said; "Magnified even unto the Heavens Thy truth, and even unto the clouds Thy mercy." For in Heaven Angels praise God, seeing the very form of truth, without any darkness of vision, without any admixture of unreality: they see, love, praise, are not wearied. There is truth: but here in our own misery surely there is mercy. For to a miserable one must be rendered mercy. For there is no need of mercy above, where is no miserable one. I have said this because that it seemeth as though it might have been more fittingly said, Magnified even unto the Heavens hath been Thy truth, and even unto the clouds Thy mercy. For

‘clouds’ we understand to be preachers of truth, men bearing that flesh in a manner dark, whence God both gleameth in miracles, and thundereth in precepts: and themselves are those clouds of whom speaketh Isaias in the person of the Lord, rebuking a certain vineyard, evil, barren, thorny, I will command My clouds, that they rain not upon it a shower: that is, I will command My Apostles, that they forsake the Jews, and to them preach not the Gospel, but preach the Gospel in the good land of the nations, whence not thorns but grapes come forth. We know therefore the clouds of God to be the preachers of truth, Prophets, Apostles, all men that rightly expound the Word of truth, and have in themselves a light hidden, as clouds have that in them whereby they lighten: men therefore are clouds. What meaneth therefore, O Lord, For magnified even unto the Heavens hath been Thy mercy, and even unto the clouds Thy truth? Truth is mighty above all among the Angels: but Thou hast given it to men also, and brought it down even to the clouds. Above, mercy the Angels seem not to need: but because to miserable men Thou shewest mercy, and by rendering to them mercy makest them Angels by partaking of the Resurrection, even unto the Heavens is Thy mercy. Glory to our Lord, and to the Mercy of the Same, and to the Truth of the Same, because neither hath He forsaken by mercy to make us blessed through His Grace, nor defrauded us of truth: because first Truth veiled in flesh came to us and healed through His flesh the interior eye of our heart, in order that hereafter face to face we may be able to see It. Giving therefore to Him thanks, let us say with the same Psalm the last verses, which sometime since too I have said, (ver. 11.) Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory. For this to Him the Prophet said so many years before; this now we see; this therefore let us also say.

PSALM 58

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonality, wherein every where he confuteth the Donatists.

1. The words which we have sung must be rather hearkened to by us, than proclaimed. For to all men as it were in an assemblage of mankind, the Truth crieth, (ver. 1.) If truly indeed justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. For to what unjust man is it not an easy thing to speak justice? or what man if about justice questioned, when he hath not a cause, would not easily answer what is just? In as much as the hand of our Maker in our very hearts hath written this truth, That which to thyself thou wouldest not have done, do not thou to another. Of this truth, even before that the Law was given, no one was suffered to be ignorant, in order that there might be some rule whereby might be judged even those to whom Law had not been given. But lest men should complain that something had been wanting for them, there hath been written also in tables that which in their hearts they read not. For it was not that they had it not written, but read it they would not. There hath been set before their eyes that which in their conscience to see they would be compelled; and as if from without the voice of God were brought to them, to his own inward parts hath man been thus driven, the Scripture saying, For in the thoughts of the ungodly man there will be questioning. Where questioning is, there law. But because men, desiring those things which are without, even from themselves have become exiles, there hath been given also a written law: not because in hearts it had not been written, but because thou wast a deserter from thy heart, by Him that is every where thou art seized, and to thyself within art called back. Therefore the written law, what crieth it, to those that have deserted the law written in their hearts? Return ye transgressors to the heart. For who hath taught thee that thou wouldest have no other man draw near thy wife? Who

hath taught thee, that thou wouldest not have a theft committed upon thee? who hath taught thee, that thou wouldest not suffer wrong, and whatever other thing either universally or particularly might be spoken of? For many things there are, of which severally if questioned men with loud voice would answer, that they would not suffer. Come, if thou art not willing to suffer these things, art thou by any means the only man? dost thou not live in the fellowship of mankind? He that together with thee hath been made, is thy fellow; and all men have been made after the image of God, unless with earthly covetings they efface that which He hath formed. That which therefore to thyself thou wilt not have to be done, do not thou to another. For thou judgest that there is evil in that, which to suffer thou art not willing: and this thing thou art constrained to know by an inward law; that in thy very heart is written. Thou wast doing somewhat, and there was a cry raised in thy hands: how art thou constrained to return to thy heart when this thing thou sufferest in the hands of others? Is theft a good thing? No! I ask, is adultery a good thing? All cry, No! Is man-slaying a good thing? All cry, that they abhor it. Is coveting the property of a neighbour a good thing? No! is the voice of all men. Or if yet thou confessest not, there draweth near one that coveteth thy property: be pleased to answer what thou wilt have. All men therefore, when of these things questioned, cry that these things are not good. Again, of doing kindnesses, not only of not hurting, but also of conferring and distributing, any hungry soul is questioned thus; "thou sufferest hunger, another man hath bread, and there is abundance with him beyond sufficiency, he knoweth thee to want, he giveth not: it displeaseth thee when hungering, let it displease thee when full also, when of another's hungering thou shalt have known. A stranger wanting shelter cometh into thy country, he is not taken in: he then crieth that inhuman is that city, at once among barbarians he might have found a home. He feeleth the injustice because he suffereth; thou perchance feelest not, but it is meet that thou imagine thyself also a stranger; and that thou see in what manner he will have displeased thee, who shall not have given that, which thou in thy country wilt not give to a stranger." I ask all men. True are these things? True. Just are these things? Just.

2. But hear ye the Psalm. If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. Be it not a justice of lips, but also of deeds. For if

thou actest otherwise than thou speakest, good things thou speakest, and ill thou judgest. For if thou actest as thou judgest; if asked which is better, gold or faith, thou art not so far perverse and erring from all truth as to answer that gold is better: thou preferrest therefore, when asked, to gold, faith; thou hast spoken justice. Hast thou heard the Psalm? If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. And where shall I prove thee not to judge as thou hast spoken? I already have got thine answer setting faith before gold. Behold from some place or other a friend hath come, and without witness gold he hath entrusted to thee; he alone knoweth this, and thou, as far as regardeth men. There is there another witness, that is not seen, and yet seeth: and the man to thee in a secret place and in thy closet perchance, in the absence of witnesses, gold hath entrusted; the witness that is present, not in a chamber of walls is present, but in the couches of your consciences. He hath entrusted and hath departed, to no one of his friends he hath made it known, hoping himself to return and to receive from his friend that which he had given: such is the uncertainty of things human, he is dead, he hath left an heir, hath left a son: the son knoweth not what his father had, what to thee he entrusted: return thou, return transgressor to the heart, there written the law is: That which to thyself thou wilt not have to be done, to another do thou not. Suppose thyself to have entrusted, to none of thy friends to have told it, to have died, to have left a son; what wouldest thou wish to be rendered to him by thine own friend? Answer, judge the case, the judge's tribunal is in thy mind, there is sitting there God, there is at hand for accuser conscience, for torturer fear. Amid things of men thou art, in the fellowship of men thou art engaged: think what thou wouldest have to be rendered to thy son by thy friend. I know what answer thy thought maketh. So judge thou, as thou hearest judge, a voice there will be; the voice of truth holdeth not its peace; not with lips it crieth, but a cry is raised out of the heart: incline thine ear, there be thou with the son of thy friend. Thou seest perchance also a man in need wandering about, knowing not what his father had, where he hath placed it, to whom he entrusted it; think also of thy son, suppose that man to live whom thou despisest as dead, thyself deem dead in order that thou mayest live. But something else covetousness doth enjoin; doth enjoin contrary to God; God one thing, another thing covetousness: one thing in Paradise our Maker, another thing athwart it, the serpent, the deceiver. Let there come into thy mind first thy

fall; for this reason mortal thou art, for this reason toiling, for this in the sweat of thy face eating bread, for this reason thorns and thistles for thee the earth beareth: by example learn that which thou wouldest not by precept. But cupidity prevaieth; why not rather truth? And where is that which thou wast speaking? Behold, thou art meditating to deny the deposit of gold; behold, thou art meditating from the heir of thy friend altogether to hide it. I had asked a little before which would be the more precious, and which would be the better, gold, or good faith. Wherefore one thing sayest thou, another thing doest? Fearest thou not this voice, If truly justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men? Behold thou hast told me that better is good faith, and in thy judgment better thou hast considered gold to be. Thou hast not judged as thou hast spoken; true things thou hast spoken, and false things thou hast judged: therefore even when thou wast speaking justice, truly thou didst not speak. For if truly justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. When to me concerning justice thou wast making answer, it was for shame, not with openness thou wast speaking.

3. But now to the present case let us come, if ye please. For the voice is that sweet voice, so well known to the ears of the Church, the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the voice of His Body, the voice of the Church toiling, sojourning upon earth, living amid the perils of men speaking evil and of men flattering. Thou wilt not fear a threatener, if thou lovest not a flatterer. He therefore, of whom this is the voice, hath observed and hath seen, that all men speak justice. For what man doth dare not to speak it, lest he be called unjust? When, therefore, as though he were hearing the voices of all men, and were observing the lips of all men, he cried out to them, If truly indeed justice ye speak,—if not falsely justice ye speak, if not one thing on lips doth sound, whilst another thing is concealed in hearts—judge right things, ye sons of men. Hear out of the Gospel His own voice, the very same as is in this Psalm: Hypocrites, saith the Lord to the Pharisees, how are ye able good things to speak, when ye are evil men? Either make the tree good, and the fruit thereof good; or make the tree evil and the fruit thereof evil. Why wilt thou whiten thee, wall of mud? I know thy inward parts, I am not deceived by thy covering: I know what thou holdest forth, I know what thou coverest. For there was no need for Him, that any one to Him should bear testimony of man; for He knew Himself what was in man.

For He knew what was in man, Who had made man, and Who had been made Man, in order that He might seek man. See, therefore, if these words do not follow one another. ‘Ye hypocrites, how are ye able good things to speak, when ye are evil men?’ If truly, therefore, justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. Have ye not justice spoken of, when ye said, Master, we know that just Thou art, and acceptest the person of no man? Wherefore guile in heart did ye conceal? Wherefore the image of Cæsar to your Creator did ye shew, and His image in your hearts did efface? Hath not the thing which ye spake been heard, and how ye would judge been tried? Have ye not crucified Him, Whom to be just ye had pronounced? If truly, therefore, justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. Why do I hear your speaking, we know that just Thou art, when I foresee your judgment, Crucify, Crucify? If truly, therefore, justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. For what have ye done by raging against God That was Man, and by slaying your King? For was He no King to be, because He was slain by you, when He was to rise again? In the title whereon had been written, King of the Jews, set upon the Cross of the Lord, in three tongues, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, a human judge knew how to say, What I have written, I have written: and did not God know how to say, What I have written, I have written? In any wise, your King He is; while alive, your King He is; when slain, your King He is: behold, He hath risen again, and in Heaven your King He is: behold, to come He is; woe unto you, for your King He is. Go to now, and speak justice, and do not judge right things, sons of men. Ye will not rightly judge, rightly ye shall be judged. For He liveth That is your King, and He dieth no more, and death over Him shall no longer have dominion. Behold, He cometh; ‘return ye transgressors to the heart.’ Behold, He shall come, be amended before that He come; ‘come ye before His face in confession.’ Behold, He shall come, your King He is. Ye remember the title upon the Cross: but ye see it not written: nevertheless it abideth; on earth it is not read, but in Heaven it is kept. For do ye suppose that this inscription hath been corrupted? And what saith the title of this Psalm? At the end, for David himself, corrupt not, for the inscription of the title. Not, therefore, corrupted is that inscription of the title. Your King is Christ, because of all things Christ is King: for His is the kingdom, and He shall Himself have dominion of the nations. If therefore King He is, behold before He come, He saith to you, I am still speaking, He saith, Not yet am I

judging: I that do so cry with menacing, am unwilling to smite with the Judgment. If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things, sons of men.

4. But now ye do what? Why these things to you do I speak? (Ver. 2.) Because in heart iniquities ye work on earth. Iniquities perchance in heart alone? Hear what followeth: both their heart hands do follow, and their heart hands do serve, the thing is thought of, and it is done; or else it is not done, not because we would not, but because we could not, Whatever thou willest and canst not, for done God doth count it. For in heart iniquities ye work on earth. What next? iniquities your hands knit together. What is, knit together? From sin, sin, and to sin, sin, because of sin. What is this? A theft a man hath committed, a sin it is: he hath been seen, he seeketh to slay him by whom he hath been seen: there hath been knit together sin with sin: God hath permitted him in His hidden judgment to slay that man whom he hath willed to slay: he perceiveth that the thing is known, he seeketh to slay a second also; he hath knit together a third sin: while these things he is planning, perchance that he may not be found out, or that he may not be convicted of having done it, he consulteth an astrologer; there is added a fourth sin: the astrologer answereth perchance with some hard and evil responses, he runneth to a soothsayer, that expiation may be made; the soothsayer maketh answer that he is not able to expiate: a magician is sought. And who could enumerate those sins which are knit together with sins? Iniquities your hands do knit together. So long as thou knittest together, thou bindest sin upon sin. Loose thyself from sins. But I am not able, thou sayest. Cry to Him. Unhappy man I, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For there shall come the Grace of God, so that righteousness shall be thy delight, as much as thou didst delight in iniquity; and thou, a man that out of bonds hast been loosed, shalt cry out to God, Thou hast broken asunder my bonds. 'Thou hast broken asunder my bonds,' is what else but, 'Thou hast remitted my sins?' Hear why chains they are: the Scripture maketh answer, with the chains of his sins each one is bound fast. Not only bonds, but chains also they are. Chains are those which are made by twisting in: that is, because with sins thou wast knitting together. Woe to them that draw sins like a long rope. Isaias crieth, Woe to them that draw sins like a long rope: what is it else but, Woe to them whose

hands knit together iniquity? And because each one with his sins is bound fast, as also with his sins he is smitten, the men that were wickedly trading in the Temple the Lord drove out with a whip made of small cords. But thou wilt not have now thy bonds to be broken, because thou feelest not thy bonds, they even delight thee, and a pleasure they are: thou shalt feel at the end, when it shall be said, Bind him hands and feet, and cast him forth into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Thou dost shudder, dost fear, dost beat the breast, thou sayest Evil things are sins, a good thing righteousness is. If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things ye sons of men. In your life let there be found your words; in your deeds let there be known your lips. Do not therefore knit together iniquity: because unto you for a binding shall be applied whatsoever ye knit together. They hear not, not all however: and they that hear not are fore-known.

5. Ver. 3. Alienated are sinners from the womb, they have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things. And when iniquity they speak, false things they speak: because deceitful is iniquity: and when justice they speak, false things they speak: because one thing with mouth they profess, another thing in heart they conceal. Alienated are sinners from the womb. What is this? Let us search more diligently: for perhaps he is saying this, because God hath foreknown men that are to be sinners even in the wombs of their mothers. For whence when Rebecca was yet pregnant, and in womb was bearing twins, was it said, Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated? For it was said, The elder shall serve the younger. Hidden at that time was the judgment of God: but yet from the womb, that is, from the very origin, alienated are sinners. Whence alienated? From truth. Whence alienated? From the blessed country, from the blessed life. Perchance alienated they are from the very womb. And what sinners have been alienated from the womb? For what men would have been born, if therein they had not been held? Or what men to-day would be alive to hear these words to no purpose, unless they were born? Perchance therefore sinners have been alienated from a certain womb, wherein that charity was suffering pains, which speaketh through the Apostle, Of whom again I am in labour, until Christ be formed in you. Expect thou therefore; be formed: do not to thyself ascribe a judgment which perchance thou knowest not. Carnal thou art as yet, conceived thou hast been: from that very time when thou hast received the

name of Christ, by a sort of sacrament thou hast been born in the bowels of a mother. For not only out of bowels a man is born, but also in bowels. First he is born in bowels, in order that he may be able to be born of bowels. Wherefore it hath been said even to Mary, For that which is born in thee, is of the Holy Spirit. Not yet of Her It had been born, but already in Her It had been born. Therefore there are born within the bowels of the Church certain little ones, and a good thing it is that being formed they should go forth, so that they drop not by miscarriage. Let the mother bear thee, not miscarry. If patient thou shalt have been, even until thou be formed, even until in thee there be the sure doctrine of truth, the maternal bowels ought to keep thee. But if by thy impatience thou shalt have shaken the sides of thy mother, with pain indeed she expelleth thee out, but more to thy loss than to hers.

6. Alienated are sinners from the womb, they have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things. For this reason therefore have they gone astray from the belly, because they have spoken false things? Or rather have they not for this reason spoken false things, because they have gone astray from the belly? For in the belly of the Church truth abideth. Whosoever from this belly of the Church separated shall have been, must needs speak false things: must needs, I say, speak false things; whoso either conceived would not be, or whom when conceived the mother hath expelled. Thence heretics exclaim against the Gospel, (to speak in preference of those, whom expelled we lament.) We repeat to them: behold Christ hath said, It behoved Christ to suffer, and from the dead to rise again the third day. "I acknowledge there our Head, I acknowledge there our Bridegroom: acknowledge thou also with me the Bride: see what followeth; That there be preached in His name repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. "Hither come, hither come." Behold the Church throughout all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. I say not, Hither come, Herself to thee doth come. But they making them deaf against the Gospel, and not permitting us to read the words of God, which they boast themselves to have kept from flame and would destroy with tongue, speak their own words, speak empty words: "Such an one was a traditor, and such an one was a traditor." Aye, I too say, "Such an one was a traditor, and such an one was a traditor:" and a true thing I say. But what is that to me? Neither thou of those men whom thou

namest to me in the Gospel dost read, nor I of those men whom I name in the Gospel do read. Let there be put aside out of the way our papers, let there come forth into the midst the writing of God: hear Christ speaking, hear the Truth speaking: That there be preached in His name, He saith, repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. “No,” they say: “but what we say, hear thou, what saith the Gospel we will not hear.” Alienated are sinners from the womb, they have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things. We speak true things, because we have heard true things; that which the Lord saith, not that which man saith. It may be that man lie: it cannot be that Truth lie. Out of the mouth of truth I acknowledge Christ, the Truth itself: out of the mouth of truth I acknowledge the Church, the partaker of Truth. Let no one speak to me false things, of him that hath gone astray from the womb in the bowels of the Church, I should at first see what he would wish to teach me. I see him alienated from the womb, I see him to have gone astray from the belly, and I am to hear from him what, but false things? They have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things.

7. Ver. 4. Indignation to them after the similitude of a serpent. A great thing ye are to hear. Indignation to them after the similitude of a serpent. As if we had said, What is that which thou hast said? there followeth, As if of a deaf asp. Whence deaf? And closing its ears. Therefore deaf, because it closeth its ears. And closing its ears. Which will not hearken to the voice of men charming, and of the medicine medicated by the wise man. As we have heard, because even men speak who have learned it with such research as they were able, but nevertheless it is a thing which the Spirit of God knoweth much better than any men. For it is not to no purpose that of this he hath spoken, but because it may chance that true is even that which we have heard of the asp. When the asp beginneth to be affected by the Marsian charmer, who calleth it forth with certain peculiar incantations, hear what it doeth—But meanwhile unto this give heed, brethren, (for this thing must be first mentioned, lest any one should hear as it were with hesitation:) the thing itself, from whence a simile is taken, by the Scriptures is not commended; but only thence a simile is drawn. For He did not commend the unjust judge, who would not hear that widow, and neither feared God nor regarded men; and nevertheless from thence a simile the

Lord derived: nor did He commend that sluggard, who gave three loaves to one asking him, not because of friendship, but being overcome with importunity; and yet from thence a simile He gave. And therefore from things not to be commended are derived in a manner a few similes. Or else if ye think we ought to countenance the Marsians, because of this thing ye hear in the Scripture of God; we must go also to the shows in the Theatre, because the Apostle saith, Not so I box, as if smiting the air. For to box is to perform the pancratium. Now because from hence hath been taken a simile, ought these shows to delight us? Or because he hath said, He that in a contest striveth, in all things is abstemious: for this reason ought a Christian to attach himself to these vain and absurd contentions? Give heed what is spoken to thee for a simile's sake, what is noted thee for avoidance. So therefore here also there hath been given a certain simile derived from the Marsian, who maketh incantation to bring forth the asp from the dark cavern; surely into light he would bring it: but it loving its darkness, wherein coiled up it hideth itself, when it will not choose to come forth, nevertheless refusing to hear those words whereby it feelth itself to be constrained, is said to press one ear against the ground, and with its tail to stop up the other, and therefore as much as possible escaping those words, it cometh not forth to the charmer. To this as being like, the Spirit of God hath spoken of certain persons hearing not the Word of God, and not only not doing, but altogether, that they may not do it, refusing to hear.

8. This thing hath been done even in the first times of the faith. Stephen the Martyr was preaching the Truth, and to minds as though dark, in order to bring them forth into light, was making incantation: when he came to make mention of Christ, Whom they would not hear at all, of them the Scripture saith what? of them relateth what? They shut, he saith, their ears. But what they did afterwards, the narrative of the passion of Stephen doth publish. They were not deaf, but they made themselves deaf. For because ears open in heart they had not, but because the might of the word through the ears of the flesh rushing in, even to the very ears of the heart was doing violence; they closed even the ears of the body, and took to stones. Behold the deaf asps, harder than the stones wherewith their charmer they stoned: they heard not the voice of him charming, and of the medicine medicated by the wise man. What is 'the medicine medicated by the wise man?' Perchance

‘medicine mixed’ he may be calling ‘medicine medicated.’ Do we not there seek some other thing, how that if already a medicine it be, it is also medicated? Medicines there were in the Prophets, medicines there were in the Law, all the very precepts were medicines, and this medicine not yet had been medicated: by the coming of the Lord medicated was the medicine: this thing they could not bear. For because they were not being healed by the medicine, medicated was the very medicine by the coming of the Lord. Now was Stephen a medicated medicine chanting; this they would not hear: whence the medicine was medicated, against this the ears they shut. For this thing they did at the point where was named Christ. The indignation of these men, was as the indignation of a serpent. Why your ears do ye shut? Wait, hear, and if ye shall be able, rage. Because they chose not to do aught but rage, they would not hear. But if they had heard, perchance they would have ceased to rage. The indignation of them was as the indignation of a serpent.

9. Such men are these also whom we are suffering. At the first they thought that they alone held the truth: God was not inactive, He held not His peace: in His Church was preached the Truth, in the bowels of the Mother were disclosed their lies: there was laid open that which giveth light, there was displayed the City upon a hill set, and the candle was placed upon a candlestick, which giveth light to all that are in the house. For where lieth hid the Church of Christ, where lieth hid the Truth of Christ? Is not the same the Mountain that hath grown out of a very small stone, and hath filled the whole face of the earth? Hence they are convinced, they have nought to say against the Church. And what for them hath remained? “Wherefore seek ye us?” “What would ye have of us?” They say, “Depart from us.” But they say also to their own people, “Let no one with them speak, no one with them be united, no one hear them.” The indignation of them is the indignation of serpents: as of a deaf asp and closing its ears; which will not hearken to the voice of men charming; and of the medicine, that is, the voice of the medicine, medicated by the wise man. Is there not from hence understood what sort of medicine it is, when of voice he speaketh? Hath anywise medicine a voice? There is a certain medicine which hath voice. A medicine we carry, the voice of it hear ye, not after the manner of deaf asps. If truly therefore of justice ye speak, judge right

things, sons of men. There is a voice of medicine, and that too medicated by the wise man. For now hath come Christ to fulfil the Law and the Prophets, to establish the truth itself, on which two commandments the whole Law hangeth and the Prophets.

10. Do we not perchance look for something even in the fact, that the asp is said so to shut the ears, as that one of them upon the earth it presseth, the other with its tail closeth up? What meaneth this? In the tail let the things behind certainly be understood; in fact, past things, upon which now it behoveth us to turn our back, in order that we may aim at those things which are promised to us: therefore neither with our past nor with our present life ought we to be delighted. For to this the Apostle admonisheth us, saying, What fruit at any time have ye had in those things wherein now ye blush? He is weaning them from remembering with pleasure things past, with a certain lust for enjoyment; lest we return in heart into Egypt. What of things present? How doth he bid us that even these things should be despised? Not regarding, he saith, the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal. Also of the present life, he saith, If in this life only in Christ we are hoping, more miserable we are than all men. Forget thou therefore things past, wherein ill thou hast lived; despise things present, wherein temporally thou livest; lest by entangling thee, things present suffer thee not to attain unto things future. For if present life delighteth thee, ear upon earth thou hast laid: if with thy past things, even now that they have glided by, thou art delighted, ear with tail thou hast closed up. Thou oughtest therefore to go into light, to go forth from darkness, at hearing the voice of the medicine medicated by the wise man: in order that now in light walking, and exulting, thou mayest say, The things which are behind I have forgotten, unto the things which are before I am reaching forth. He hath not said, The things which are behind I have forgotten, and with things present I am delighted. When he saith, The things which are behind I have forgotten, he hath not closed up ear with tail: when he saith, Unto the things which are before I am reaching forth, with these and things present he hath not grown deaf, with reason hearing, with reason preaching, with reason exulteth the tongue of him, preaching the Truth in new light, the old service being now laid aside. For for this purpose availeth

the subtlety of the serpent, to imitate which the Lord exhorteth us. For He saith, Be ye subtle, as serpents. What is, subtle as serpents? Offer all thy limbs to the smiter, provided only the Head thou keep entire. The Head of the man is Christ. But there is weighing us down something like the weight of a sort of hide, and as it were the old age of the old man. Hear the Apostle saying, You stripping off the old man, and putting on the new. And how do I put off, thou sayest, the old man? Imitate the subtlety of the serpent. For what doth the serpent, in order to put off from itself the old coat? It squeezeth itself through a narrow hole. And where, thou sayest, do I find this narrow hole? Hear: Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth to life, and few there are that enter in through it. Dost thou shrink back from it, and art thou not willing to walk therein, because few there are? There must the old coat be laid aside, and at another place laid aside it cannot be. Or, if thou art willing with thine oldness to be impeded, weighed down, oppressed, do not go through the narrow way. But if thou art weighed down with a sort of oldness of thy sin, and of thy past life; pass along it thou canst not. Because therefore the body, which is corruptible, weigheth down the soul: either let desires corporal not oppress thee, or let the lusts of the flesh be put off. Whence are they put off, except thou shalt have gone through the narrow way, unless thou shalt have been subtle as the serpent?

11. Ver. 6. God hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. Of whom? Of them to whom indignation is as the similitude of a serpent, and of an asp closing up its ears, so that it heareth not the voice of men charming, and of medicine medicated by the wise man. The Lord hath done to them what? Hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. It hath been done, this at first hath been done, and now is being done. But it would have sufficed, my brethren, that it should have been said, God hath broken utterly the teeth of them. Wherefore, in their own mouth? The Pharisees would not hear the Law, would not hear the precepts of truth from Christ, being like to that serpent and asp. For in their past sins they took delight, and present life they would not lose, that is, joys earthly for joys heavenly. One ear they were shutting with delight in things past, another with delight in things present, therefore they would not hear. For whence is this, If we shall have let Him go, there will come the Romans, and take away both our place and nation? They were unwilling indeed to lose their

place, to earth they had pressed down their ear, and therefore they would not hear those words medicated by the wise man. It was said of them, that both covetous they were, and lovers of money: and all the life of them, even the past, was described by the Lord in the Gospel. He that diligently readeth the Gospel, findeth whence those men were closing up both ears. Let your love give heed: the Lord hath done what? Hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. What is, in their own mouth? In such sort, that with their own mouth against themselves they should make declaration: He hath compelled them with their mouth against themselves to give sentence. They would have slandered Him, because of the tribute: He said not, It is lawful to pay tribute, or, it is not lawful to pay tribute. And He willed to break utterly their teeth, wherewith they were gaping in order to bite; but in their own mouth He would do it. If He said, Let there be paid to Cæsar tribute, they would have slandered Him, because He had spoken evil to the nation of the Jews, by making it a tributary. For because of sin they were paying tribute, having been humbled, as to them in the Law had been foretold. We have Him, say they, a maligner of our nation, if He shall have bidden us to pay tribute: but if He say, Do not pay, we have Him for saying that we should not be under allegiance to Cæsar. Such a double noose as it were to catch the Lord they laid. But to whom had they come? To Him that knew how to break utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. Shew to Me the coin, He saith. Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Of paying tribute do ye think? To do justice are ye willing? the counsel of justice do ye seek? If truly justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. But now because in one way ye speak, in another way judge, hypocrites ye are: Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Now I will break utterly your teeth in your mouth: shew to Me the coin. And they shewed it to Him. And He saith not, Cæsar's it is: but asketh, Whose it is? in order that their teeth in their own mouth might be utterly broken. For on His inquiring, of whom it had the image and inscription, they said, of Cæsar. Even now the Lord shall break utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. Now ye have made answer, now have been broken utterly your teeth in your mouth. Render unto Cæsar the things which are of Cæsar, and unto God the things which are of God. Cæsar seeketh his image; render it: God seeketh His image; render it. Let not Cæsar lose from you his coin: let not God lose in you His coin. And they found not what they might answer. For they had been sent to slander

Him: and they went back, saying, that no one to Him could make answer. Wherefore? Because broken utterly had been the teeth of them in their own mouth.

12. Of that sort is also the following; In what power doest Thou these things? I also will ask of you one question, answer me. And He asked them of John, whence was the Baptism of John, from heaven, or of men? so that whatever they might answer might tell against themselves. They would not say out, of men, fearing men, lest they should be stoned by them; because John for a prophet they counted; to say, from heaven, they dreaded still more, lest they should confess Christ Himself; because John had preached of Christ. Straitened on both sides, on the one hand and on the other, they that were preparing to lay a charge gave an answer of ignorance: they said, We know not. For a slander they were preparing, when they said, In what power dost Thou these things? so that if He said, Christ I am, as being arrogant, proud, a blasphemer, they would have assailed Him. He would not say, The Christ I am: but He enquired about John, who had said that He was the very Christ. But they dared not find fault with John, fearing lest by the people they should be slain: they dared not to say, A true saying John hath spoken, lest it should be said to them, Believe him. They were dumb, they said that they knew not: now to bite they were not able. Whence were not able? At once your thoughts run upon, Broken had been the teeth of them in their own mouth.

13. The Lord displeased that Pharisee, who to dinner had bidden Him, because a woman that was a sinner drew near to His feet, and he murmured against Him, saying, If this man were a prophet, He would know what woman drew near to His feet. O thou that art no prophet, whence knowest thou that He knew not what woman drew near to His feet? Because indeed He kept not the purifying of the Jews, which outwardly was as it were kept in the flesh, and was afar from the heart, this thing he suspected of the Lord. And in order that I may not speak at length on this point, even in his mouth He willed to break utterly the teeth of him. For He set forth to him: "A certain usurer had two debtors, one was owing five hundred pence, the other fifty: both had not wherewithal to pay, he forgave both. Which loved him the more?" To this end the one asketh, that the other may answer: to

this end he answereth, that the teeth of him in his mouth may be broken utterly. He answered confounded, shut out he was: admitted she was to receive mercy, she that had burst into a strange habitation, but had not drawn near to a strange God: The Lord hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth.

14. The jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly. Not only of asps. What of asps? Asps treacherously desire to throw in their venom, and scatter it, and hiss. Most openly raged the nations, and roared like lions. Wherefore have raged the nations, and the peoples meditated empty things? When they were lying in wait for the Lord. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or is it not lawful? Asps they were, serpents they were, broken utterly were the teeth of them in their own mouth. Afterwards they cried out, Crucify, Crucify. Now is there no tongue of asp, but roar of lion. But also the jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly. Perchance here there is no need of that which he hath not added, namely, in the mouth of them. For men lying in wait with captious questions, were forced to be conquered with their own answer: but those men that openly were raging, were they by any means to be confuted with questions? Nevertheless, even their jaw-bones were broken utterly: having been crucified, He rose again, ascended into heaven, was glorified as the Christ, is adored by all nations, adored by all kings. Let the Jews now rage, if they are able. They rage not: The jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly.

15. We have also in the case of heretics this as a warning and precedent, because themselves also we find to be serpents with indignation made deaf, not choosing to hear the ‘medicine medicated by the wise man:’ and in their own mouth the Lord hath broken utterly the teeth of them. How were they raging against us, accusing us as being persecutors, for excluding them from the Basilicas? Now question them: ought heretics to be excluded from the Basilicas, or ought they not? Let them answer now, let them say that they ought not: the Maximianists demand back the Basilicas. But in order that the Maximianists may not recover the Basilicas, they say that heretics ought to be excluded. What is it therefore that ye were saying against us? Are not your teeth utterly broken in your own mouth? What have we to do with kings? say they. What have we to do with emperors? Ye on emperors

do rely! I ask also, What have ye to do with proconsuls, whom emperors have sent? What have ye to do with laws, which against you emperors have given? The emperors of our communion against all heretics have given laws: those men, in fact, they call heretics, who are not of their communion, among whom certainly you also are: if true are the laws, let them hold good even against you heretics; if false are the laws, wherefore do they hold good against your heretics? Brethren, for a little space give heed, and understand what we have said: when they were pleading their causes against the Maximianists, in order that they might expel those that were by themselves condemned, and their schismatics, from places which they held of old, and where bishops had succeeded their predecessors; wishing to exclude these men from thence, they pleaded public laws, before the judges they came, said that they were themselves catholics, in order that they might be able to exclude heretics. Wherefore dost thou call thyself a catholic, in order to have a heretic excluded; and wilt not rather be a catholic, that thou mayest not be excluded as a heretic? Now a catholic thou art, in order that thou mayest have power to exclude a heretic. For a judge could not judge otherwise than by his laws. They called themselves catholics, they were admitted to plead: they called the others heretics, he enquired whereby it might be proved: there was read the Council of Bagai, whereby the Maximianists were condemned, it was inserted in the Acta Proconsularia, it was proved that they having been condemned ought not to hold the Basilicas, and the proconsul gave judgment according to law. According to what law? That which was passed against heretics. If against heretics, also against thee. Wherefore, saith he, against me? For I am not a heretic. If heretic thou art not, false are those laws: for by those emperors they were passed, that are not of thy communion: all that are not of their communion, by their laws they call heretics. I enquire not whether true they are, or false; let that question be set aside, if still a question it is: meanwhile after thy account now I ask, True laws are they, or false laws are they? If true they are, let them be believed: if false they are, wherefore usest thou them? Thou hast said to the proconsul, A catholic I am, exclude thou a heretic. He enquired whence a man should be proved a heretic: thou producedst thy Council, shewedst that thou hadst condemned him. He, either conniving, or not understanding, nevertheless used the law in the capacity of judge; and thou hast done by means of the judge that which by thyself thou art not

willing to do; for if the judge used the law of the emperor at thy instigation, why dost thou not use it for thy own correction? Lo, he hath expelled thy heretic according to the law of his emperor: wherefore according to the same law wilt thou not have him expel thee too? We repeat what ye have done: behold, the Basilicas were held by the Maximianists, now by you they are held: there have been excluded from them the Maximianists: there are extant the orders of the proconsuls, are extant the minutes of the proceedings, guards are accepted, cities stirred, men expelled from their places. Wherefore? Because heretics they are. Expelled by what law? Answer: let us see whether yet your teeth are not broken utterly in your mouth. False is the law? let it not hold good against thy heretic. True is the law? let it hold good also against thee. There is nothing which they can answer, God hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. And therefore, wherever they cannot with slimy guile twine like asps, with open violence they roar like lions. There rush forth and rage armed bands of Circumcelliones, make havoc as much as they can, as much as ever they can. But also the jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly.

16. Ver. 7. They shall be despised like water running down. Be not terrified, brethren, by certain streams, which are called torrents: with winter waters they are filled up; do not fear: after a little it passeth by, that water runneth down; for a time it roareth, soon it will subside: they cannot hold long. Many heresies now are utterly dead: they have run in their channels as much as they were able, have run down, dried are the channels, scarce of them the memory is found, or that they have been. They shall be despised like water running down. But not they alone; the whole of this age for a time is roaring, and is seeking whom it may drag along. Let all ungodly men, all proud men resounding against the rocks of their pride as it were with waters rushing along and flowing together, not terrify you, winter waters they are, they cannot alway flow: it must needs be that they run down unto their place, unto their end. And nevertheless of this torrent of the world the Lord hath drunk. For He hath suffered here, the very torrent He hath drunk, but in the way He hath drunk, but in the passage over: because in way of sinners He hath not stood. But of Him saith the Scripture what? Of the torrent in the way He shall drink, therefore He shall lift up His Head: that is, for this reason glorified He hath been, because He hath died; for this

reason hath risen again, because He hath suffered. If He would not have drunk in the way of the torrent, He would not have died; if He had not died, He would not have risen again; if He had not risen again, He would not have been glorified. Therefore, Of the torrent in the way He shall drink, for this cause He shall lift up His Head. Exalted is now our Head: let His members follow Him. They shall be despised like water running down. He hath bended His bow, until they be made weak. The menaces of God cease not: the bow of God are the menaces of God. The bow is bended, not yet it striketh. He hath bended His bow, until they be made weak. And many men have been made weak, terrified by the bending of that same bow. For hence was made weak he that said, What dost Thou bid me to do? I am, He saith, Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest. He that was crying out from heaven, was bending the bow. Many men therefore that have been enemies, have been made weak; and having been converted, would not for long lift up their necks against the continuance of the bended bow. For in like manner also was he made weak that saith, in order that we might not fear to be made weak, When I am made weak, then mighty I am. And when he was praying that from him should be taken the thorn of the flesh, what had he for answer? "Virtue in weakness is made perfect." He hath bended His bow, until they be made weak.

17. Ver. 8. Like wax melted they shall be taken away. For thou wast about to say, all men are not so made weak, like myself, in order that they may believe: many men do persevere in their evil, and in their malice. And of the same fear thou nothing: Like wax melted they shall be taken away. Against thee they shall not stand, they shall not continue: with a sort of fire of their own lusts they shall perish. For there is here a kind of hidden punishment, of it the Psalm is about to speak now, to the end of it. There are but a few verses; be attentive. There is a certain punishment future, fire of hell, fire everlasting. For future punishment hath two kinds: either of the lower places it is, where was burning that rich man, who was wishing for himself a drop of water to be dropped on his tongue off the finger of the poor man, whom before his gate he had spurned, when he saith, For I am tormented in this flame. And the second is that at the end, whereof they are to hear, that on the left hand are to be set: Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. Those punishments shall be

manifest at that time, when we shall have departed out of this life, or when at the end of the world men shall have come to the resurrection of the dead. Now therefore is there no punishment, and doth God suffer sins utterly unpunished even unto that day? There is even here a sort of hidden punishment, of the same he is treating now. This the Spirit of God would commend to our notice: this let us understand, of this beware, this avoid, and into those very terrible punishments we shall not fall. Perchance some one will say to me, There are even here punishments, prisons, banishments, tortures, deaths, divers kinds of pains and tribulations. There are indeed even these, and by God's judgment they are dispensed: but to many men for probation, to many men for condemnation. We see nevertheless sometimes with these punishments just men to be afflicted, and to these punishments unjust men to be strangers: for which reason did totter the feet of him that afterwards rejoicing saith, How good is the God of Israel to men right in heart! But my own feet have been almost shaken, because I have been jealous in the case of sinners, beholding the peace of sinners. For he had seen the felicity of evil men, and well-pleased he had been to be an evil man, seeing evil men to reign, seeing that it was well with them, that they abounded in plenty of all things temporal, such as he too, being as yet but a babe, was desiring from the Lord: and his feet did totter, even until he saw what at the end is either to be hoped for or to be feared. For he saith in the same Psalm, This thing is a labour before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand unto the last things. It is not therefore the punishments of the lower places, not the punishments of that fire everlasting after the resurrection, not those punishments which as yet in this world are common to just men and unjust men, and oftentimes more heavy are those of just men than those of unjust men; but some punishment or other of the present life the Spirit of God would recommend to our notice. Give heed, hear ye me about to speak of that which ye know: but a more sweet thing it is when it is declared in a Psalm, which, before it was declared, was deemed obscure. For behold I bring forth that which already ye knew: but because these things are brought forth from a place where ye have never yet seen them, it cometh to pass that even known things, as if they were new things, do delight you. Hear ye the punishment of ungodly men: Like wax, he saith, melted they shall be taken away. I have said that through their lusts this thing to them is done. Evil lust is like a burning and a fire. Doth fire

consume a garment, and doth not the lust of adultery consume the soul? Of meditated adultery when the Scripture was speaking it saith, Shall one bind fire in his bosom, and his garments shall he not burn up? Thou bearest in thy bosom live coals; burned through is thy vest; thou bearest in thought adultery, and whole then is thy soul?

18. But these punishments few men do see: therefore them the Spirit of God doth exceedingly recommend to our notice. Hear the Apostle saying, God hath given them up unto the lusts of their heart. Behold, the fire from the face of which like wax they are melting. For they loose themselves from a certain continence of chastity: therefore even these same men, going unto their lusts, as loose and melting are spoken of. Whence melting? whence loose? From the fire of lusts. God hath given them up unto the lusts of their heart, so that they do those things which beseem not, being filled full of all iniquity. And he enumerateth many things which are sins, and saith they are the punishments of sinners. For he saith that the first punishment is pride: nay, no punishment, but the first sin is pride. The first sin is pride: the last punishment is fire everlasting, or fire infernal; for hereafter it will be the punishment of men condemned. Between that first sin and this last punishment, the things which are intermediate are both sins and punishments. For of so many things speaketh the Apostle as being done by them which are execrable sins; and nevertheless punishments he calleth them; For this cause, he saith, God hath given up them unto the lusts of their heart, unto uncleanness, so that they do those things which beseem not. And lest any one might think that he is afflicted only with those very punishments wherewith now he is delighted, and that he should not fear that which is to come at the end; he hath made mention of the last punishment; Who, though they had known the justice of God, perceived not, he saith, that they that do these things, are worthy of death, not only they that do them, but also they that consent to men doing them. They that do those things are worthy of death. What things? Those that above he hath enumerated to be in the number of punishments. For God hath given them up, he hath said, unto the lusts of their heart, so that they do those things which beseem not. For a man to be an adulterer, is at once a punishment: for a man to be a liar, covetous, fraudulent, a man-slayer, are even now punishments. Of what sins are they the punishments? Of former apostasy, of

that pride. The beginning of the sin of a man is to apostatise from God: and the beginning of all sin is pride. Therefore of sin itself first he hath spoken. Who though they had known God, glorified Him not as God, nor gave thanks, but were empty in their thoughts, and their unwise heart was darkened. Now this darkening of heart is punishment. But whence doth it chance to them? For saying themselves to be wise men, they became fools. Because, of themselves they used to say they had that, which from God they had received: or if they knew from whom they received it, Him they glorified not, from whom they knew themselves to have received: this is, saying themselves to be wise men, and there forthwith followed punishment: fools they became, and their unwise heart was darkened, saying themselves to be wise, they became fools. Is this a small punishment? To speak of these punishments alone; is darkening of heart, blindness of mind, a little punishment? If any one committing a theft, immediately had lost an eye: all men would say that God being present had taken vengeance. The eye of the heart he hath lost, and is God supposed to have spared him? Like wax melted they shall be taken away.

19. Ver. 7. There hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun. Ye see in what manner he speaketh of a certain punishment of darkening. Fire hath fallen upon them, fire of pride, a smoky fire, fire of lust, fire of wrath. How great a fire is it? He upon whom it shall have fallen, shall not see the sun. Therefore hath it been said, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Therefore, brethren, fire of evil lust fear ye, if ye will not to melt like wax, and to perish from the face of God. For there falleth upon you that fire, and the sun ye shall not see. What sun? Not that which together with thee see both beasts and insects, and good men and evil men: because He maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men. But there is another sun, whereof those men are to speak, And the sun hath not risen to us, passed away are all those things as it were a shadow. Therefore we have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shone to us, and the sun hath not risen to us. Wherefore, but because there hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun. There hath conquered them the lust of the flesh. And this lust hath come whence? Give heed. From propagation thou hast been born together with that sin which thou mayest conquer: do not to thyself add enemies, conquer that with which

thou hast been born. Into the arena of this life with it thou hast come, engage with that which together with thee hath gone forward. When this same hath not been conquered, wherefore dost thou challenge troops of lusts? For carnal pleasure, brethren, together with man is born. But he that is well trained quickly seeth his enemy, and assaileth, and striveth, and quickly conquereth: for he is prepared for enemies that are not yet increasing. But he that maketh light of conquering that lust, with which by the propagation of sin he hath been born, and still stirreth up and advanceth many lusts; with difficulty overcometh them, and against himself being himself divided, with his own fire is burned up. Do not therefore hope as though there should be only those future punishments; see them present. There hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun.

20. Ver. 8. Before that the bramble bringeth forth your thorns: as though living, as though in anger, it shall drink them up. What is the bramble? Of prickly plants it is a kind, upon which there are said to be certain of the closest thorns. At first it is a herb; and while it is a herb, soft and fair it is: but thereon there are nevertheless thorns to come forth. Now therefore sins are pleasant, and as it were they do not prick. A herb is the bramble; even now nevertheless there is a thorn. Before that the bramble bringeth forth thorns: is before that of miserable delights and pleasures the evident tortures come forth. Let them question themselves that love any object, and to it cannot attain; let them see if they are not racked with longing: and when they have attained to that which unlawfully they long for, let them mark if they are not racked with fear. Let them see therefore here their punishments; before that there cometh that resurrection, when in flesh rising again they shall not be changed. For all we shall rise again, but not all we shall be changed. For they shall have the corruption of the flesh wherein to be pained, not that wherein to die: otherwise even those pains would be ended. Then the thorns of that bramble, that is, all pains and piercings of tortures shall be brought forth. Such thorns as they shall suffer that are to say, These are they whom sometimes we had in derision: thorns of the piercing of repentance, but of one too late and without fruit like the barrenness of thorns. The repentance of this time is pain healing: repentance of that time is pain penal. Wouldest thou not suffer those thorns? here be thou pierced with the thorns of repentance; in such sort that thou do that which hath been

spoken of, Turned I have been in sorrow, when the thorn was piercing: my sin I have known, and mine iniquity I have not covered: I have said, I will declare against me my shortcoming to the Lord, and Thou hast remitted the ungodliness of my heart. Now do so, now be pierced through, be there not in thee done that which hath been said of certain execrable men, They have been cloven asunder, and have not been pierced through. Observe them that have been cloven asunder and have not been pierced through. Ye see men cloven asunder, and ye see them not pierced through. Behold beside the Church they are, and it doth not repent them, so as they should return whence they have been cloven asunder. The bramble hereafter shall bring forth their thorns. They will not now have a healing piercing through, they shall have hereafter one penal. But even now before that the bramble produceth thorns, there hath fallen upon them fire, that suffereth them not to see the sun, that is the wrath of God is drinking up them while still living: fire of evil lusts, of empty honours, of pride, of their covetousness: and whatsoever is weighing them down, that they should not know the truth, so that they seem not to be conquered, so that they be not brought into subjection even by truth herself. For what is a more glorious thing, brethren, than to be brought in subjection and to be overcome by truth? Let truth overcome thee willing: for even unwilling she shall of herself overcome thee. Therefore that fire of evil desires, that hath fallen upon them, so that they see not the sun, hath drunk up the bramble, before that it produceth their thorns: that is, it hideth their evil life, before that the same life bringeth forth evident rackings at the end; but in the anger of God that fire is concealing the bramble. For it is no little punishment that now they see not the sun, nor believe that thorns of punishment out of this evil life hereafter shall come forth. For ye, he saith, are a bramble, which bramble, that is, your own selves, living, that is, still set in this life, before that it bring forth in future judgment the evident thorns of your punishments, now in anger it drinketh up, that is, as if by sucking up suffereth it not to appear. The order of these words then, as far as I think, more perspicuously can be put together thus. There hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun: which fire as though in anger, you as though living, a bramble it drinketh up, before that it bringeth forth your thorns: that is, you yourselves whom a bramble it findeth, it drinketh up before death, before that the same bramble bringeth forth your thorns, that is, after death in that penal

resurrection. But wherefore hath he not spoken of living, but as though living, except because unreal is this life of ungodly men? For they do not live, but seem to themselves to live. And wherefore not, in anger, but as though in anger, except because undisturbed God doeth this thing? For this also hath been written: But Thou, O Lord of virtues, with gentleness judgest. He therefore even when He threateneth is not angry. For He is not perturbed, but is as though angry, because He punisheth and avengeth. And they that amended will not be, as it were live, but do not live. For the vengeance for the first sin, and that for those which they have added, abideth upon them; and the same is called the anger of God, because of the judgment of God it cometh. Whence the Lord of one not believing saith, But the anger of God abideth upon him. For with the anger of God we mortal men are born. Whence saith the Apostle, We also have been sometime by nature sons of wrath, as also the rest. What is, by nature sons of wrath, except that we bear with us the punishment of the first sin? But if we turn ourselves, wrath is taken away, there is granted grace. Thou wilt not be turned, thou art adding even upon that thou wert born: as though in wrath thou art drunk up in the present time.

21. Acknowledge therefore that punishment, and rejoice that ye are not in this other, all ye that are advancing and all ye that understand and love the truth, all ye that in yourselves desire more the victory of truth than your own, that close not against the truth your ears, because of delight in present things and remembrance of past things: be not ye a dog returned to its own vomit. All ye that are of such sort, see ye the punishments of those that are not of such sort, and rejoice. As yet the punishments of the lower places have not come, as yet fire everlasting hath not come: let him that is growing in God compare himself now with an ungodly man, a blind heart with an enlightened heart: compare ye two men, one seeing and one not seeing in the flesh. And what so great thing is vision of the flesh? Did Tobias by any means have fleshly eyes? His own son had, and he had not; and the way of life a blind man to one seeing did shew. Therefore when ye see that punishment, rejoice, because in it ye are not. Therefore saith the Scripture, (ver. 9.) The just man shall rejoice when he shall have seen vengeance. Not that future punishment; for see what followeth: his hands he shall wash in the blood of the sinner. What is this? Let your love attend. When

manslayers are smitten, ought anywise innocent men to go thither and wash their hands? But what is, in the blood of the sinner he shall wash his hands? When a just man seeth the punishment of a sinner, he groweth himself; and the death of one is the life of another. For if spiritually blood runneth from those that within are dead, do thou, seeing such vengeance, wash therein thy hands; for the future more cleanly live. And how shall he wash his hands, if a just man he is? For what hath he on his hands to be washed, if just he is? But the just man of faith shall live. Just men therefore he hath called believers: and from the time that thou hast believed, at once thou beginnest to be called just. For there hath been made a remission of sins. Even if out of that remaining part of thy life some sins are thine, which cannot but flow in, like water from the sea into the hold; nevertheless, because thou hast believed, when thou shalt have seen him that altogether is turned away from God to be slain in that blindness, there falling upon him that fire so that he see not the sun—then do thou that now through faith seest Christ, in order that thou mayest see in substance, (because the just man liveth of faith,) observe the ungodly man dying, and purge thyself from sins. So thou shalt wash in a manner thy hands in the blood of the sinner. Therefore his hands he shall wash in the blood of the sinner.

22. Ver. 10. And a man shall say, If therefore there is fruit to a just man. Behold, before that there cometh that which is promised, before that there is given life everlasting, before that ungodly men are cast forth into fire everlasting, here in this life there is fruit to the just man. What fruit? In hope rejoicing, in tribulation enduring. What fruit to the just man? We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, but patience probation, but probation hope: but hope confoundeth not: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, that hath been given to us. Doth he rejoice that is a drunkard; and doth he not rejoice that is just? In love there is fruit to a just man. Miserable the one, even when he maketh himself drunken: blessed the other, even when he hungereth and thirsteth. The one wine-bibbing doth gorge, the other hope doth feed. Let him see therefore the punishment of the other, his own rejoicing, and let him think of God. He that hath given even now such joy of faith, of hope, of charity, of the truth of His Scriptures, what manner of joy is He making ready against the end? In the way thus He feedeth, in his home how shall

He fill him? And a man shall say, If therefore there is fruit to the just man. Let them that see believe, and see, and perceive. Rejoice shall the just man when he shall have seen vengeance. But if he hath not eyes whence he may see vengeance, he will be made sad, and will not be amended by it. But if he seeth it, he seeth what difference there is between the darkened eye of the heart, and the eye enlightened of the heart: between the coolness of chastity and the flame of lust, between the security of hope and the fear there is in crime. When he shall have seen this, let him separate himself, and wash his hands in the blood of the same. Let him profit by the comparison, and say, Therefore there is fruit to the just man: therefore there is a God judging them in the earth. Not yet in that life, not yet in fire eternal, not yet in the lower places, but here in earth. Behold, that rich man yet is clothed with purple and fine linen, and yet feasteth every day sumptuously. Not yet the bramble hath brought forth thorns, not yet he saith, I am tormented in this flame: but even now there is blindness of mind, even now the eye of the mind hath been quenched. If blind in eyes of flesh he were to sit down to his table, however rich it be, miserable thou wouldest call him: blind within, the bread of Christ he seeth not, and blessed is he? This no one saith but one alike blind. Therefore there is fruit to the just man; therefore there is a God judging them in the earth.

23. If somewhat too prolix we have been, pardon us. We exhort you in the name of Christ, to meditate profitably on those things which ye have heard. Because even to preach the truth is nought, if heart from tongue dissenteth; and to hear the truth nothing profiteth, if a man upon the rock build not. He that buildeth upon a Rock, is the same that heareth and doeth: but he that heareth and doeth not, buildeth upon sand: he that neither heareth nor doeth, buildeth nothing. But in like manner as he that buildeth upon sand, ruin for himself buildeth; so he that buildeth not upon a rock, the flood coming, without house is carried away. It is not possible to do any thing without both building, and upon a rock building: that is, both to hear and to do. And let not another man say, Why do I go forth to the Church? for they that daily to the Church go forth, do not what they hear. They do it, nevertheless, in order that they may hear: thus they may come so to do it, as both to hear and to do: but thou, how very far thou art from doing, that so far art fleeing from hearing? But I, he saith, build not upon sand. Upon thee naked the

flood will come: will it therefore not take thee off? will therefore the rain not slay thee? will, for this reason, the winds not sweep thee away? Therefore I will come and will hear. But when thou shalt have heard, do. For if thou shalt have heard and shalt not have done, thou hast builded indeed, but upon sand. Because therefore without building standing, naked we are, but in a building planted upon sand, under ruin we are: it remaineth that upon a Rock we build, and what we have heard, that we do.

PSALM 59

Exposition

Sermon I. on the first part of the Psalm

1. As the Scripture is wont to set mysteries of the Psalms on the titles, and to deck the brow of a Psalm with the high announcement of a Mystery, in order that we that are about to go in may know (when as it were upon the door-post we have read what within is doing) either of whom the house is, or who is the owner of that estate: so also in this Psalm there hath been written a title, of a title. For it hath, At the end, corrupt not for David himself unto the inscription of the title. This is that which I have spoken of, title of Title. For what the inscription of this title is, which to be corrupted he forbiddeth, the Gospel to us doth indicate. For when the Lord was being crucified, a title by Pilate was inscribed and set, King of the Jews, in three tongues, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin: which tongues in the whole world mostly do prevail. Therefore, if the King of the Jews was crucified, the Jews their King crucified; by crucifying Him, King of the Gentiles also they made Him, rather than slew Him. And indeed as much as in them lay, they destroyed the Christ, but for themselves, not for us; and He died for us, and with His blood He redeemed us. And now the title is not corrupted: because He is King, not only of the Gentiles, but also of the same Jews. But why? Because they spake against Him, therefore were they able to overthrow the dominion of their King? King He is, and above them. For this King an iron rod doth bear, wherewith He both ruleth and breaketh. I, He saith, have been set a King by Him over His holy Mount Sion, preaching the precept of the Lord. The Lord hath said to Me, My Son art Thou, to-day I have begotten Thee: ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession the ends of the earth; Thou shalt rule them with an iron rod, and as it were a vessel of the potter Thou shalt break them in pieces. Whom shall He rule? whom shall He break in pieces? Shall

rule men obeying, shall break in pieces men resisting. Therefore corrupt not is most proper and prophetic; since indeed even those Jews made suggestion at that time to Pilate, and said, Do not write King of the Jews, but write, that Himself said that He was King of the Jews: for this title, say they, hath established Him King over us. And Pilate, What I have written, I have written. And there was fulfilled, corrupt not.

2. Nor is this the only Psalm which hath an inscription of such sort, that the Title be not corrupted. Several Psalms thus are marked on the face, but however in all the Passion of the Lord is foretold. Therefore here also let us perceive the Lord's Passion, and let there speak to us Christ, Head and Body. So always, or nearly always, let us hear the words of Christ from the Psalm, as that we look not only upon that Head, the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus: Who also after the Divine Nature in the beginning was the Word, God with God, which Word was made Flesh, and dwelled in us, flesh out of the seed of Abraham, out of the seed of David by Mary the Virgin: not therefore of Him alone, Who is our Head, let us think, when we hear Christ speak; but let us think of Christ, Head and whole Body, a sort of entire Man. For to us is said, But ye are the Body of Christ and members, by the Apostle Paul. And of Him is said by the same Apostle, that He is the Head of the Church. If therefore He is Head, we Body; whole Christ is Head and Body. For sometimes thou findest words which do not suit the Head, and unless thou shalt have attached them to the Body, thy understanding will waver: again thou findest words which are proper for the Body, and Christ nevertheless is speaking. In that place we must have no fear lest a man be mistaken: for quickly he proceedeth to adapt to the Head, that which he seeth is not proper for the Body. Himself in a word on the Cross hanging in the person of the Body spake, My God, My God, have regard unto Me, wherefore, hast Thou forsaken Me? For He had not forsaken Christ, by whom forsaken He had not been: nor in truth did He come to us in such sort as to have forsaken Him; or did He so send Him, as from Him to have departed. But because man was deserted by God, that sinning Adam, who though he was wont to rejoice before the face of God, being terrified by the consciousness of sin, fled from his joy: and God did truly forsake him, because himself left God: since out of this Adam Christ

had received flesh, out of the person of the same flesh, this He saith: because then our old man was nailed together with Him to the Cross.

3. Let us hear therefore what followeth: When Saul sent and guarded his house in order that he might kill him. This though not to the Cross of the Lord, yet to the Passion of the Lord doth belong. For Crucified was Christ, and dead, and buried. That sepulchre was therefore as it were the house: to guard which the government of the Jews sent, when guards were set to the sepulchre of Christ. There is indeed a story in the Scripture of the Reigns, of the occasion when Saul sent to guard the house in order that he might kill David: but as much as he that hath written the Psalm hath taken thence, so much we ought to examine when of the title of the Psalm we are treating. Did he wish to intimate this only to us, that they sent to the house in order that it might be guarded, and he might be killed? How then, if David figured Christ, to this end was the house guarded that Christ might be killed; since in the Tomb Christ was not laid, until after He had been slain on the Cross? Refer this therefore to the Body of Christ: that to kill Christ was to take away the name of Christ, in order that men might not believe in Christ, provided that the falsehood of the guards might gain credit, who were bribed to say, that while they slept His disciples came and took Him away. This is truly to will to slay Christ, to extinguish the name of His Resurrection, in order that falsehood might be preferred to the Gospel. But in like manner as Saul effected not his purpose of slaying David: so this could not the government of the Jews effect, that the testimony of guards sleeping should avail more than that of Apostles watching. For what were the guards instructed to say? We give to you, they say, as much money as ye please; and say ye, that while ye were sleeping there came His disciples, and took Him away. Behold what sort of witnesses of falsehood against truth and the Resurrection of Christ, His enemies, through Saul figured, did produce. Enquire, O unbelief, of sleeping witnesses, let them reply to thee of what was done in the Tomb. Who, if they were sleeping, whence knew it? If watching, wherefore detained they not the thieves? Let him say therefore what followeth.

4. Ver. 1. Deliver me from mine enemies, my God, and from men rising up upon me, redeem Thou me. There hath been done this thing in the flesh of

Christ, it is being done in us also. For our enemies, to wit the devil and his angels, cease not to rise up upon us every day, and to wish to make sport of our weakness and our frailness, by deceptions, by suggestions, by temptations, and by snares of whatsoever sort to entangle us, while on earth we are still living. But let our voice watch unto God, and cry out in the members of Christ, under the Head that is in heaven, Deliver me from mine enemies, my God, and from men rising up upon me, redeem Thou me.

5. Ver. 2. Deliver me from men working iniquity, and from men of bloods, save Thou me. They indeed were men of bloods, who slew the Just One, in Whom no guilt they found: they were men of bloods, because when the foreigner washed his hands, and would have let go Christ, they cried, Crucify, Crucify, they were men of bloods, on whom when there was being charged the crime of the blood of Christ, they made answer, giving it to their posterity to drink, His blood be upon us and upon our sons. But neither against His Body did men of bloods cease to rise up; for even after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, the Church suffered persecutions, and she indeed first that grew out of the Jewish people, of which also our Apostles were. There at first Stephen was stoned, and received that of which he had his name. For Stephanus doth signify a crown. Lowly stoned but highly crowned. Secondly, among the Gentiles rose up kingdoms of Gentiles, before that in them was fulfilled that which had been foretold, There shall adore Him all the kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him: and there roared the fierceness of that kingdom against the witnesses of Christ: there was shed largely and frequently the blood of Martyrs: wherewith when it had been shed, being as it were sown, the field of the Church more productively put forth, and filled the whole world as we now behold. From these therefore, men of bloods, is delivered Christ, not only Head, but also Body. From men of bloods is delivered Christ, both from them that have been, and from them that are, and from them that are to be; there is delivered Christ, both He that hath gone before, and He that is, and He that is to come. For Christ is the whole Body of Christ; and whatsoever good Christians that now are, and that have been before us, and that after us are to be, are an whole Christ, who is delivered from men of bloods; nor is this voice void, And from men of bloods save Thou me.

6. Ver. 3. For behold they have hunted my soul. They have been able to hold, been able to slay, they have hunted my soul. But where is, Thou hast broken asunder my bonds? Where is, The trap is broken, and we are delivered? Where is that wherein we bless God, that hath not given us for a hunting to the teeth of them? They indeed have hunted, but in the hands of men hunting He leaveth not us, That guardeth Israel. For, behold, they have hunted my soul: there have rushed upon me strong men. We must not however pass on from these strong men: diligently we must trace who are the strong men rising up. Strong men, upon whom but upon weak men, upon powerless men, upon men not strong? And praised nevertheless are the weak men, and condemned are the strong men. If it would be perceived who are strong men, at first the devil himself the Lord hath called a strong man: No one, He saith, is able to go into the house of a strong man, and to carry off his vessels, unless first he shall have bound the strong man. He hath bound therefore the strong man with the chains of His dominion: and his vessels He hath carried off, and His own vessels hath made them. For all unrighteous men were vessels of the devil, that believing have been made vessels of Christ: to whom the Apostle saith, For ye have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord: That maketh known His riches on the vessels of mercy. These men therefore may be understood as strong men. But there are among mankind certain strong men of a blameable and damnable strength, that are confident indeed, but on temporal felicity. That man doth not seem to you to have been strong, of whom now from the Gospel hath been read: how his estate brought forth abundance of fruits, and he being troubled, hit upon the design of rebuilding, so that, having pulled down his old barns, he should construct new ones more capacious, and, these having been finished, should say to his soul, Thou hast many good things, soul, feast, be merry, be filled. What sort of strong man seest thou? Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper, but hath hoped in the multitude of his riches. See how strong he is: And he hath prevailed, he saith, in his emptiness.

7. There are also other men strong, not because of riches, not because of the powers of the body, not because of any temporally preeminent power of station, but relying on their righteousness. This sort of strong men must be guarded against, feared, repulsed, not imitated: of men relying, I say, not on

body, not on means, not on descent, not on honour; for all such things who would not see to be temporal, fleeting, falling, flying? but relying on their own righteousness. Such strength prevented the Jews from going in through the eye of the needle. For while on themselves they rely that just men they are, and think themselves to be as it were whole, the medicine they refused, and the Physician Himself they slew. Such strong men therefore, not weak, He came not to call, That said, They that are whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick: I am not come to call just men but sinners unto repentance. These were the strong men that reviled the disciples of Christ, because their Master was going in unto sick men, and was feasting with sick men. Wherefore, say they, doth your Master eat with publicans and sinners? O ye strong men, to whom a Physician is not needful! This strength to soundness belongeth not, but to insanity. For even than men phrensied nothing can be stronger, more mighty they are than whole men: but by how much greater their powers are, by so much nearer is their death. May God therefore turn away from our imitation these strong men. For we must fear lest a man should desire to imitate these men. But the Teacher of humility, Partaker of our infirmity, giving to partake of His own Divinity, for this purpose coming down, that He might teach the way and become the Way, deigned very much to recommend His own humility to us; and therefore by a servant to be baptized disdained not, in order that He might teach us to confess our sins, and to be made weak in order that we may be strong; to have rather the Apostle's voice, saying, When I am made weak, then mighty I am. How therefore would he not be strong? But these men that strong have desired to be, that is, that on their own virtue have desired to rely, as though being just, have stumbled upon the stone of stumbling: and the Lamb hath seemed to them to be a kid, and because as if He were a kid they slew Him, by the Lamb to be redeemed they deserved not. The same are therefore the strong men, that assailed Christ, commending their own justice. Hear ye these strong men: when certain men of Jerusalem were speaking, having been sent by them to take Christ, and not daring to take Him; (because when He would, then was He taken, That truly was strong:) Why therefore, say they, could ye not take Him? And they made answer, No one of men did ever so speak as He. And these strong men, Hath by any means any one of the Pharisees believed on Him, or any one of the Scribes, but this people knowing not the Law? They preferred themselves to the sick

multitude, that was running to the Physician: whence but because they were themselves strong? and what is worse, by their strength, all the multitude also they brought over unto themselves, and slew the Physician of all. But He also because He was slain, of His blood made medicine for sick men; There have rushed upon Me strong men. To these mighty strong men give heed: and see whether a man should rely on any thing, when not even on righteousness he ought to rely. Now see where they lie that rely on riches, on strength of body, on nobility of family, on rank in the world, if whosoever on justice itself as if his own shall have relied, falleth. There have rushed upon me strong men. Out of these strong men was he that vaunted his powers. Thanks to Thee, he saith, I render, because I am not like the rest of men, unjust, robbers, adulterers, as also this Publican: I fast twice in a week, tithes I give of all things that I possess. Behold, a strong man vaunting his power, but on the other side observe a weak one afar off standing, and in humility drawing near. But the Publican, He saith, stood afar off, and not even his eyes unto Heaven dared to raise, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. Verily I say unto you, that Publican went down justified rather than that Pharisee. And observe the justice. For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. There rushed on those strong men, that is, proud men, who knowing not God's righteousness, and their own righteousness wishing to set up, to the righteousness of God they did not submit.

8. Ver. 3. What next? Neither iniquity is mine, nor sin mine, O Lord. There have rushed on indeed strong men on their own righteousness relying, they have rushed on, but sin in me they have not found. For truly those strong men, that is, as it were righteous men, on what account would they be able to persecute Christ, unless it were as if a sinner? But, however, let them look to it how strong they be, in the raging of fever not in the vigour of soundness: let them look to it how strong they be, and how as though just against an unrighteous man they have raged. But, however, neither iniquity is mine, nor sin mine, O Lord. Without iniquity I did run, and I was guided. Those strong men therefore could not follow me running: therefore a sinner they have deemed me, because my steps they have not seen.

9. Ver. 4. Without iniquity I did run, and was guided; rise up to meet me, and see. To God is said, Without iniquity I did run, and was guided; rise up to meet me, and see. But why? If He meet not, is He unable to see? It is just as if thou wast walking in a road, and from afar by some one thou couldest not be recognised, thou wouldest call to him and wouldest say, Meet me, and see how I am walking; for when from afar thou espiest me, my steps thou art not able to see. So also unless God were to meet, would He not see how without iniquity he was guided, and how without sin he was running? This interpretation indeed we can also accept, namely, Rise up to meet me, as if 'help me.' But that which he hath added, and see, must be understood as, make it to be seen that I run, make it to be seen that I am guided: according to that figure wherein this also hath been said to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God. God saith, Now I know: whence, but because I have made thee to know? For unknown to himself every one is before the questioning of temptation: just as of himself Peter in his confidence was ignorant, and by denying learned what kind of powers he had, in his very stumbling he perceived that it was falsely he had been confident: he wept, and in weeping he earned profitably to know what he was, and to be what he was not. Therefore Abraham when tried, became known to himself: and it was said by God, Now I know, that is, now I have made thee to know. In like manner as glad is the day because it maketh men glad; and sad is bitterness because it maketh sad one tasting thereof: so God's seeing is making to see. Rise up, therefore, he saith, to meet me, and see. What is, and see? And help me, that is, in those men, in order that they may see my course, may follow me; let not that seem to them to be crooked which is straight, let not that seem to them to be curved which keepeth the rule of truth: For without iniquity I have run, and was guided: rise up to meet me, and see.

10. Something else I am admonished to say in this place by the loftiness of our Head Himself: for He was made weak even unto death, and He took on Him the weakness of flesh, in order that the chickens of Jerusalem He might gather under His wings, like a hen shewing herself weak with her little ones. For have we not observed this thing in some bird at some time or other, even in those which build nests before our eyes, as the house-sparrows, as swallows, so to speak, our annual guests, as storks, as various

sorts of birds, which before our eyes build nests, and hatch eggs, feed chickens, as the very doves which daily we see; and some bird to become weak with her chickens, have we not known, have we not looked upon, have we not seen? In what way doth a hen experience this weakness? Surely a known fact I am speaking of, which in our sight is daily taking place. How her voice groweth hoarse, how her whole body is made languid? The wings droop, the feathers are loosened, and thou seest around the chickens some sick thing, and this is maternal love which is found as weakness. Why was it therefore, but for this reason, that the Lord willed to be a Hen, saying in the Holy Scripture, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often have I willed to gather thy sons, even as a hen her chickens under her wings, and thou hast not been willing? But He hath gathered all nations, like as a hen her chickens, He That hath been made weak for our sakes, receiving flesh from us, that is, from mankind, crucified, despised, with buffets smitten, scourged, hanged on the Tree, wounded with the spear. Therefore this belongeth to maternal weakness, not to Majesty lost. Whereas therefore such was Christ, and therefore despised, and therefore a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, and therefore many men have stumbled against Him: whereas such therefore He was, and nevertheless flesh without sin had taken upon Him, He was made partaker of our own weakness, not of our own iniquity; in order that even hereby, that with us He shared weakness, He might undo our iniquity. Therefore without iniquity I did run, and I was guided. Why, therefore, is He not to be acknowledged according to His Godhead, and why is that alone in Him to be considered, which for our sakes He was made, and not That whereby He made us? Evidently That also is to be considered: because a great proof of loving-kindness it is to know Who it was that for thee hath suffered, and what. No small one it was, it was not in behalf of thee some great one, but in behalf of thee weak, He the Highest. What? He having been made a little one: He humbled Himself, having been made obedient even unto death. Who? Hear from above: Who when in the form of God He was, thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Therefore being equal with God, His own Self He emptied, taking the form of a servant, after the similitude of men having been made, and in shape having been found as a man: and He emptied Himself in such wise, that He took unto Him that which He was not, not so as to lose what He was. In what manner therefore emptied?

Because to thee of such sort He appeared, because to thee the dignity which with the Father He hath, He shewed not, because to thee now He presented weakness, reserved for the purged hereafter brightness. He therefore that is equal to the Father of such sort was made: and nevertheless in the very weakness He must be acknowledged, not by sight, but by faith: in order that what to see we are not yet able, at least we may believe, and by believing that which we do not see, even to see we may earn. With reason, after that He rose again, He saith to Mary Magdalene, to whom He deigned first to appear: Touch Me not; for not yet I have ascended to the Father. What is this? A little after, the women touched Him. For returning from the tomb, as He met them, they worshipped Him, and held His feet: the disciples also felt His scars. What is therefore, Touch Me not, for not yet have I ascended to the Father: but, do not believe Me to be this alone which thou seest, lest here also should abide thy seeing even as thy touching? For humble to thee I seem, not yet I have ascended to the Father. Whence also to you I have come down, and thence I have not departed: not yet thither I have ascended, since you I have not deserted. He came without departing, He ascended without deserting. But what is it that He ascendeth to the Father? When to us He is known as equal with the Father. For we ascend by making progress, so that we may be strong enough to see this, to perceive this, to receive this however it be. For this reason therefore He deferred touching. He put it not away, He repelled not, He refused not. For not yet, He saith, have I ascended to the Father. 'From the highest Heaven is the going forth of Him,' saith another Psalm, 'and the meeting of Him even unto the highest of Heaven.' The highest of Heaven, that is, the highest in all spiritual things, the Father is: thence the running forth of Him, and the meeting even unto the highest of Heaven. He meeteth even unto the highest, is not said but of one equal. Lastly, when some things unequal we compare, and something short to something long we apply, to see how it is length to length, if unequal we shall have found it, then we are wont to say, It meeteth not; but if equal it be, it meeteth. Therefore the meeting of Him is even unto the highest of Heaven, because equal He is with the Father, as such an One He would have Himself be known to His faithful, Who said, Touch Me not. This thing He would have to be granted by the Father to His faithful, Who was saying, Rise up unto meeting Me, and see: make it known, that with Thee I am equal. And see: what is, And see? Make it to be

seen that with Thee I am equal. How long doth Philip say to Me, Shew to us the Father, and it is sufficient for us? How long shall I say, So long a time am I with you, and the Father know ye not: Philip, he that hath seen Me hath seen also the Father: dost thou not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? And as yet perchance he believed not Him to be equal. Rise up to meet Me, and see. Make Me to be seen, make Thyself to be seen, make known to men Our equality. Let not the Jews think themselves to have crucified a man. Though in Him there was crucified, only so much as of Man there was: nevertheless they knew not Whom they crucified. For if they had known, the Lord of Glory they never would have crucified. This Lord of glory in order that My faithful ones may know, Rise up to meet me and see.

11. And Thou, Lord God of virtues, God of Israel. Thou God of Israel, that art thought to be but God of one nation, which worshipping Thee, when all nations worship idols, Thou God of Israel, Give heed unto the visiting all nations. Fulfilled be that prophecy wherein Isaiah in Thy person speaketh to Thy Church, Thy holy City, that barren one of whom many more are the sons of Her forsaken than of her that hath a husband. To Her indeed hath been said, Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry out, thou that travailest not: for many more are the sons of Her forsaken than of her that hath a husband; more than of the Jewish nation which hath an Husband, which hath received the Law, more than of that nation which had a visible king. For thy king is hidden, and more sons to thee there are by a hidden Bridegroom. Therefore to Her is said, Many more are the children of thee forsaken than of Her which hath an Husband. Secondly, the Prophet addeth, Enlarge the place of Thy tabernacle, and Thy courts fix thou: there is no cause for thee to spare, extend further thy cords, and strong stakes set thou again and again on the right and on the left. Upon the right keep good men, on the left keep evil men, until there come the fan: occupy nevertheless all nations; bidden to the marriage be good men and evil men, filled be the marriage with guests; it is the office of servants to bid, of the Lord to sever. Again and again on the right hand and on the left stretch forth. For Thy seed shall inherit the nations: and cities which had been forsaken Thou shalt inhabit: forsaken of God, forsaken of Prophets, forsaken of Apostles, forsaken of the Gospel, full of demons. Cities which

had been forsaken Thou shalt inhabit, there is nothing for thee to fear. For Thou shalt prevail; and blush not because abominable Thou hast been. Therefore though there have risen up upon thee strong men, blush not: when against the name of Christ laws were enacted, when ignominy and infamy it was to be a Christian. Blush not because abominable Thou hast been: for confusion for everlasting Thou shalt forget, of the ignominy of Thy widowhood Thou shalt not be mindful. For I am the Lord that make Thee, The Lord is His name: and He that rescueth Thee, the Same, the God of Israel, shall be called the Lord of the whole earth. And Thou, Lord God of Virtues, God of Israel, give heed unto visiting all nations: give heed, I say, unto visiting all nations.

12. Ver. 5. Have not pity upon all men that work iniquity. Here evidently He is terrifying. Whom would He not terrify? What man falling back upon his own conscience would not tremble? Which even if to itself it is conscious of godliness, strange if it be not in some sort conscious of iniquity. For whosoever doeth sin, also doeth iniquity. For if Thou shalt have marked iniquities, O Lord, what man shall abide it? And nevertheless a true saying it is, and not said to no purpose, and neither is nor will it be possible to be void, Have not pity upon all men that work iniquity. But He had pity even upon Paul, who at first as Saul wrought iniquity. For what good thing did he, whence he might deserve of God? Did he not hate His Saints unto death? did he not bear letters from the chief of the priests, to the end that wheresoever he might find Christians, to punishment he should hurry them? When bent upon this, when thither proceeding, breathing and panting slaughter, as the Scripture testified of him, was he not from Heaven with a mighty voice summoned, thrown down, raised up; blinded, lightened; slain, made alive; destroyed, restored? In return for what merit? Let us say nothing; himself rather let us hear: I that before have been, he saith, a blasphemer, and persecutor; and injurious, but mercy I have obtained. Surely Thou wouldest not have pity upon all men that work iniquity: this in two ways may be understood: either that in fact not any sins doth God leave unpunished; or that there is a sort of iniquity, on the workers whereof God hath indeed no pity. On these two heads briefly, as much as the time sufficeth for, something we would speak to your Love.

13. All iniquity, be it little or great, punished must needs be, either by man himself repenting, or by God avenging. For even he that repenteth punisheth himself. Therefore, brethren, let us punish our own sins, if we seek the mercy of God. God cannot have mercy on all men working iniquity as if pandering to sins, or not rooting out sins. In a word, either thou punishest, or He punisheth. Wilt thou that He punish not? Punish thou. For even that thing thou hast done which unpunished cannot be: but by thyself be it punished rather, in order that thou mayest do that which in the Psalm hath been written, Let us come before the face of Him in confession. What is, Let us come before the face of Him? Before that Himself giveth heed to punish, do thou come before Him in confession, and punish. Let not Him find any thing which He may punish. Because when thou punishest iniquity, thou doest equity. And therefore on thee God shall have pity, because God doth find thee now working equity. What is working equity? Because this thing in thyself thou hatest, which He also hateth: so that thou mayest begin to please God, because that thing in thyself thou punishest which displeaseth God. For it is not possible for sin to be left unpunished: for true is, Have Thou not pity on all men that work iniquity.

14. But let us see now another way in which this sentence may be understood. There is a certain iniquity, on the worker whereof it cannot be that God have mercy. Ye enquire, perchance, what that is? It is the defending of sins. When a man defendeth his sins, great iniquity he worketh: that thing he is defending which God hateth. And see how perversely, how iniquitously. Whatever of good he hath done, to himself he would have it to be ascribed; whatever of evil, to God. For in this manner men defend sins in the person of God, which is a worse sin. What is this? No one there is that would dare to say, good is adultery, good is manslaying, good guile, good falseswearing; no one surely among men. For even they that do these things, make an outcry when they suffer them. By no means therefore canst thou find a soul so perverse, so alien from the society of mankind and from sharing in the common blood of Adam, as that to him appeareth adultery to be a good thing, as I have said, or guile, robbery, false swearing. But how do they defend these things? If God had not willed it, I should not have done this thing. Wilt thou have me do any thing against my fate? Then thou enquirest, what is fate: thou fleest to the stars. Thou

inquirest who made and ordered the stars: God it is. Therefore thou defendest thy sin in such sort, that thou layest blame on God. So the guilty is excused, so that the Judge may be charged. However on men working iniquity God hath no pity at all. Have Thou no pity on all men that work iniquity.

15. Ver. 6. Let them be converted at the evening. Of certain men he is speaking that were once workers of iniquity, and once darkness, being converted in the evening. What is, in the evening? Afterward. What is, at the evening? Later. For before, before that they crucified Christ, they ought to have acknowledged their Physician. Wherefore. when He had been crucified—rising again, into Heaven ascending—after that He sent His Holy Spirit, wherewith were fulfilled they that were in one house, and they began to speak with the tongues of all nations, there feared the crucifiers of Christ: they were pricked through with their consciences, counsel of safety from the Apostles they besought, they heard, do penance, and be baptized each one of you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be remitted unto you. After the slaying of Christ, after the shedding of the blood of Christ, remitted are your sins. He so willed to die, that with His blood even the shedders of the same blood He redeemed. Ye have shed raging, drink ye confessing. With reason, let them be converted at evening, and suffer hunger as dogs. Dogs the Jews called the Gentiles, as if being unclean. For even the Lord Himself, when after Him there cried a certain woman of Canaan, not of Judæa, unto the healing of her daughter desiring to prevail with His mercy—He foreseeing all things—knowing all things—yet since her faith He willed to shew, deferred the blessing, and kept her in suspense. And how deferred? I am not, He saith, sent but to the sheep which have been lost of the house of Israel. Israel, sheep: Gentiles, what? It is not good to throw the bread of sons to dogs. The Gentiles therefore dogs He called, because of uncleanness. But what of that woman hungering? This moreover she disdained not: humbly she received reproach, and earned a blessing. But this must not be called a reproach, which by the Lord had been said. If a servant say any such thing to his master, a reproach it is. When the Lord saith even any such thing to his servant, it may rather be called a condescension. Even so, she saith, Lord. What is even so? A true thing thou sayest, surely a true thing thou sayest, a dog I am. But even dogs,

she saith, eat of the crumbs which fall from the table of their masters. And immediately the Lord, O woman, great is thy faith. But lately a dog, now a woman. Whence now a woman, she that a little before was a dog? By confessing humbly, by not disdainning that which by the Lord had been spoken. Therefore the nations are dogs, and for this reason they are hungry. It is a good thing for Jews also to acknowledge themselves sinners; and though it be at evening, to be converted; and to suffer hunger like dogs. For in ill sort had he been filled that was saying, I fast twice in a week. But that publican was a dog, suffering hunger; and thence for the blessing of the Lord was hungering he that was saying, 'Merciful be Thou to me, a sinner.' Let these be converted, therefore, they also at evening, and suffer hunger as dogs. Let them yearn for the grace of God, perceive themselves to be sinners; let those strong men be made weak, those rich men be made poor, those just men acknowledge themselves sinners, those lions be made dogs. Let them be converted at evening, and suffer hunger as dogs. And they shall go around the city. What city? That world, which in certain places the Scripture calleth 'the city of standing round:' that is, because in all nations every where the world had encompassed the one nation of Jews, where such words were being spoken, and it was called 'the city of standing round.' Around this city shall go those men, now having become hungry dogs. In what manner shall they go around? By preaching. Saul out of a wolf was made a dog at evening, that is, being late converted by the crumbs of his Lord, in His grace he ran, and went around the city.

16. Ver. 7. Behold, themselves shall speak in their mouth, and a sword is on the lips of them. Here is that sword twice whetted, whereof the Apostle saith, And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Wherefore twice whetted? Wherefore, but because smiting out of both Testaments? With this sword were slain those whereof it was said to Peter, 'Slay, and eat.' And a sword is on the lips of them. For who hath heard? They shall speak in their mouth, Who hath heard? That is, they shall be wroth with men that are slow to believe. They that a little before were even themselves unwilling to believe, do feel disgust from men not believing. And truly, brethren, so it is. Thou seest a man slow before he is made a Christian; thou criest to him daily, hardly he is converted: suppose him to be converted, and then he would have all men to be Christians, and wondereth that not yet

they are. It hath chanced out to him at evening to have been converted: but because he hath been made hungering like a dog, he hath also on his lips a sword; he saith, Who hath heard? What is, Who hath heard? 'Who hath believed our hearing, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For who hath heard?' The Jews believe not: they have turned them to the nations, and have preached. The Jews did not believe; and nevertheless through believing Jews the Gospel went around the city, and they said, For who hath heard?

17. Ver. 8. And Thou, Lord, shalt deride them. 'Who hath heard?' All nations are to be Christian, and ye say, Who hath heard? What is, 'shalt deride them?' As nothing Thou shalt esteem all nations. Nothing for Thee it shall be; because a most easy thing it will be for all nations to believe in Thee.

18. Ver. 9. My strength to Thee I will keep. For those strong men have fallen for this reason; because their strength to Thee they have not kept: that is, they that upon me have risen up and rushed, on themselves have relied. But I my strength to Thee will keep: because if I withdraw, I fall; if I draw near, stronger I am made. For see, brethren, what there is in a human soul. It hath not of itself light, hath not of itself powers: but all that is fair in a soul, is virtue and wisdom: but it neither is wise for itself, nor strong for itself, nor itself is light to itself, nor itself is virtue to itself. There is a certain origin and fountain of virtue, there is a certain root of wisdom, there is a certain, so to speak, if this also must be said, region of unchangeable truth: from this the soul withdrawing is made dark, drawing near is made light. Draw near to Him, and be made light: because by withdrawing ye are made dark. Therefore, my strength, I will keep to Thee: not from Thee will I withdraw, not on myself will I rely. My strength, to Thee I will keep: because, O God, my lifter up Thou art. For where was I, and where am I? Whence hast Thou taken me up? What iniquities of mine hast Thou remitted? Where was I lying? To what have I been raised up? I ought to have remembered these things: because in another Psalm is said, 'For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken me unto Him.' My strength, to Thee I will keep: for, O God, my taker up Thou art.

19. Ver. 10. My God, the mercy of Him shall come before me. Behold what is, My strength, to Thee I will keep: on myself I will no ways at all rely. For what good thing have I brought, that thou shouldest have mercy on me, and shouldest justify me. What in me hast Thou found, save sins alone? Of Thine there is nothing else but the nature which Thou hast created; the other things are mine own evil things which Thou hast blotted out. I have not first risen up to Thee, but to awake me Thou hast come: for His mercy shall come before me. Before that any thing of good I shall do, His mercy shall come before me. What answer here shall the unhappy Pelagius make?

20. My God hath shewn to me among mine enemies. What saith he? How great mercy He hath put forth concerning me, among mine enemies He hath shewed. Let one gathered compare himself with men forsaken, and one elect with men rejected: let the vessel of mercy compare itself with the vessels of wrath; and let it see how out of one lump God hath made one vessel unto honour, another unto dishonour. What is, hath shewed to me among mine enemies? For so God, willing to shew wrath, and to manifest His power, hath brought in, in much patience, the vessels of wrath, which have been perfected unto perdition. And wherefore this? In order that He might make known His riches upon the vessels of mercy. If therefore vessels of wrath He hath brought in, wherein He might make known His riches upon the vessels of mercy, most rightly hath been said, His mercy shall come before me: My God hath shewed to me among mine enemies: that is, however great mercy He hath had concerning me, to me He hath shewed it among those men, concerning whom He hath not had mercy. For unless the debtor be in suspense, he is less grateful to him by whom the debt hath been forgiven. My God hath shewed to me among mine enemies.

21. Ver. 11. But of the enemies themselves what? Slay them not, lest sometime they forget Thy law. He is making request for his enemies, he is fulfilling the commandment. What is, Do not Thou have mercy upon all men that work iniquity; and, Slay them not, lest sometime they forget Thy law. In what manner hath He not mercy upon all men that work iniquity; and in what manner doth He not slay them? Lest they forget Thy law. But here of His enemies he is speaking. What then? Do His enemies work equity? If any that are enemies to Him work equity, then He doth Himself

work iniquity. But because He doth Himself work equity, and moreover He that worketh equity doth in fact suffer iniquity from enemies; it is evident that they that are enemies to a just man, do work iniquity. Whence therefore a little above, Have not Thou mercy upon all men that work iniquity; and now of his enemies, He saith, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law. 'Do not Thou,' therefore, 'have mercy on them,' that Thou mayest slay their sins. Slay not them of whom the sins Thou slayest. But what is it to be slain? To forget the law of the Lord. It is real death, to go into the pit of sin: this indeed may be also understood of the Jews. Why of the Jews, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law? Those very enemies of mine, that have slain me, do not Thou slay. Let the nation of the Jews remain: certes conquered it hath been by the Romans, certes effaced is the city of them, Jews are not admitted into their city, and yet Jews there are. For all those provinces by the Romans have been subjugated. Who now can distinguish the nations in the Roman empire the one from the other, in as much as all have become Romans and all are called Romans? The Jews nevertheless remain with a mark; nor in such sort conquered have they been, as that by the conquerors they have been swallowed up. Not without reason is there that Cain, on whom, when he had slain his brother, God set a mark in order that no one should slay him. This is the mark which the Jews have: they hold fast by the remnant of their law, they are circumcised, they keep Sabbaths, they sacrifice the Passover; they eat unleavened bread. These are therefore Jews, they have not been slain, they are necessary to believing nations. Why so? In order that He may shew to us among our enemies His mercy. My God hath shewn to me in mine enemies. He sheweth His mercy to the wild-olive grafted on branches that have been cut off because of pride. Behold where they lie, that were proud, behold where thou hast been grafted, that didst lie: and be not thou proud, lest thou shouldest deserve to be cut off. My God, slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law.

22. Ver. 11. Scatter them abroad in Thy virtue. Now this thing hath been done: throughout all nations there have been scattered abroad the Jews, witnesses of their own iniquity and our truth. They have themselves writings, out of which hath been prophesied Christ, and we hold Christ. And if sometime perchance any heathen man shall have doubted, when we have told him the prophecies of Christ, at the clearness whereof he is

amazed, and wondering hath supposed that they were written by ourselves, then out of the copies of the Jews we prove, how this thing so long time before had been foretold. See after what sort by means of our enemies we confound other enemies. Scatter them abroad in Thy virtue: take away from them ‘virtue,’ take away from them their strength. And bring them down, my protector, O Lord. (Ver. 12.) The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips: and let them be taken in their pride: and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations, in the anger of consummation, and they shall not be. Obscure words these are, and I fear lest they be not well instilled. Now ye are tired of hearing: therefore if it please your Love; what remaineth let us defer until to-morrow. The Lord will aid us to pay to you our debt: for on His part we promise rather than from ourselves.

SERMON II

on the second part of psalm 59.

1. Yesterday’s sermon, though protracted, hath left me a debtor against to-day; accordingly because the Lord hath willed, the time for paying hath come. But in proportion as we are earnest to repay, so ought ye to be covetous to require: that is, in such sort that what He giveth and we render, (for He is Lord, we are servants,) ye should so accept, as that there may be fruit through your hearing from your life. For a cultivated field, rendering no fruit, and ungrateful to the husbandman, instead of fruits bringing forth thorns, requireth not barn but fire. But the Lord our God, as ye see Him visit this earth with wonted rains, in like manner deigneth to visit with His Word our heart, as it were His field; and from our heart requireth fruits, because He knoweth both what there He soweth, and how much rain He giveth. And because in truth without Him we are nothing, because also before we were, we were nothing, and whosoever is now a man, and willeth to be without Him, will be nothing else but a sinful one: and that is true which here hath been said, My strength, to Thee will I keep: since whatever we can do, unless with Him and to Him we keep it, by withdrawing we lose: our mind ought alway to watch not from Him to withdraw, but rather if afar it was, more and more to approach and draw near; not with the step of the feet, not in the conveyance of carriages, not with the speed of

animals, not with the lifting up of wings, but with purity of affections, and the integrity of holy morals.

2. Let us see therefore what remaineth of this Psalm. For we had left off at the point, when he had begun to speak of his enemies, saying to God, (ver. 11.) Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law. Although he had called them his enemies, nevertheless he asked of God that He would not slay them, and that they should not forget His law. To hold the law however, that is, not to forget the law, is not at once perfection, and, as it were, security about recompense, and no anxiety about punishment. For there are they that hold the law in memory, and fulfil it not in life: but they that fulfil it in life, cannot but hold it in memory. Therefore he that in morals doeth the commandments of God, and in a manner by his living taketh pains that that be not wiped out which he holdeth in his heart, and by living calleth to his mind what in his heart hath been written of the law of God, the same doth fruitfully hold the law of God, he shall not be counted an enemy. For, behold, the Jews are enemies, whom this Psalm seemeth to imply; the law of God they hold, and therefore of them hath been said, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law: in order that the nation of Jews might remain, and by it remaining the number of Christians might increase. Throughout all nations they remain certainly, and Jews they are, nor have they ceased to be what they were: that is, this nation hath not so yielded to Roman institutions, as to have lost the form of Jews; but hath been subjected to the Romans so as that it still retaineth its own laws; which are the laws of God. But what in their case hath been done? Ye tithe mint and cummin, and have forsaken the weightier matters of the law, mercy, and judgment, straining a gnat, but swallowing a camel. This to them the Lord saith. And in truth so they are; they hold the law, hold the Prophets; read all things, sing all things: the Light of the Prophets therein they see not, which is Christ Jesus. Not only Him now they see not, when He is sitting in Heaven: but not even at that time saw they Him, when among them humble He was walking, and they were made guilty by shedding the blood of the Same; but not all. This even to day we commend to the notice of your Love. Not all: because many of them were turned to Him Whom they slew, and by believing on Him, they obtained pardon even for the shedding of His blood: and they have given an example for men; how they ought not to despair that

sin of whatsoever kind would be remitted to them, since even the killing of Christ was remitted to them confessing. Thence therefore hath been said, (ver. 9.) Because, O God, my taker up Thou art, my God, His mercy shall prevent me: that is, before any good deservings of mine, there preventeth me the mercy of the same; and if nothing in me of good He shall have found, He doth Himself make me good, and He doth Himself justify one converted, and doth Himself admonish that one averted should be converted. (Ver. 10.) My God, He saith again, hath shewn to me among mine enemies: that is, how much He loveth me, and how much on me He bestoweth of His goodness, by comparison of mine enemies to me He sheweth; because while out of one lump are the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy, through the vessels of wrath the vessels of mercy learn how much of good on them God doth bestow. And secondly, (ver. 11.) Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law: this hath been said of Jews. But what to them wilt Thou do? Scatter them abroad in Thy virtue. Shew to them, that Thou art strong, not themselves, who, by relying on their own virtue, have not known Thy truth: not such as those strong men are, of whom hath been said, There have rushed upon me strong men: but such as Thou art, strong to scatter them abroad. And bring them down, my protector, O Lord: that is, scatter them abroad, in such sort that Thou forsake them not, lest sometime they forget Thy law: and in that very thing protect me, so that in the scattering abroad of the same, I may have the evidence of Thy mercy.

3. And there followeth, (ver. 12.) The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. To what is joined, to what is connected this sentence? The transgressions, he saith, of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. The following words are not so connected as to teach us to what is joined this sentence. The transgressions, he saith, of their mouth, the discourse of their lips: and let them be taken in their pride, and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations, in anger of consummation, and they shall not be. This to be obscure even yesterday we had declared, and accordingly we had deferred the exposition for your minds when more fresh. Now then, since not yet fatigued ye are with hearing, lift up your hearts to assist me with attention, lest perchance on account of the seeming obscurity and perplexity thereof, our discourse may

not be sufficient to win your attention: and ye ought from yourselves also to contribute something, in order that what we have not filled up by our word, ye may supply by intelligence. Well then, this sentence hath been set in such wise in the middle, that we do not readily see to what it is joined: The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. Let us go back then to words higher up. Because he had said, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law, them to wit whom he had called enemies; he added two verses, scatter them abroad in Thy virtue, and bring them down, my protector, O Lord: and immediately he hath introduced, The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips, that is, slay this, not themselves. Therefore, slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law; but there is something in them for Thee to slay, in order that thou mayest fulfil that which above hath been said, Do not Thou have mercy on all men that work iniquity. Scatter them abroad therefore, and lead them down: that is, do not forsake, when Thou scatterest abroad; because in not forsaking thou hast something in them for Thee to do, though themselves Thou slayest not. What therefore wilt Thou slay? The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. What in them wilt Thou slay? The Crucify, Crucify, which they cried out, not them that cried out. For they willed to blot out, cut off, destroy Christ: but Thou, by raising to life Christ, Whom they willed to destroy, dost slay the transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. For in that He whom they cried out should be destroyed, liveth, they are taken with dread: and that He whom on earth they despised, in heaven is adored by all nations, they wonder: thus are there slain the transgressions of them, and the discourse of their lips.

4. And let them be taken in their pride. What is, let them be taken in their pride? Because to no purpose have strong men rushed on, and it hath fallen out to them as it were to think themselves to have done somewhat, and they have prevailed against the Lord. They were able to crucify a man, weakness might prevail and virtue be slain; and they thought themselves somewhat, as it were strong men, as it were mighty men, as it were prevailing, as it were a lion prepared for prey, as it were fat bulls, as of them in another place he maketh mention: Fat bulls have beset me. But what have they done in the case of Christ? Not life, but death they have slain. That is, death in Him dying having been effaced, and life rising again from death in Him

living—for He did even of Himself raise again Himself to life—because there was in Him even that which could not die, they have done what? Hear what they have done: they pulled down the Temple. But Himself did what? In three days He raised to life again the same. By this means, therefore, were slain the transgressions of their mouth, and the discourse of their lips. And what now hath come to pass in those men that have been converted? And let them be taken in their pride. For it was told to them, that He Whom they slew rose again. They believed Him to have risen again, because they saw that He, being in Heaven, thence sent the Holy Spirit, and filled those that on Him believed; and they found themselves to have condemned nought, and to have done nought. Their doing issued in emptiness, the sin remained. Because therefore the doing was made void, but the sin remained upon the doers; they were taken in their pride, they saw themselves under their iniquity. It remained therefore for them to confess the sin, and for Him to pardon, That had given Himself up to sinners, and to forgive His death, having been slain by men dead, and making alive men dead. They were taken therefore in their pride.

5. And out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations, in anger of consummation, and they shall not be. This too with difficulty is understood, to what is joined the and they shall not be. What shall they not be? Let us therefore examine the context above: when they shall have been taken in their pride, there shall be declared out of cursing and lying consummations. What are consummations? Perfections: for to be consummated, is to be perfected. One thing it is to be consummated, another thing to be consumed. For a thing is consummated which is so finished as that it is perfected: a thing is consumed, which is so finished that it is not. Pride would not suffer a man to be perfected, nothing so much hindereth perfection. For let your Love attend a little to what I am saying; and see an evil very pernicious, very much to be guarded against. What sort of evil do ye think it is? How long could I enlarge upon how much evil there is in pride? The devil on that account alone is to be punished. Certes he is the chief of all sinners: certes he is the tempter to sin: to him is not ascribed adultery, not wine-bibbing, not fornication, not the robbing of others' goods: by pride alone he fell. And since pride's companion is envy, it must needs be that a proud man should envy: because of this vice, which

doth necessarily follow pride, having fallen he also envied him that stood, and was at pains to lead man astray, lest he should be exalted to that place whence himself had been cast down. And therefore he earnestly endeavours to allure us to real sins, because we have a Judge of such sort as that before Him he cannot lay to our charge unreal sins. For if before a human judge our cause were to be pleaded, whom he might beguile with false accusations, he would not have to busy much in order to make us to sin: because by beguiling the judge he might both oppress the innocent, and bring over to himself them when overreached by him, and make them to be condemned together with himself; but now because he knoweth of such a Judge as cannot be deceived, and because he knoweth that He is just, and cannot accept persons; he desireth to bring before Him persons so guilty, as that it must needs be that He condemn them, because Just He is. He is therefore at pains to make us sin, of mere envy, which envy must needs accompany pride. Such an evil then is pride, which doth hinder perfection. If therefore a man vaunt himself of riches, vaunt himself of the beauty and of the powers of his body; all these things are but mortal: they are to be laughed at that vaunt themselves of things mortal, by which things oftentimes either while living they are forsaken, or when dead they must needs forsake them: it is a capital sin, when a man hath well advanced, that with pride he is tempted, so as to lose all wherein he made progress. In a word, all vices in evil-doings are to be feared, pride in well-doings is more to be feared. It is no wonder then, that so humble is the Apostle, as to say, When I am made weak, then I am strong. For lest he should himself be tempted by this sin, what sort of medicine doth he say was applied to him against swelling by the Physician, who knew what He was healing? Lest by the greatness, he saith, of the revelations I should be exalted, there was given to me a thorn of my flesh, the angel of Satan, to buffet me: wherefore thrice the Lord I besought, that it should depart from me: and He said to me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for virtue in weakness is made perfect. See what the consummations are. An Apostle, the teacher of Gentiles, father of the faithful through the Gospel, received a thorn of the flesh whereby he might be buffeted. Which of us would dare to say this, unless he had not been ashamed to confess this? For if we shall have said that Paul had not suffered this; while to him as it were honour we give, a liar we make him. But because truthful he is, and truth he hath spoken; it behoveth us to believe

that there was given to him an angel of Satan, lest by the greatness of the revelations he should be exalted. Behold how much to be feared is the serpent of pride. What therefore hath been done to those men? In their sin they have been taken, for that they slew Christ, and by the very greatness of the sin they were the more humbled, and in their greater humility they merited to be raised up: this is, Let them be taken in their pride. And out of cursing and lying there shall be declared consummations: that is, for this reason they shall be made the more perfect, because in cursing and lying they have been overtaken. For pride did not allow them to be made perfect; evil-doing took away pride through their confession, pardon effaced evil-doing through the mercy of God, and out of cursing and lying there were declared consummations; that is, it hath been said to man, thou hast seen what thou art, thou hast felt what thou art, thou hast strayed, made blind thou hast been, thou hast sinned and hast fallen, thou hast acknowledged thy weakness, beseech the Physician, do not think thyself whole; where is thy phrenzy? Behold the Physician thou hast slain, Whom by slaying thou couldest not destroy; nevertheless, as much as in thee lay, thou hast slain; Out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations. Ye have done what belonged to cursing, O Jews: for cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Ye have crucified Christ, as though accursed ye have deemed Him. Add to cursing lying: guards at the sepulchre ye placed: in order that they might lie, ye gave money. Behold, Christ hath risen again: where is the curse of the Cross which ye have made? where is the lying of the guards whom ye have bribed?

6. Ver. 12. Out of cursing and lying shall be declared (ver. 13.) consummations in the anger of consummation, and they shall not be. What is, in the anger of consummation shall be declared consummations? There is an anger of consummation, and there is an anger of consuming. For every vengeance of God is called anger: sometimes God avengeth, to the end that He may make perfect; sometimes He avengeth, to the end that He may condemn. How doth He avenge, to the end that He may make perfect? He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. How doth He avenge, to the end that He may condemn? When He shall have set ungodly men on the left hand, and shall have said to them, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. This is the anger of consuming, not

that of consummation. But there shall be declared consummations in the anger of consummation; it shall be preached by the Apostles, that where sin hath abounded, grace shall much more abound, and the weakness of man hath belonged to the healing of humility. Those men thinking of this, and finding out and confessing their iniquities, shall not be. 'Shall not be' what? In their pride. For above he had said, Let them be taken in their pride, and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations in the anger of consummation, and they shall not be, to wit in their pride, wherein they have been taken.

7. And they shall know how God shall have dominion of Jacob, and of the ends of the earth. For before they thought themselves just men, because the Jewish nation had received the Law, because it had kept the commandments of God: it is proved to them that it hath not kept them, since in the very commandments of God Christ it perceived not, because blindness in part has happened to Israel. Even the Jews themselves see that they ought not to despise the Gentiles, of whom they deemed as of dogs and sinners. For just as alike they have been found in iniquity, so alike they will attain unto salvation. Not only to Jews, saith the Apostle, but also even to Gentiles. For to this end the Stone which the builders set at nought, hath even been made for the Head of the corner, in order that two in Itself It might join: for a corner doth unite two walls. The Jews thought themselves exalted and great: of the Gentiles they thought as weak, as sinners, as the servants of demons, as the worshippers of idols, and yet in both was there iniquity. Even the Jews have been proved sinners; because there is none that doeth good, there is not even so much as one: they have laid down their pride, and have not envied the salvation of the Gentiles, because they have known their own and their weakness to be alike: and in the Corner Stone being united, they have together worshipped the Lord. And they shall know that God shall have dominion of Jacob, and of the ends of the earth. Not only of Jews He shall have dominion, but also of the earth: which thing they had not known, if they had continued in their pride; but in their pride they would be, if they still thought themselves righteous: but in order that they should not think themselves righteous, there were 'preached to them out of cursing and lying consummations in anger of consummation;' because they were taken in their pride, out of the curse which they made when Christ

they slew. Behold what our Lord Jesus Christ hath done. He hath died at the hands of the Jews, and hath redeemed the multitude of the Gentiles: here was shed the blood, there it profited; but it hath profited all men that have been converted; because even they have acknowledged Him Whom they slew, and through Him for that very slaying, and for their great sin, they have obtained pardon.

8. What now then of the men themselves? The thing which hath been spoken of above: (ver. 14.) They shall be converted at evening: that is, even if late, that is, after the slaying of our Lord Jesus Christ: They shall be converted at evening: and hereafter they shall suffer hunger as dogs. But as dogs, not as sheep, or calves: as dogs, as Gentiles, as sinners; because they too have known their sin that thought themselves righteous. Of those of whom hath been said in another Psalm, After this they made haste: the same hath been said herein, at evening. For in that place it is thus: Multiplied were the weaknesses of them, after this they made haste. Whence have they made haste after this? Because multiplied were the weaknesses of them: for if still they thought themselves whole, they never would have made haste. The thing which therefore hath been implied in, ‘multiplied were the weaknesses of them:’ the same hath been said here, Let them be taken in their pride, and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations in the anger of consummation. And that which there hath been said in, after this they made haste: the same hath been said here, And they shall not be, in their pride. And they shall know that God shall have dominion of Jacob, and of the ends of the world: and they shall be converted at evening. It is a good thing therefore for a sinner to be humbled; and no one is more incurable than he that thinketh himself whole. And they shall go around the city. Already, to wit yesterday, we have explained city; it is the ‘city of standing round;’ all nations.

9. Ver. 15. They shall be scattered abroad in order that they may eat; that is, in order that they may gain others, in order that into their Body they may change believers. But if they shall not be filled, they shall murmur. Because above also he had spoken of the murmur of them, saying, For who hath heard? And Thou, O Lord, he saith, shalt deride them, saying, Who hath

heard? Wherefore? Because, as nothing Thou shalt count all nations. So also here, But if they shall not be filled, they shall murmur.

10. Let the Psalm be concluded. See ye the Corner exulting, now with both walls rejoicing. The Jews were proud, humbled they have been; Gentiles were despairing, raised up they have been: let them come to the Corner, there let them meet, there run together, there find the kiss of peace; from different parts let them come, but with differing not come, those of Circumcision, these of uncircumcision. Far apart were the walls, but before that to the Corner they came: but in the Corner let them hold themselves, and now let the whole Church from both walls, say what? (ver. 16.) But I will sing of Thy power, and I will exult in the morning of Thy mercy. In the morning when temptations have been overcome, in the morning when the night of this world shall have passed away; in the morning when no longer the lyings in wait of robbers and of the devil and of his angels we dread, in the morning when no longer by the lamp of prophecy we walk, but Himself the Word of God as it were a Sun we contemplate. And I will exult in the morning of Thy mercy. With reason in another Psalm is said, In the morning I will stand by Thee, and I will meditate. With reason also of the Lord Himself the Resurrection was at dawn, that there should be fulfilled that which hath been said in another Psalm, In the evening shall tarry weeping, and in the morning exultation. For at even the disciples mourned our Lord Jesus Christ as dead, at dawn at Him rising again they exulted. I will exult in the morning of Thy mercy.

11. For Thou hast become my taker up, and my refuge in the day of my tribulation. (Ver. 17.) My Helper, to Thee I will play, because Thou, O God, art my taker up. What was I, unless Thou didst succour? How much despaired of was I, unless Thou didst heal? Where was I lying, unless Thou didst come to me? Certes with a huge wound I was endangered, but that wound of mine did call for an Almighty Physician. To an Almighty Physician nothing is incurable. He taketh not leave of any one: it is needful that thou shouldest wish to be healed, it is needful that from His hands thou flee not. But even if thou wouldest not be healed, He admonisheth of thy wound that thou mayest be healed: and calleth thee back when turned away, and when fleeing as it were compelleth thee, and enticeth thee to return to

Himself. In all things He fulfilleth that which hath been said, His mercy shall prevent me. Think of that which hath been said, shall prevent me. If any thing of thine thou hast first brought, and by any good thing of thine hast merited the mercy of God, then He hath not prevented thee. But when dost thou even perceive that prevented thou hast been, except thou perceive that which the Apostle saith, For what hast thou, which thou hast not received. But if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as though thou hast not received? That is, His mercy shall prevent me. Lastly, thinking of all good things whatsoever we may have, either in nature or in purpose, or in conversion itself, in faith, in hope, in charity, in good morals, in justice, in fear of God; all these to be only by His gifts, he hath thus concluded: My God is my mercy. He being filled with the good things of God hath not found what he might call his God, save his mercy. O name, under which no one must despair! My God, he saith, is my mercy. What is, my mercy? If thou say, my salvation, I perceive that He giveth salvation; if thou say, my refuge, I perceive that thou takest refuge in Him; if thou say, my strength, I perceive that He giveth to thee strength: my mercy, is what? All that I am is of Thy mercy. But have I merited of Thee, by calling upon Thee? That I should be, what have I done? That I should be one to call upon Thee, what have I performed? For if I have done any thing that I should be, then I was, before I was. Moreover if nothing I was before I was, no wise I have deserved of Thee, that I should be. Thou hast caused that I should be, and hast Thou not caused that good I should be? Thou hast granted to me to be, and could any one else grant to me that good I should be? If Thou to me hast granted that I should be, and another to me hath granted that good I should be; better is he that to me hath granted that good I should be, than He that to me hath granted that I should be. Moreover because than Thou no one is better, no one than Thou more mighty, no one than Thou in mercy more abundant; from Whom I have received that I should be, from the Same I have received that good I should be. My God is my mercy.

PSALM 60

Exposition

Sermon preached to the people a little while after the exposition of the former Psalm.

1. The title of this Psalm is somewhat long: but let it not frighten us, because the Psalm is short. As though therefore we had heard a somewhat longer Psalm, thus let us attend thereto: forasmuch as to men fed and to be fed in the name of Christ we are speaking in the Church of God; and to men not aliens to the savour of those writings whereto the world is alien, these things ought not alway to be new. For if those things which very often ye have heard, with pleasantness in the mouth of thought ye have ruminated, and have not in forgetfulness as though in belly buried them; that very same recollection and memory of yours will be able to aid us much, that we may not speak much for the purpose of explaining, to persons as if uneducated, those things which we know that you know already. Certainly we remember that you oftentimes have heard the thing which we are speaking of. Scarce is it possible in the Psalms to find any voices, but those of Christ and the Church, or of Christ only, or of the Church only, which truly in part we also are. And for this cause whenever we recognise our voices, without emotion recognise them we cannot; and by so much the more we are delighted, in proportion as in the same ourselves we feel to be. David the king was one man, but not one man he figured; sometimes to wit he figured the Church of many men consisting, extended even unto the ends of the earth: but sometimes One Man he figured, Him he figured that is Mediator of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. In this Psalm therefore, or rather in this Psalm's title, certain victorious actions of David are spoken of, how he had done mightily in defeating certain enemies, and in making them tributaries; when after the death of Saul his persecutor, he received his kingdom openly over Israel. For even before that he was suffering persecution, a king he

was, but to God alone he was known. Afterwards therefore the kingdom having been made known, and visibly and notably received, he defeated those that in this title are mentioned; and the title of the Psalm is set down as followeth: To the end, in behalf of those men that shall be changed unto the title's inscription, unto teaching for David himself, when he burned up Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal, and turned Joab, and smote Edom, in the valley of salt-pits twelve thousand. We read of these things in the books of the Reigns, that all those persons whom he hath named, were defeated by David, that is, Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal, Joab, Edom. These things were done, and just as they were done, so there they have been written, so they are read: let him read that will. Nevertheless, as the Prophetic Spirit in the Psalms' titles is wont to depart somewhat from the expression of things done, and to say something which in history is not found, and hence rather to admonish us that titles of this kind have been written not that we may know things done, but that things future may be prefigured; just as it was said that in the presence of Abimelech he 'changed his countenance, and let him go, and he departed;' whereas the Scripture of the Reigns sheweth that he did this thing not in the presence of Abimelech, but in the presence of king Achish: so also in this title we find something whereby we are advised of some other thing. For in that narrative of wars and mighty deeds of king David, where all these nations, of whom we have made mention, were defeated, that he burned up any place we read not. But here this thing is inserted for this especial reason, that there it is not written that he burned up Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal. But now let us begin to examine these things after the significations of things future, and to bring out the dimness of shadows into the light of the word.

2. What is to the end ye know. For the end of the law is Christ. Those that are changed ye know. For who but they that from old life into new do pass? For far be it that here a blameable change should be understood. It is not like that whereby Adam was changed from righteousness to iniquity, and from delights to toil: but as they are changed to whom hath been said, For ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. But they are changed into the title's inscription. Ye know the title's inscription: a title was fixed upon the Cross of the Lord written, This is the King of the Jews: they are changed into this title's inscription, who into the kingdom of Christ do pass

over from the kingdom of the devil. It is well that they are changed unto this title's inscription. But they are changed, as followeth, unto teaching. For when he had said, In behalf of those that shall be changed unto the title's inscription: he added, for David himself unto teaching: that is, are changed not for themselves, but for David himself, and are changed unto teaching. For Christ is not King in such sort, as if in the world He were to reign; inasmuch as openly He said, My kingdom is not of this world. Therefore into His teaching let us pass over, if unto the writing of the title we would be changed, not for ourselves, but for David himself: so that they which live, no longer unto themselves may live, but unto Him That for them hath died and hath risen again. When therefore would Christ have changed us, unless He had done that which He spake of, Fire I have come to send into the world? If therefore Christ came to send into the world fire, to wit to its health and profit, we must inquire not how He is to send the world into fire, but how into the world fire. Inasmuch as therefore He came to send fire into the world, let us inquire what is Mesopotamia which was burned up, what is Syria Sobal? The interpretations therefore of the names let us examine according to the Hebrew language, wherein first this Scripture was written. Mesopotamia they say is interpreted, exalted calling. Now the whole world by calling hath been exalted, Syria is interpreted lofty. But she which was lofty, burned up hath been and humbled. Sobal is interpreted empty antiquity. Thanks to Christ that hath burned her. Whenever old bushes are burned up, green places succeed; and more speedily and more plentifully, and more fully green, fresh ones spring out, when fire hath gone before them to the burning up of the old. Let not therefore the fire of Christ be feared, hay it consumeth. For all flesh is hay, and all the glory of man as flower of hay. He burneth up therefore those things with that fire. And turned Joab. Joab is interpreted enemy. There was turned an enemy, as thou wilt understand it. If turned unto flight, the devil it is: if converted to the faith, a Christian it is. How unto flight? From the heart of a Christian: The Prince of this world, He saith, now hath been cast out. But how can a Christian turned to the Lord be an enemy turned? Because he hath become a believer that had been an enemy. Smote Edom. Edom is interpreted earthly. That earthly one ought to be smitten. For why should one live earthly, that ought to live heavenly? There hath been slain therefore life earthly, let there live life heavenly. For as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear

also the image of Him that is from Heaven. See it slain: Mortify your members which are upon earth. But when he had smitten Edom, he smote twelve thousand in the valley of salt-pits. Twelve thousand is a perfect number, to which perfect number also the number of the twelve Apostles is ascribed: for not to no purpose is it, but because through the whole world was to be sent the Word. But the Word of God, which is Christ, is in clouds, that is, in the preachers of truth. But the world of four parts doth consist. The four parts thereof are exceeding well known to all, and often in the Scriptures they are mentioned: they are the same as the names of the four winds, East, West, North, and South. To all these four parts was sent the Word, so that in the Trinity all might be called. The number twelve four times three do make. With reason therefore twelve thousand earthly things were smitten, the whole world was smitten: for from the whole world was chosen out the Church, mortified from earthly life. Why in the valley of salt-pits? A valley is humility: salt-pits signify savour. For many men are humbled, but emptily and foolishly, in empty oldness they are humbled. One suffereth tribulation for money, suffereth tribulation for temporal honour, suffereth tribulation for the comforts of this life; he is to suffer tribulation and to be humbled: why not for the sake of God? why not for the sake of Christ? why not for the savour of salt? Knowest thou not that to thee hath been said, Ye are the salt of earth, and, If the salt shall have been spoiled, for no other thing will it be of use, but to be cast out? A good thing it is therefore wisely to be humbled. Behold now are not heretics being humbled? Have not laws been made even by men to condemn them, against whom divine laws do reign, which even before had condemned them? Behold they are humbled, behold they are put to flight, behold persecution they suffer, but without savour; for folly, for emptiness. For now the salt hath been spoiled: therefore it hath been cast out, to be trodden down of men. We have heard the title of the Psalm, let us hear also the words of the Psalm.

3. Ver. 1. God, Thou hast driven us back, and hast destroyed us. Is that David speaking that smote, that burned up, that defeated, and not they to whom He did these things, that is to say, their being smitten and driven back, that were evil men, and again their being made alive and returning in order that they might be good men? That destruction indeed That David

made, strong of hand, our Christ, whose figure that man was bearing; He did those things, He made this destruction with His sword and with His fire: for both He brought into this world. Both Fire I am come to send into the world, thou hast in the Gospel: and, A sword I have come to send into the earth, thou hast in the Gospel. He brought in fire, whereby might be burned up Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal: He brought in a sword whereby might be smitten Edom. Now again this destruction was made for the sake of 'those that are changed unto the title's inscription.' Hear we therefore the voice of them: to their health smitten they were, being raised up let them speak. Let them say, therefore, that are changed into something better, changed unto the title's inscription, changed unto teaching for David himself; let them say, God, Thou hast driven us back, and hast destroyed us: angry Thou hast been, and hast had mercy on us. Thou hast destroyed us, in order that Thou mightest build us; Thou hast destroyed us that were ill builded, hast destroyed empty oldness; in order that there may be a building unto a new man, building to abide for everlasting. Deservedly angry Thou hast been, Thou hast had mercy on us. Thou wouldest not have had mercy, unless Thou hadst been angry. Thou hast destroyed us in Thy anger: but Thy anger against our oldness hath been, in order that the oldness might be destroyed. But Thou hast had mercy upon us because of newness, because of those that are changed unto the title's inscription: because even if our outward man is wasted, yet our inward man is renewed from day to day.

4. Ver. 2. Thou hast moved the earth, and hast troubled it. How hath the earth been troubled? In the conscience of sinners. Whither go we? whither flee we, when this sword hath been brandished, 'Do penance, for near hath drawn the kingdom of Heaven?' Thou hast moved the earth, and hast troubled it. Heal the crushings thereof, for moved it hath been. Unworthy it is to be healed, if moved it hath not been: but thou speakest, preachest, threatenest us with God, of coming judgment holdest not thy peace, of the commandment of God thou warnest, from these things thou abstainest not; and he that heareth, if he feareth not, if he is not moved, is not worthy to be healed, Another heareth, is moved, is stung, smiteth the breast, sheddeth tears: Heal the crushings thereof, for moved it is.

5. After these things, the earthly one smitten, oldness burned up, man changed into something better, those made light that were darkness, there followeth that which elsewhere hath been written, My son, drawing near to the service of God, stand in righteousness and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation. The first labour is, that thou shouldest be displeasing to thyself, that sins thou shouldest battle out, that thou shouldest be changed into something better: the second labour, in return for thy having been changed, is to bear the tribulations and temptations of this world, and amid them to hold on even unto the end. Of these things therefore when he was speaking, while pointing out such things, he addeth what? (Ver. 3.) Thou hast shewn to Thy people hard things: to Thy people now, made tributary after the victory of David. Thou hast shewn to Thy people hard things. Wherein? In persecutions which the Church of Christ hath endured, when so much blood of martyrs was spilled. Thou hast shewn to Thy people hard things. Thou hast given us to drink of the wine of goading. Of goading is what? Not of killing. For it was not a killing that destroyeth, but a medicine that smarteth. Thou hast given us to drink of the wine of goading.

6. Wherefore this? (Ver. 4.) Thou hast given to men fearing Thee, a sign that they should flee from the face of the bow. Through tribulations temporal, he saith, Thou hast signified to Thine own to flee from the wrath of fire everlasting. For, saith the Apostle Peter, Time it is that Judgment begin with the House of God. And exhorting the Martyrs to endurance, when the world should rage, when slaughters should be made at the hands of persecutors, when far and wide blood of believers should be spilled, when in chains, in prisons, in tortures, many hard things Christians should suffer, in these hard things, I say, lest they should faint, Peter saith to them, Time it is that Judgment begin with the House of God; and if a beginning there be with us, what sort of end shall be to them that believe not the Gospel of God? and if a just man scarce shall be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly man appear? What therefore is to be in the Judgment? The bow is bended, still in menacing posture it is, not yet in aiming. And see what there is in the bow: is there not an arrow to be shot forward? The string however is stretched back in a contrary direction to that in which it is to be shot; and the more the stretching thereof hath gone backward, with the greater swiftness it starteth forward. What is it that I

have said? The more the Judgment is deferred, with so much the greater swiftness it is to come. Therefore even for temporal tribulations to God let us render thanks, because He hath given to His people a sign, that they should flee from the face of the bow: in order that His faithful ones having been exercised in tribulations temporal, may be worthy to avoid the condemnation of fire everlasting, which is to find out all them that do not believe these things. Thou hast given to men fearing Thee a sign that they should flee from the face of the bow.

7. Ver. 5. That Thy beloved may be delivered: save me with Thy right hand, and hearken unto me. With Thy right hand save me, Lord: so save me as that at the right hand I may stand. Save me with Thy right hand: not any safety temporal I require, in this matter Thy Will be done. For a time what is good for us we are utterly ignorant: for ‘what we should pray for as we ought we know not:’ but save me with Thy right hand, so that even if in this time I suffer sundry tribulations, when the night of all tribulations hath been spent, on the right hand I may be found among the sheep, not on the left hand among the goats. Save me with Thy right hand, and hearken unto me. Because now I am deserving that which Thou art willing to give; not ‘with the words of my transgressions’ I am crying through the day, so that Thou hearken not, and ‘in the night so that Thou hearken not, and that not for folly to me,’ but truly for my warning, by adding savour from the valley of salt-pits, so that in tribulation I may know what to ask: but I ask life everlasting; therefore hearken unto me, because Thy right hand I ask. Let therefore Your Love understand, how every faithful man having in heart the Word of God with fear, fearing Judgment to come, living commendably, so that because of him the holy name of his Lord be not evil spoken of, imploreth many things after the world’s way and is not hearkened unto; but for life everlasting always is hearkened unto. For what man would not ask for health, when he is sick? And yet perchance to be sick is good for him. It may be that on this point thou art not hearkened to: nevertheless, thou art not hearkened to at thy desire, in order that thou mayest be hearkened to for thy profit. But truly when this thing thou askest, that God should give to thee life everlasting, that God should give to thee the kingdom of Heaven, that He should give to thee at the right hand of His Son to stand, when He shall have come to judge the earth, without care be thou, thou shalt receive,

if now thou receivest not: for not yet hath come the time that thou shouldest receive. Thou art hearkened unto and knowest not: what thou askest is doing, even if thou knowest not wherein it is doing. In the root the thing is, not yet in fruit. Save me with Thy right hand, and hearken unto me.

8. Ver. 6. God hath spoken in His Holy One. Why fearest thou that there come not to pass that which God hath spoken? If thou shouldest have any friend stern and wise, how wouldest thou say? He hath spoken these things, there must needs come to pass that which he hath spoken: the man is stern, no levity he useth, not easily from his resolution is he moved aside, that which he hath promised is stedfast. But nevertheless a human being he is, that sometimes willeth to do that which he hath promised, and is not able. Of God there is not any thing that thou mayest fear; that truthful He is, is certain; that Almighty He is, is certain; to deceive thee He is not able, He hath means whence He may perform. Why then fearest thou lest thou be beguiled? It is needful that thou beguile not thine own self, and that thou persevere even unto the end, when He is to give that which He hath promised. God hath spoken in His Holy One. In what Holy One of His? God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. In that Holy One, of whom elsewhere ye have heard, "O God, in the Holy One is Thy way." God hath spoken in His Holy One. I will rejoice and will divide Sichima. Because God hath spoken this thing, it will be done: the voice of the Church is, God hath spoken in His Holy One; she saith not the words which God hath spoken, but because God hath spoken in His Holy One; nor can there be done any thing, except after the manner that God hath spoken; in consequence those things come forth: I will rejoice, and I will divide Sichima, and the valley of tabernacles I will measure out. Sichima is interpreted shoulders. But according to history, Jacob returning from Laban his father in law with all his kindred, hid the idols in Sichima which he had from Syria, where for a long time he had dwelled, and at length was coming from thence. But tabernacles he made there because of his sheep and herds, and called the place Tabernacles. And these I will divide, saith the Church. What is this, I will divide Sichima? If to the story where the idols were hidden is the reference, the Gentiles it signifieth; I divide the Gentiles. I divide, is what? For not in all men is there faith. I divide, is what? Some will believe, others will not believe: but nevertheless let them not fear that

believe, among them that believe not. For divided they are even now in faith, hereafter there shall be divided in the Judgment, sheep on the right hand, goats on the left. Behold we find in what manner the Church divideth Sichima. How doth it divide the shoulders, according to the interpretation of the name? The shoulders are divided, in order that their sins may burthen some men, while others may take up the burden of Christ. For godly shoulders He was requiring when He said, For My yoke is gentle, and My burden is light. Another burden oppresseth and loadeth thee, but Christ's burden relieveth thee: another burden hath weight, Christ's burden hath wings. For even if thou pull off the wings from a bird, thou dost remove a kind of weight; and the more weight thou hast taken away, the more on earth it will abide. She that thou hast chosen to disburden lieth there: she flieth not, because thou hast taken off a weight: let there be given back the weight, and she flieth. Such is Christ's burden: let men carry it, and not be idle: let them not be heeded that will not bear it; let them bear it that will, and they shall find how light it is, how sweet, how pleasant, how ravishing unto Heaven, and from earth how transporting: I will divide Sichima, and the valley of tabernacles I will measure out. Perchance because of the sheep of Jacob, the valley of tabernacles is to be understood of the nation of the Jews, and the same is divided: for they have passed from thence that have believed, the rest have remained without.

9. Ver. 7. Mine is Galaad. These names are read in the Scriptures of God. Galaad hath the voice of an interpretation of its own and of a great Mystery: for it is interpreted the heap of testimony. How great a heap of testimony in the Martyrs? Mine is Galaad, mine is a heap of testimony, mine are the true Martyrs. Let others die for their ancient emptiness saltless, do they belong to the heap of testimony? For even if I shall have given up my body so that I be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. But when in a certain place the Lord was admonishing of keeping peace, He put salt before: Have, He saith, in yourselves salt, and peace have ye among yourselves. Therefore, mine is Galaad; but Galaad, that is, a heap of witness, in great tribulation evidently hath been made. Then meanly esteemed was the Church among men, then reproach on Her a Widow was being thrown, because Christ's She was, because the sign of the Cross on her brow She was wearing: not yet was there honour, censure there was

then: when therefore not honour, but censure there was, then was made a heap of witness; and through the heap of witness was the Love of Christ enlarged; and through the enlargement of the Love of Christ, were the Gentiles possessed. There followeth, And mine is Manasses; which is interpreted forgotten. For to Her had been said, Confusion for everlasting Thou shalt forget, and of the reproach of Thy widowhood Thou shalt not be mindful. There was therefore a confusion of the Church once, which now hath been forgotten: for of Her confusion and of the reproach of Her widowhood now She is not mindful. For when there was a sort of confusion among men, a heap of witness was made. Now no longer doth any even remember that confusion, when it was a reproach to be a Christian, now no one remembereth, now all have forgotten, now Mine is Manasses, and Ephraim the strength of My head. Ephraim is interpreted fruitfulness. Mine, he saith, is fruitfulness, and this fruitfulness is the strength of My Head. For My Head is Christ. And whence is fruitfulness the strength of Him? Because unless a grain were to fall into the earth, it would not be multiplied, alone it would remain. Fall then to earth did Christ in His Passion, and there followed fruit-bearing in the Resurrection. And Ephraim is the strength of My Head. He was hanging and was being despised: the grain was within, it had powers to draw after it all things. How in a grain do numbers of seeds lie hid, something abject it appeareth to the eyes, but a power turning into itself matter and bringing forth fruit is hidden; so in Christ's Cross virtue was hidden, there appeared weakness. O mighty grain! Doubtless weak is He that hangeth, Doubtless before Him that people did wag the head, Doubtless they said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Hear the strength of Him: that which is a weak thing of God, is stronger than men. With reason so great fruitfulness hath followed: it is mine, saith the Church.

10. Ver. 7. Juda is my king: Moab the pot of my hope. 'Juda is my king:' what Juda? He that is of the tribe of Juda. What Juda, but He to whom Jacob himself said, 'Juda, thy brethren shall praise thee,' Juda is my king. What therefore should I fear, when Juda my king saith, 'Fear not them that kill the body?' Juda is my king: Moab the pot of my hope. Wherefore pot? Because tribulation. Wherefore of my hope? Because there hath gone before Juda my king. For where He hath gone before, why fearest thou to

follow? Where hath He gone before? Through tribulations, through straits, through reproaches. Fenced was the way, but only before He passed along: now that He hath passed along, follow, now the way is open by His passing along. Single I am, He saith, but until that I pass along: single is the grain, but until it pass along: when it hath passed along, there will follow fruitfulness. Juda is my king. Therefore because Juda is my king: Moab is the pot of my hope. Moab is perceived in the Gentiles. For that nation was born of sin, that nation was born of the daughters of Lot, who lay with their father drunken, abusing a father. Better were it to have remained barren, than thus to have become mothers. But this was a kind of figure of them that abuse the law. For do not heed that law in the Latin language is of the feminine gender: in Greek of the masculine gender it is: but whether it be of the feminine gender in speaking, or of the masculine, the expression maketh no difference to the truth. For law hath rather a masculine force, because it ruleth, is not ruled. But moreover, the Apostle Paul saith what? Good is the law, if any one use it lawfully. But those daughters of Lot unlawfully used their father. But in the same manner as good works begin to grow when a man useth well the law: so arise evil works, when a man ill useth the law. Furthermore, they ill using their father, that is, ill using the law, engendered the Moabites, by whom are signified evil works. Thence the tribulation of the Church, thence the pot boiling up. Of this pot in a certain place of prophecy is said, A pot heated by the North wind. Whence but by the quarters of the devil, who hath said, I will set my seat at the North? The chiefest tribulations therefore arise against the Church from none except from those that ill use the law. What then? Is the Church hence to fall off: and because of a pot, that is, abundance of offences, will She not persevere even unto the end? Hath not Juda Her King foretold this unto Her! Doth He not say to Her, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall grow cold? With boiling pot love groweth cold. Wherefore the rather dost not thou, O love, against the pot grow warm? Art thou ignorant that to thee hath been said, when of that abundance of offences Thy King was speaking, He that shall have persevered unto the end, the same shall be saved? Persevere therefore even unto the end against the pot of offences. The pot of iniquity is hot, but mightier is the flame of love. Be not conquered, but persevere even unto the end. Why fearest thou the Moabites, the evil works of them that ill use the law? For why? Did not Juda thy king, that hath gone before,

endure such men? Knowest thou not that the Jews by ill using the law slew Christ? Therefore hope thou; and where thy king hath gone before, follow. Say, Juda is my king. And for that Juda is my king, Moab hath been made what? The pot of my hope, not of my consuming. See in tribulations the pot of hope, hear the Apostle: But also we glory, he saith, in tribulation. The pot there is already, but attend to this man, and see whether he explaineth the pot of hope. Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, but patience probation, probation hope. If tribulation patience, patience probation, probation hope, and the pot is the tribulation which worketh hope: with good reason, 'Moab is the pot of my hope.' 'But hope confoundeth not.' And why? Dost thou boil against the pot? Yea evidently, For the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given unto us.

11. Ver. 8. Into Idumæa I will stretch out my shoe. The Church speaketh, I will come through even unto Idumæa. Let tribulations rage, let the world boil with offences, I will stretch out my shoe even unto Idumæa, even unto those very persons, that lead an earthly life, (for Idumæa is interpreted earthly,) even unto these same, even unto Idumæa, I will stretch out my shoe. Of what thing the shoe except of the Gospel? How beautiful the feet of them that tell of peace, that tell of good things, and the feet shod unto the preparation of the Gospel of peace. In a word, since tribulation worketh patience, but patience probation, probation hope, the pot shall not consume me: for the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given unto us. Let us not cease to preach the Gospel, let us not cease to tell of the Lord. Even unto Idumæa I will stretch out my shoe. Do not even the very earthly men serve? Even if with earthly desires they are bound, yet Christ they adore. In these times we see, brethren, how many earthly men do perpetrate frauds for the sake of gain, for frauds perjuries; on account of their fears they consult fortune-tellers, astrologers: all these men are Edomites, earthly; and nevertheless all these men adore Christ, under His own shoe they are; now even unto Idumæa is stretched out His shoe. To Me Allophyli have been made subject. Who are Allophyli? Men of other race, not belonging to My race. They have been made subject, because many men adore Christ, and are not to reign with Christ. To Me Allophyli have been made subject.

12. Ver. 9. Who will lead Me down into the city of standing round? What is the city of standing round? If ye remember already, I have made mention thereof in another Psalm, wherein hath been said, And they shall go around the city. For the city of standing round is the compassing around of the Gentiles, which compassing around of the Gentiles in the middle thereof had the one nation of the Jews, worshipping one God: the rest of the compassing around of the Gentiles to idols made supplication, demons they did serve. And mystically it was called the city of standing round; because on all sides the Gentiles had poured themselves around, and had stood around that nation which did worship one God. Who will lead me down into the city of standing around? Who, but God? This is meant to express, even as He shall lead down through those clouds, whereof hath been said, The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel. The wheel itself is the city of standing round, which hath been called a wheel, that is, the round world. Who will lead me down into the city of standing around? who will lead me down even unto Idumæa? that is, so that I may reign even over earthly men, so that even they may venerate Me, that of Me are not, that will not learn of Me.

13. Who will lead me down even unto Idumæa? (Ver. 10.) Wilt not Thou, O God, That hast driven us back? And wilt not Thou, O God, march forth in our powers? Wilt not Thou lead us down, That hast driven us back? But wherefore 'hast driven us back?' Because Thou hast destroyed us. Wherefore hast destroyed us? Because angry Thou hast been, and hast had pity on us. Thou therefore wilt lead down, That hast driven back; Thou, O God, that wilt not march forth in our powers, wilt lead down. What is, wilt not march forth in our powers? The world is to rage, the world is to tread us down, there is to be a heap of witness, builded of the spilled blood of martyrs, and the raging heathen are to say, Where is the God of them? Then Thou wilt not march forth in our powers: against them Thou wilt not shew Thyself, Thou wilt not shew Thy power, such as Thou hast shewn in David, in Moses, in Joshua the son of Nun, when to their might the Gentiles yielded, and when the slaughter had been ended, and the great laying waste repaired, into the land which Thou promisedst Thou leddest in Thy people. This thing then Thou wilt not do, Thou wilt not march forth in our powers, but within Thou wilt work. What is, wilt not march forth? Wilt not shew

Thyself. For indeed when in chains the Martyrs were being led along, when they were being shut up in prison, when they were being led forth to be mocked, when to the beasts they were exposed, when they were being smitten with the sword, when with fire they were being burned, were they not despised as though forsaken, as though without helper? In what manner was God working within? in what manner within was He comforting! in what manner to these men was He making sweet the hope of life everlasting? in what manner was He not forsaking the hearts of them, where the man was dwelling in silence, well if good, ill if evil? Was He then by any means forsaking, because He was not marching forth in the powers of them? By not marching forth in the powers of them, did He not the more lead down the Church even unto Idumæa, lead down the Church even unto the city of standing round? For if the Church chose to war and to use the sword, She would seem to be fighting for life present: but because she was despising life present, therefore there was made a heap of witness for the life that shall be.

14. Thou therefore, O God, that wilt not march forth in our powers, (ver. 11.) Give to us aid from tribulation, and vain is the safety of man. Go now they that salt have not, and desire safety temporal for their friends, which is empty oldness. Give to us aid: from thence whence Thou wast supposed to forsake, thence succour. Give to us aid from tribulation, and vain is the safety of man.

15. Ver. 12. In God we will do valour, and Himself to nothing shall bring down our enemies. We will not do valour with the sword, not with horses, not with breastplates, not with shields, not in the mightiness of an army, not abroad. But where? Within, where we are not seen. Where within? In God we will do virtue: and as if abjects, and as if trodden down, men as if of no consideration we shall be, but Himself to nothing shall bring down our enemies. In a word, this thing hath been done to our enemies. Trodden down have been the Martyrs: by suffering, by enduring, by persevering even unto the end, in God they have done valour. Himself also hath done that which followeth: to nothing He hath brought down the enemies of them. Where are now the enemies of the Martyrs, except perchance that

now drunken men with their cups do persecute those, whom at that time
phrensied men did use with stones to persecute?

PSALM 61

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. The above Psalm with your Love we have undertaken to consider. Short it is, the Lord will be with us, to enable us to speak sufficiently and briefly upon it. As far as Himself shall have aided that biddeth us to speak, so will I be to the willing subservient, as that I be not to them that are dull, tedious, nor to (so) few, overmuch, nor to the engaged, burdensome. The title of it doth not detain us. For it is Unto the end, in hymns, to David himself. In hymns, to wit in praises. Unto the end, to wit unto Christ. For the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness to every one that believeth. And David himself as no other ought we to understand than the same Who came out of the seed of David, so that He might be Man among men, and might make men equal to angels. But the voice in this Psalm (if we are among the members of Him, and in the Body, even as upon His exhortation we have the boldness to trust) we ought to acknowledge to be our own, not that of any foreigner. But I have not so called it our own, as if it were of those only that are now in presence; but our own, as being of us that are throughout the whole world, that are from the East even unto the West. And in order that ye may know it thus to be our voice, He speaketh here as if one Man: but He is not One Man; but even as One, the Unity is speaking. But in Christ we all are one man: because of this One Man the Head is in Heaven, and the members are yet toiling on earth: and because they are toiling see what He saith.

2. Ver. 1. Hearken, O God, to my supplication, give heed to my prayer. Who saith? He, as if One. See whether one: (ver. 2.) From the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried, while my heart was being vexed. Now therefore not one: but for this reason one, because Christ is One, of Whom all we are the

members. For what one man crieth from the ends of the earth? There crieth not from the ends of the earth any but that inheritance, of which hath been said to the Son Himself, Demand of Me, and I will give to Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession the boundaries of the earth. This therefore Christ's possession, this Christ's inheritance, this Christ's Body, this Christ's one Church, this the Unity which we are, is crying from the ends of the earth. But is crying what? That whereof I have spoken above, Harken, O God, to my supplication, give heed to my prayer: from the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried. That is, this thing to Thee I have cried: from the ends of the earth, that is, every where.

3. But wherefore have I cried this thing? While my heart was being vexed. He sheweth himself to be throughout all nations in the whole round world, in great glory, but in great tribulation. For our life in this sojourning cannot be without temptation: because our advance is made through our temptation, nor does a man become known to himself unless tempted, nor can he be crowned except he shall have conquered, nor can he conquer except he shall have striven, nor can he strive except he shall have experienced an enemy, and temptations. This Man therefore is being vexed, that from the ends of the earth is crying, but nevertheless He is not forsaken. For ourselves who are His Body He hath willed to prefigure also in that His Body wherein already He hath both died and hath risen again, and into Heaven hath ascended, in order that whither the Head hath gone before, thither the members may be assured that they shall follow. Therefore us He did transfer by a figure into Himself, when He willed to be tempted of Satan. But now there was being read in the Gospel, how the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness was being tempted of the devil. Christ entirely was tempted of the devil. For in Christ thou wast being tempted, because Christ of thee had for Himself flesh, of Himself for thee salvation; of thee for Himself death, of Himself for thee life; of thee for Himself revilings, of Himself for thee honours; therefore of thee for Himself temptation, of Himself for thee victory. If in Him tempted we have been, in Him we overcome the devil. Dost thou observe that Christ was tempted, and dost thou not observe that He conquered? Acknowledge thyself in Him tempted, and in Him acknowledge thyself conquering. He was able from Himself to keep away the devil: but if He were not tempted, to thee that

must be tempted the lesson of conquering He had failed to give. Therefore it is no wonder, if that Man being set amid temptations is crying from the ends of the earth. But wherefore is he not being conquered? On the Rock Thou hast exalted me. Now therefore here we perceive who is crying from the ends of the earth. Let us call to mind the Gospel: Upon this Rock I will build My Church. Therefore She crieth from the ends of the earth, whom He hath willed to be builded upon a Rock. But in order that the Church might be builded upon the Rock, who was made the Rock? Hear Paul saying: But the Rock was Christ. On Him therefore builded we have been. For this reason that Rock whereon we have been builded, first hath been smitten with winds, flood, rain, when Christ of the devil was being tempted. Behold on what firmness He hath willed to stablish thee. With reason our voice is not in vain, but is hearkened unto: for on great hope we have been set: On the Rock Thou hast exalted me.

4. Ver. 3. Thou hast led me down, because Thou hast been made my hope. If He had not been made our own hope, He would not have led us down. He leadeth down as being a Leader, and on Himself leadeth as being the Way, and to Himself leadeth home as being the Country. He leadeth us down therefore. Wherefore? Because He hath been made our hope. Whence hath been made our hope? Behold, in the same manner as ye have heard that He was tempted, that He suffered, that He rose again, even so He hath been made our hope. For what do we say to ourselves when we read of these things? God indeed will not destroy us for whose sake He hath sent His Son, to be tempted, to be crucified, to die, to rise again: for truly God doth not despise us, for whose sake His own Son He hath not spared, but for us all hath delivered Him up. Thus therefore He hath been made our hope. In Him thou seest both thy labour and thy reward; labour in His Passion, reward in His resurrection. Thus therefore He hath been made our hope. For we have two lives; but one wherein we are, the other for which we hope. That wherein we are is known to us: that for which we hope is to us unknown. Endure that wherein thou art, and thou shalt have that which not yet thou hast. How dost thou endure? So that thou be not conquered by temptations. By His labours, temptations, sufferings, by His death, Christ hath pointed out to thee the life wherein thou art: by His Resurrection hath pointed out to thee the life wherein thou shalt be. For we had known man be

born and die; man rising and living for everlasting we had not known: He took upon Him that which thou knewest, and shewed to thee that which thou knewest not. For this reason therefore He was made our hope in tribulations, in temptations. See the Apostle saying: Not this alone, but we glory also in tribulations, he saith, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience probation, probation hope, but hope confoundeth not: for the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given to us. Therefore Himself hath been made our hope That hath given to us the Holy Spirit, and we walk now by hope; for we should not walk, unless we hoped. The Apostle Himself saith what? For that which a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if that which we see not we hope for, by patience we wait for it. And again, For by hope we have been saved.

5. Thou hast led me down, because Thou hast been made my hope: a tower of strength from the face of the enemy. My heart is vexed, saith that Unity from the ends of the earth, and I toil amid temptations and offences: the heathen envy, because they have been conquered; the heretics lie in wait, hidden in the cloak of the Christian name: within in the Church itself the wheat suffereth violence from the chaff: amid all these things when my heart is vexed, I will cry from the ends of the earth. But there forsaketh me not the Same that hath exalted me upon the Rock, in order to lead me down even unto Himself, because even if I labour, while the devil through so many places and times and occasions lieth in wait against me, He is to me a tower of strength, to whom when I shall have fled for refuge, not only I shall escape the weapons of the enemy, but even against him securely I shall myself hurl whatever darts I shall please. For Christ Himself is the tower, Himself for us hath been made a tower from the face of the enemy, who is also the Rock whereon hath been builded the Church. Art thou taking heed that thou be not smitten of the devil? Flee to the Tower; never to that Tower will the devil's darts follow thee: there thou wilt stand protected and fixed. But in what manner shalt thou flee to the Tower? Let not a man, set perchance in temptation, in body seek that Tower, and when he shall not have found it, be wearied, or faint in temptation. Before thee is the Tower: call to mind Christ, and go into the Tower. How dost thou call to mind Christ, in order that thou mayest go into the tower? Whatever thou

sufferest, meditate how He first hath suffered, and meditate with what end He suffered, to wit, that He should die and should rise again. For such an end do thou also hope, as in Him hath gone before, and thou hast gone into the Tower by not assenting to the enemy. For if thou shalt have assented to the enemy, then unto thee hath reached the dart of him fighting against thee. Do thou rather against him hurl weapons, wherewith he may be smitten, wherewith he may be conquered. These weapons are what? The words of God, thy faith, that same hope of thine, good works. I say not, so stay in that Tower as to be idle there, and let it suffice for thee that the enemy's weapons reach thee not: do there something, let not thy hands be at rest: good works of thine are swords that slay the enemy.

6. Ver. 4. A sojourner I will be in Thy tabernacle even unto ages. Ye see how he, of whom we have spoken, is he that crieth. Which of us is a sojourner even unto ages? For a few days here we live, and we pass away: for sojourners here we are, inhabitants in Heaven we shall be. Thou art a sojourner in that place where thou art to hear the voice of the Lord thy God, "Remove." For from that Home everlasting in the Heavens no one will bid thee to remove. Here therefore a sojourner thou art. Whence also is said in another Psalm, A sojourner I am with Thee and a stranger, as all my fathers were. Here therefore sojourners we are; there the Lord shall give to us mansions everlasting: Many are, He saith, the mansions in My Father's house. Those mansions not as though to sojourners He will give, but as though to citizens to abide for everlasting. Here however, brethren, because for no small time the Church was to be on this earth, but because here shall be the Church even unto the end of the world: therefore here He hath said, A dweller I will be in Thy tabernacle even unto ages. Let the enemy rage, as he will, let him fight against me, lyings in wait for me let him make ready, with offences let him beset me, and make my heart to be vexed; A sojourner I will be in Thy tabernacle even unto ages. The Church shall not be conquered, she shall not be rooted up, nor yield to temptations of whatever sort, until there come this world's end, and from this temporal habitation that everlasting one receive us, whereunto He shall lead us home That hath been made our hope. A sojourner I will be in Thy tabernacle even for ages. If for a long time thou art to be a sojourner, (suppose to Him we were saying this,) thou must then toil on earth amid so great temptations: for if a

few days were the Church's time here, speedily there would be an end to the tempter's lyings in wait. Well, of a few days thou wouldest choose that the temptations should be: but how would She gather together all Her sons, unless for a long time She were to be here, unless even unto the end She were to be prolonged? Do not envy the rest of mankind that hereafter shall be: do not, because thou hast already passed over, wish to cut down the bridge of mercy: be it here even for ever. And what of temptations, which needs must abound, by how much the more offences come? For Himself saith, because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many shall wax cold. But that Church, which crieth from the ends of the earth, is in these circumstances whereof he speaketh in continuation. But he that shall have persevered even unto the end, the same shall be saved. But whence shalt thou persevere? What are thy powers amid so great offences, amid so great temptations, amid so great fightings? With what powers dost thou conquer an enemy, whom thou seest not? Canst thou anywise with thine own? Nay, and inasmuch as even unto ages that sojourner shall be here, what hope hath he that he may endure? (Ver. 4.) I shall be covered up in the veiling of Thy wings. Behold the reason why we are in safety amid so great temptations, until there come the end of the world, and ages everlasting receive us; namely, because we are covered up in the veiling of His Wings. There is heat in the world, but there is a great shade under the wings of God. I shall be covered up in the veiling of Thy wings.

7. Ver. 5. For Thou, O God, hast hearkened to my prayer. What prayer? That wherewith he beginneth: Hearken, O God, to my supplication, give heed unto my prayer: from the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried. This to Thee I have cried from the ends of the earth. Therefore I shall be covered up in the veiling of Thy wings, because Thou hast hearkened to my supplication. We are admonished therefore, brethren, not to cease praying, so long as it is the time of temptations. Thou hast given inheritance to men fearing Thy name. Let us continue therefore in the fear of God's name: the eternal Father deceiveth us not. Sons labour, that they may receive the inheritance of their parents, to whom when dead they are to succeed: are we not labouring to receive an inheritance from that Father, to whom not dying we succeed; but together with Him in the very inheritance for everlasting are to live? Thou hast given inheritance to men fearing Thy name.

8. Ver. 6. Days upon days of the King Thou shalt add to the years of Him. This is therefore the King of whom we are the members. A King Christ is, our Head, our King. Thou hast given to Him days upon days; not only those days in that time that hath end, but days upon those days without end. I will dwell, he saith, in the house of the Lord, for length of days. Wherefore for length of days, but because now is the shortness of days? For every thing which hath an end, is short: but of this King are days upon days, so that not only while these days pass away, Christ reigneth in His Church, but the Saints shall reign together with Him in those days which have no end. There one day there is, and many days there are. Inasmuch as there are many days, I have said just now, For length of days: inasmuch as there is one day, thus is understood, My Son Thou art, I this day have begotten Thee. Of one day He hath spoken as this day: but that day is not set in the middle between yesterday and to-morrow, nor is the beginning thereof the end of yesterday, nor the end thereof the beginning of to-morrow. For years of God have been also spoken of: But Thou art the very Same, and Thy years shall not fail. In the same manner as years, so days, so one day. Whatsoever thou wilt thou sayest of eternity. Whatever thou wilt thou sayest for this reason, because whatever thou shalt have said, it is too little that thou hast said. For thou must needs say somewhat, to the end that there may be something whereby thou mayest meditate on that which cannot be told. Days upon days of the King Thou shalt add to the years of Him, even unto the day of generation and of generation. Of this generation and of the generation that shall be: of this generation which is compared to the moon, because as the moon is new, waxeth, is full, waneth, and vanisheth, so are these mortal generations; and of the generation wherein we are born anew by rising again, and shall abide for everlasting with God, when now no longer we are like the moon, but like that of which saith the Lord, Then the righteous shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. For the moon by a figure in the Scriptures is put for the mutability of this mortal state. Therefore to Jericho was he going down that fell among robbers: because the city Jericho is a Hebrew name, and is interpreted in Latin by moon. He was going down therefore as though from immortality to mortality; and fittingly in the journey was he wounded by robbers and left half dead, even that Adam out of whom is the whole human race. Therefore days upon days of the King Thou shalt add to the years of Him, even unto

the day of generation, of generation mortal I take it: of what other generation hath he made mention? Hear, of what.

9. Ver. 7. He shall abide for everlasting in the sight of God; according to what, or because of what? His mercy and truth who shall seek for Him? He saith also in another place, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, to men seeking His testament and His testimonies. Large is the discourse of truth and mercy, but shortness we have promised. Briefly hear ye what is truth and mercy: because no small thing is that which hath been said, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. Mercy is spoken of, because our merits God regarded not, but His own goodness, in order that He might forgive us all our sins, and might promise life everlasting: but truth is spoken of, because He faileth not to render those things which He hath promised. Let us acknowledge it here, and let us do it; so that, just as to us God hath shewn forth His mercy and His truth, mercy in forgiving our sins, truth in shewing forth His promises; so also, I say, let us execute mercy and truth, mercy concerning the weak, concerning the needy, concerning even our enemies; truth in not sinning, and in not adding sin upon sin. For he that counteth much on the mercy of God, hath suffered to steal into his mind the making God unjust, and the thinking that if he shall have continued a sinner, and shall have chosen not to depart from his iniquities, He will come, and will set him in that place, where He setteth His servants that to Him are obedient. And will it be just, that He should set thee, continuing in sins, in that place where He is to set them that have departed from sins? Wilt thou be unjust in such sort as to make God also unjust? Why wilt thou then turn God unto thy will? Do thou be turned unto the will of God. Who is therefore he that doeth this, save one out of those few, of whom is said, He that shall have continued unto the end, the same shall be saved? With reason here also His mercy and truth who shall seek for Him? Why is there 'for Him?' Who shall seek, would be sufficient. Why hath he added, for Him, but because many men seek to learn His mercy and truth in His books? And when they have learned, for themselves they live, not for Him; their own things they seek, not the things which are of Jesus Christ: they preach mercy and truth, and do not mercy and truth. But by preaching it, they know it: for they would not preach it, unless they knew it. But he that loveth God and Christ, in preaching the mercy and truth of the Same, doth

himself seek her for Him, not for himself: that is, not in order that himself may have by this preaching temporal advantages, but in order that he may do good to His members, that is, His faithful ones, by ministering with truth of that which he knoweth: in order that he that liveth no longer for himself may live, but for Him that for all men hath died. His mercy and truth who will seek for Him?

10. Ver. 8. So I will play music to Thy name, that I may render my vows from day unto day. If thou playest music to the name of God, play not for a time. Wilt thou for ever play? wilt thou for everlasting play? Render to Him thy vows from day unto day. What is, render to Him thy vows from day unto day? From this day unto that day. Continue to render vows in this day, until thou come to that day: that is, He that shall have continued even unto the end, the same shall be saved.

PSALM 62

Exposition

Sermon to the people.

1. The delight of divine sayings, and the pleasantness of understanding the Word of God, while Himself that giveth the sweetness aideth our earth to give her fruit, do invite both us to speak and you to hear. I see that you hear without weariness, and I rejoice in the palate of your heart, wherefrom that which is wholesome is not rejected, but with eagerness it is taken in and profitably is retained. Let us speak therefore to you to-day also, as far as the Lord alloweth, of that Psalm which but now we have sung. The title of it is, Unto the end, in behalf of Idithun, a Psalm to David himself. I recollect that already to you hath been explained what Idithun is. For according to the interpretation of the Hebrew tongue, as to us it hath come down, in Latin Idithun is translated, leaping over them. Therefore he that is singing doth leap over certain men, on whom from above he looketh down. Let us see how far he hath leaped over, and whom he hath leaped over, and in what place, though he hath leaped over certain men, he is situate, whence as from a kind of spiritual and secure position he may behold what is below, (not so looking back as that he fall, but so that he that hath leaped over may stir up the indolent to follow,) and may extol the place, at which by leaping over he hath arrived. For this man that leapeth over is above something in such sort as that he is under some one: whence first to us he hath desired to intimate the Person under whom he is protected, in order that his having passed over, may not be for pride but for advancement.

2. He being set, I say, in a certain fortified place, doth say, (ver. 1.) Shall not my soul be subject to God? For he had heard, He that doth exalt himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted: and fearful lest by leaping over he should be proud, not elated by those things which

were below, but humble because of Him that was above; to envious men, as it were threatening to him a fall, who were grieved that he had leaped over, he hath made answer, Shall not my soul be subject to God? Why is it that for me as it were leaping over ye seek for snares? either by assaulting ye would throw me down, or by leading astray ye would deceive me. Do I so remember what I am above, as that I am forgetful, whom I am below? Shall not my soul be subject to God? Howsoever much I may draw near, howsoever much I may ascend, howsoever much I leap over, under God I shall be, not against God. Safely therefore I mount above other things, when He that is above all things doth hold me under Him. Shall not my soul be made subject to God? For from Himself is my salvation. For Himself is my God and my salvation, my taker up, I shall not be moved more. I know Who is above me, I know Who stretcheth forth His mercy to men that know Him, I know under the covering of Whose wings I should hope: I shall not be moved more. Ye are striving indeed, he saith to certain, leaping over those very persons to whom he speaketh: ye indeed are striving that I should be moved, but let there not come to me the foot of pride. For, for this cause cometh about that which also in the same Psalm followeth, nor let the hand of sinners remove me: to which agreeth, I shall not be moved more. For to that which there hath been said, nor let the hand of sinners remove me, there answereth here, I shall not be moved more. But to that which there hath been said, Let not there come to me the foot of pride, there answereth here, Shall not my soul be made subject to God?

3. Therefore, down from the higher place fortified and protected, he, to whom the Lord hath been made a refuge, he, to whom is God Himself for a fortified place, hath regard to those whom he hath leaped over, and looking down upon them speaketh as though from a lofty tower: for this also hath been said of Him, A Tower of strength from the face of the enemy: he giveth heed therefore to them, and saith, How long do ye lay upon a man? By insulting, by hurling reproaches, by laying wait, by persecuting, ye lay upon a man burthens, ye lay upon a man as much as a man can bear: but in order that a man may bear, under him is He that hath made man. How long do ye lay upon a man? If to a man ye look, slay ye, all of you. Behold, lay upon, rage, slay ye, all of you. As though a wall bowed down, and as a fence smitten against; lean against, smite against, as if going to throw down.

And where is, I shall not be moved more? But wherefore? I shall not be moved more? Because Himself is God my Saving One, my taker up, therefore ye men are able to lay burdens upon a man; can ye anywise lay upon God, Who protecteth man?

4. Ver. 3. Slay ye, all of you. What is that size of body in one man so great as that he may be slain by all? But we ought to perceive our person, the person of the Church, the person of the Body of Christ. For one Man with His Head and Body is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the Body and the Members of the Body: two in one Flesh, and in one voice, and in one passion, and, when iniquity shall have passed over, in one rest. The sufferings therefore of Christ are not in Christ alone; nay, there are not any save in Christ. For if Christ thou understandest to be Head and Body, the sufferings of Christ are not, save in Christ: but if Christ thou understand of Head alone, the sufferings of Christ are not in Christ alone. For if the sufferings of Christ are in Christ alone, to wit in the Head alone; whence saith a certain member of Him, Paul the Apostle, In order that I may supply what are wanting of the oppressions of Christ in my flesh? If therefore in the members of Christ thou art, whatsoever man thou art that art hearing these words, whosoever thou art that dost not hear these words: (but however, thou dost hear, if in the members of Christ thou art:) whatsoever thing thou sufferest from those that are not in the members of Christ, was wanting to the sufferings of Christ. Therefore it is added because it was wanting; thou fillest up the measure, thou causest it not to run over: thou sufferest so much as was to be contributed out of thy sufferings to the whole suffering of Christ, that hath suffered in our Head, and doth suffer in His members, that is, in our own selves. Unto this our common republic, as it were each of us according to our measure payeth that which we owe, and according to the powers which we have, as it were a quota of sufferings we contribute. The store-house of all men's sufferings will not be completely made up, save when the world shall have been ended. How long do ye lay upon man? Whatever the Prophets have suffered from the blood of just Abel even unto the blood of Zacharias, hath been laid upon man, because there have preceded the advent of the Incarnation of Christ certain members of Christ: as in the birth of a certain one, though not yet the head came forth, there came forth the hand, but yet to the head was joined even the

hand. Do not therefore think, brethren, that all just men, that have suffered the persecution of ungodly men, even those that have come before the Lord's Advent to foretell the Lord's Advent, belonged not to the members of Christ. Far be it that he should not belong to the members of Christ, who belongeth to the City which for King hath Christ. That alone is Jerusalem heavenly, the holy City. The King of this City is Christ: for Himself saith to Her, "Mother, Sion" a man will say. He saith to Her, "Mother;" but as Man. For "Mother Sion" a man will say, and Man He was made in Her, and Himself the Most Highest hath founded Her. This King therefore of Her, that hath founded Her, the Most Highest, Himself, in Her was made man most lowly. Himself therefore, before the Advent of His Incarnation, hath sent before Him certain of His Members, after whom foreshewing Himself to come there came also Himself, joined together with them. Reflect upon the similitude of that man that was born: how hand before head coming forth, is both with the head and under the head. For in reference to Christ it was said, when the excellence of the first people was being praised, and the natural branches broken off were grieved over: Of whom is the Adoption, he saith, and the testaments, and the establishment of the law; of whom are the fathers, and out of whom is Christ after the flesh, Who is above all, God blessed for ever. Out of whom is Christ after the flesh, as though out of Sion, because Man He was made in Her: because Christ is above all, God blessed for ever, because Himself hath founded Her, the Most Highest. Out of whom is Christ after the flesh, the Son of David; Who is above all, God blessed for ever, the Lord of David. That whole City therefore is speaking, from the blood of righteous Abel even to the blood of Zacharias. Thence also hereafter from the blood of John, through the blood of the Apostles, through the blood of Martyrs, through the blood of the faithful ones of Christ, one City speaketh, one man saith, How long do ye lay upon a man? Slay ye all of you. Let us see if ye efface, let us see if ye extinguish, let us see if ye remove from the earth the name thereof, let us see if ye peoples do not meditate of empty things, saying, When shall She die, and when shall perish the name of Her? As though She were a wall bowed down, and a fence smitten against, lean ye against Her, smite against Her. Hear from above: (ver. 2.) My taker up, I shall not be moved more: for as though a heap of sand I have been smitten against that I might fall, and the Lord hath taken me up.

5. Ver. 4. Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back: conquered while they slay men yielding, by the blood of the slain multiplying the faithful, yielding to these and no longer being able to kill; Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back. Now because a Christian cannot be killed, pains are taken that a Christian should be dishonoured. For now by the honour of Christians the hearts of ungodly men are tortured: now that spiritual Joseph, after his selling by his brethren, after his removal from his home into Egypt as though into the Gentiles, after the humiliation of a prison, after the made-up tale of a false witness, after that there had come to pass that which of him was said, Iron passed through the soul of him: now he is honoured, now he is not made subject to brethren selling him, but corn he supplieth to them hungering. Conquered by his humility and chastity, uncorruptness, temptations, sufferings, now honoured they see him, and his honour they think to check. For in their thoughts is this, The sinner shall see; for he cannot but see, since a City cannot be hid that is set upon a hill. The sinner, I say, shall see, and be angry; with his teeth he shall gnash, and shall pine away. There lurketh in the heart and is hidden by the brow their venom, while they rage and are indignant. Therefore here also of the thoughts of them he speaketh, Mine honour, he saith, they have thought to drive back. For they dare not in words to profess what they think. Let us wish for them good things, even if they wish evil things. Judge them, O God, let them fall down from their thoughts. For what is better for them, what more profitable, than that they should fall from thence where they stand ill, in order that they too being amended may be able to say, Thou hast set my feet upon a Rock.

6. Ver. 4. Nevertheless, they have thought mine honour to drive back. Is it all against one man, or one man against all; or all against all, or one against one? Meanwhile, when he saith, ye lay upon a man, it is as it were upon one man: and when he saith, Slay all ye, it is as if all men were against one man: but nevertheless it is also all against all, because also all are Christians, but in One. But why must those divers errors hostile to Christ be spoken of as all together? Are they also one? Truly them also as one I dare to speak of: because there is one City and one city, one People and one people, King and king. One City and one city is what? Babylon one, Jerusalem one. By whatsoever other mystical names besides She is called, yet One City there

is and one city; over this the devil is king, over that Christ is King. For I remark the Gospel in a certain place, and there moveth me that which I think doth move you too. After that there were bidden many men to the marriage, good and bad, and the marriage was filled with them that sat at meat: (for the servants that were sent forth, as had been commanded, did bid both good men and bad men:) and the King came in to view them that were at meat, and He found a man not having a marriage garment, and He said to him that which ye know: Friend, whence hast thou come hither, not having a marriage garment? But he was speechless: and He commanded him to be bound hands and feet, and to be cast into outer darkness. Thus there was removed from the banquet, and sent into punishment, some man or other in so great a multitude of guests. But yet the Lord, to shew that one man to be one body which consisteth of many, when He commanded him to be cast out, and to be sent into condign punishment, hath added forthwith, For many are called, but few are chosen. What is this? What is this? Thou hast called together crowds, there hath come a huge multitude, Thou hast preached, hast spoken, they have been ‘multiplied above number,’ filled is the marriage with guests, there is cast forth thence one man alone, and Thou sayest, For many are called, but few are chosen. Why not rather, All called, many chosen, one cast forth? If He had said, For many are called, and more chosen, but few rejected: in the few perchance nearer the truth we should perceive that one man. But now he saith that one hath been cast forth thence, and he addeth, For many are called, but few chosen. Who are chosen, but they that have continued? One having been cast forth, those that were chosen have continued. How is it that when one hath been cast forth out of many, few are chosen, except because in that one are many? All men that earthly things do mind, all men that do choose earthly felicity before God, all men that seek their own things, not the things which are of Jesus Christ, to that one city belong, which is called Babylon mystically, and which hath for king the devil. But all men who mind those things which are above, who on heavenly things do meditate, who with carefulness live in the world that they may not offend God, who are careful not to sin, who if sinning are not ashamed to confess, humble, mild, holy, just, godly, good, all these to that one City do belong, which for King hath Christ. For the former on earth as it were is the greater in age, not by elevation, not by honour. For the former city was first born, the latter city was after born. For

that began from Cain, this from Abel. These two Bodies, serving under two kings, to their several cities belonging, are opposed to one another even unto the end of the world, until there be made out of the mixture a severing, and some be set on the right, others on the left, and it be said to the former, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world: but to the latter, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. For Christ saith this, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom that for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world, as King of His City, victorious over all things. But to those that are set on the left hand, as though to a city of unrighteous men, Go ye, He saith, into fire everlasting, doth He by any means sever from them their king? No. For He hath added, That hath been prepared for the devil and his angels.

7. Give heed, brethren, give heed, I entreat you. For it delighteth me yet to speak a few words to you of this beloved City. For most glorious things of Thee have been spoken, City of God. And, if I forget Thee, O Jerusalem, let mine own right hand forget me. For dear is the one Country, and truly but one Country, the only Country: besides Her whatsoever we have, is a sojourning in a strange land. I will say therefore that which ye may acknowledge, that of which ye may approve: I will call to your minds that which ye know, I will not teach that which ye know not. Not first, saith the Apostle, that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards that which is spiritual. Therefore the former city is greater by age, because first was born Cain, and afterwards Abel: but in these the elder shall serve the younger. The former greater by age, the latter greater in dignity. Wherefore is the former greater by age? Because not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural. Wherefore is the latter greater in dignity? Because the elder shall serve the younger. But Cain builded a city, so we have read: before there was any city, in the beginning of things human, Cain builded a city. Doubtless thou wouldest perceive that already there had been born many men out of those two men, and out of those whom they had begotten, so that there was a meet and convenient number, to have impressed upon it the name of city. Cain therefore builded a city where a city was not. There was builded also afterward Jerusalem, the kingdom of God, the Holy City, the City of God; and set in the form as it were of a shadow signifying things

future. Perceive ye therefore the great mystery, and bear in mind what I have quoted before, Not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards the spiritual; for this reason therefore Cain first builded a city, and in that place he buided where no city was. But when Jerusalem was being builded, it was not builded in a place where there was not a city, but there was a city at first which was called Jebus, whence the Jebusites. This having been captured, overcome, made subject, there was builded a new city, as though the old were thrown down; and it was called Jerusalem, vision of peace, City of God. Each one therefore that is born of Adam, not yet doth belong to Jerusalem: for he beareth with him the offshoot of iniquity, and the punishment of sin, having been consigned to death, and he belongeth in a manner to a sort of old city. But if he is to be in the people of God; his old self will be thrown down, and he will be builded up new. For this reason therefore Cain builded a city where there was not a city. For from mortality and from naughtiness every one setteth out, in order that he may be made good hereafter. For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One Man many shall be made just. And all we in Adam do die: and each one of us of Adam was born. Let him pass over to Jerusalem, he shall be thrown down old, and shall be builded new. As though to conquered Jebusites, in order that there may be builded up Jerusalem, is said, Put ye off the old man, and put on the new. And now to them builded in Jerusalem, and shining by the light of Grace, is said, Ye have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. The evil city therefore from the beginning even unto the end doth run on, and the good City by the changing of evil men is builded up.

8. And these two cities are meanwhile mingled, at the end to be severed; against each other mutually in conflict, the one for iniquity, the other for the truth. And sometimes this very temporal mingling bringeth it to pass that certain men belonging to the city Babylon, do order matters belonging to Jerusalem, and again certain men belonging to Jerusalem, do order matters belonging to Babylon. Something difficult I seem to have propounded. Be ye patient, until it be proved by examples. For all things in the old people, as writeth the Apostle, in a figure used to befall them: but they have been written for our amendment, upon whom the end of the world hath come. Regard therefore that people as also set to intimate an after people; and see

then what I say. There were great kings in Jerusalem: it is a known fact, they are enumerated, are named. They all were, I say, wicked citizens of Babylon, and they were ordering matters of Jerusalem: all men from thence to be dissevered at the end, to no one but to the devil do belong. Again we find citizens of Jerusalem to have ordered certain matters belonging to Babylon. For those three children, Nabuchodonosor, overcome by a miracle, made the ministers of his kingdom, and set them over his Satraps; and so there were ordering the matters of Babylon citizens of Jerusalem. Observe now how this is being fulfilled and done in the Church, and in these times. All they of whom hath been said, What things they say do ye, but what things they do, do not, are citizens of Babylon, ordering the commonwealth of the City Jerusalem. For if they were ordering nothing of the City Jerusalem, whence What things they say do ye? Whence, In the chair of Moses they sit? Again, if citizens they are of Jerusalem Herself, that shall reign for everlasting with Christ, whence, What things they do, do not ye, except because they too are to hear, Depart from Me, all ye that work iniquity? It is therefore a thing known to you, that the citizens of the evil city do order certain doings of the good City. Let us see if now also citizens of the good City do order certain doings of the evil city. Every earthly commonwealth, sometime assuredly to perish, whereof the kingdom is to pass away, when there shall come that kingdom, whereof we pray, Thy kingdom come; and whereof hath been foretold, And of His kingdom shall be no end: an earthly commonwealth, I say, hath our citizens conducting the affairs of it. For how many faithful, how many good men, are both magistrates in their cities, and are judges, and are generals, and are counts, and are kings? All that are just and good men, having not any thing in heart but the most glorious things, which of Thee have been said, City of God. And as if they are doing bond-service in the city which is to pass away, even there by the doctors of the Holy City they are bidden to keep faith with those set over them, whether with the king as supreme, or with governors as though sent by God for the punishment of evil men, but for the praise of good men: or as servants, that to their masters they should be subject, even Christians to Heathens, and the better should keep faith with the worse, for a time to serve, for everlasting to have dominion. For these things do happen until iniquity do pass away. Servants are commanded to bear with masters unjust and capricious: the citizens of Babylon are commanded to be

endured by the citizens of Jerusalem, shewing even more attentions, than if they were citizens of the same Babylon, as though fulfilling the, He that shall have exacted of thee a mile, go with him other twain. This whole city dispersed, spread abroad, mingled, He addresseth in these words, and saith, (ver. 3.) How long do ye lay upon a man? Slay all ye, both ye that are without as though thorns in the hedges, or as though trees unfruitful in the woods, and ye that are within as though tares, or as though chaff, all ye as many as ye are, severed, mingled, to be endured, to be severed, slay all ye, as though against a wall bowed down, and a fence smitten down. (Ver. 4.) Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back. They have not spoken, but yet they have thought. Have thought to drive back mine honour.

9. I have run in thirst. For they were rendering evil things for good things: for them was I thirsting: mine honour they thought to drive back: I was thirsting to bring them over into my body. For in drinking what do we, but send into our members liquor that is without, and suck it into our body? Thus did Moses in that head of the calf. The head of the calf is a great sacrament. For the head of the calf was the body of ungodly men, in the similitude of a calf eating hay, seeking earthly things: because all flesh is hay. It was therefore, as I have said, the body of ungodly men. Moses being angered cast it into the fire, ground it to powder, in water scattered it, to drink to the people he gave it; and the anger of the Prophet became handmaid to a prophecy. For that body is thrown into the fire of tribulations, and by the word of God is ground to powder. For little by little they relinquish the unity of that body. For like as it were a garment, so by time it is wasted. And each one that is made a Christian is severed from that people, and as it were from the lump he is ground off. Combined they hate, broken off they believe. And what now is more evident, than that into that City Jerusalem, of which the people Israel was a type, by Baptism men were to be made to pass over? Therefore in water it was scattered, in order that for drink it might be given. For this even unto the end this man thirsteth; he runneth and thirsteth. For many men He drinketh, but never will He be without thirst. For thence is, I thirst, woman, give Me to drink. That Samaritan woman at the well found the Lord thirsting, and by Him thirsting she was filled: she first found Him thirsting, in order that He might drink her believing. And when He was on the Cross, I thirst, He said,

although they gave not to Him that for which He was thirsting. For for themselves He was thirsting: but they gave vinegar, not new wine, wherewith are filled up the new bottles, but old wine, but old to its loss. For old vinegar also is said of the old men, of whom hath been said, For to them is no changing; namely, that the Jebusites should be overthrown, and Jerusalem be builded.

10. So also the Head of this body even unto the end from the beginning runneth in thirst. And as if to Him were being said, Why in thirst? what is wanting to Thee, O Body of Christ, O Church of Christ? in so great honour, in so great exaltation, in so great height also even in this world established, what is wanting to Thee? There is fulfilled that which hath been foretold of Thee, There shall adore Him all kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. For what therefore dost Thou thirst? for what dost Thou thirst? with so many peoples art Thou not satisfied? Of what peoples dost Thou speak? With their mouth they were blessing, with their heart they were cursing. 'Many called, but few chosen.' A woman suffering with an issue of blood touched the border of His garment, and was made whole: and when the Lord was admiring her touching, because He had perceived from Himself virtue to have gone forth, to wit for healing the woman, He said, Who hath touched Me? And the wondering disciples, Multitudes throng Thee, and Thou sayest, Who hath touched Me? And He, Some one hath touched Me? As though He were saying, One woman hath touched, multitudes throng. They that at Jerusalem's festivals fill up the Churches, at Babylon's festivals fill up the theatres: and for all they serve, honour, obey Her—not only those very persons that bear the Sacraments of Christ, and hate the commandments of Christ, but also they, that bear not even the mere Sacraments, Heathen though they be, Jews though they be,—they honour, praise, proclaim, but with their mouths they were blessing. I heed not the mouth, He knoweth That hath instructed me, with their heart they were cursing. In that place they were cursing, where mine honour they thought to drive back.

11. What dost Thou, O Idithun, Body of Christ, leaping over them? What dost Thou amid all these things? What wilt Thou? wilt faint? wilt Thou not persevere even unto the end? wilt Thou not hearken, He that shall have

persevered even unto the end, the same shall be saved, though for that iniquity aboundeth, the love of many shall wax cold? And where is it that Thou hast leaped over them? where is it that Thy conversation is in Heaven? But they cleave unto earthly things, as though earthborn they mind the earth, and are earth, the serpent's food. What dost thou amid these things? Howbeit although they do these things, although they think of these things, although they smite against, although they bear against me as if bowed down, although they perceive me now erect, and mine honour they think to drive back, although with their mouth they bless, and with their heart curse, although they lie in wait where they can, slander where they can: (ver. 5.) Nevertheless, to God my soul shall be made subject. And who would endure so great things, either open wars, or secret lyings-in-wait? Who would endure so great things amid open enemies, amid false brethren? Who would endure so great things? Would a man? and if a man would, would a man of himself? I have not so leaped over that I should be lifted up, and fall: To God my soul shall be made subject: for from Himself is my patience. What patience is there amid so great scandals, except that if for that which we do not see we hope, through patience we look for it? There cometh my pain, there will come my rest also; there cometh my tribulation, there will come my cleansing also. For doth gold glitter in the furnace of the refiner? In a necklace it will glitter, in an ornament it will glitter: let it suffer however the furnace, in order that being cleansed from dross it may come into light. This is the furnace, there is there chaff, there gold, there fire, into this bloweth the refiner: in the furnace burneth the chaff, and the gold is cleansed; the one into ashes is turned, of dross the other is cleansed. The furnace is the world, the chaff unrighteous men, the gold just men; the fire tribulation, the refiner God: that which therefore the refiner willeth I do; wherever the Maker setteth me I endure it. I am commanded to endure, He knoweth how to cleanse. Though there burn the chaff to set me on fire, and as if to consume me: that into ashes is burned, I of dross am cleansed. Wherefore? Because to God my soul shall be made subject: for from Himself is my patience.

12. What to thee is He, from whom is thy patience. (Ver. 6.) For Himself is my God and My Saving One, my Taker up, I will not remove hence. Because Himself is my God, therefore He calleth me: and my Saving One,

therefore He justifieth me: and my Taker up, therefore He glorifieth me. For here I am called and am justified, but there I am glorified; and from thence where I am glorified, I will not remove. For a sojourner I am with Thee on earth as all my fathers were. Therefore from my lodging I shall remove, from my Heavenly home I shall not remove.

13. Ver. 7. In God is my salvation and my glory. Saved I shall be in God, glorious I shall be in God: for not only saved, but also glorious, saved, because a just man I have been made out of an ungodly man, by Him justified; but glorious, because not only justified, but also honoured. For those whom He hath predestinated, those also He hath called. Calling them, what hath He done here? Whom He hath called, the same also He hath justified; but whom He hath justified, the same also He hath glorified. Justification therefore to salvation belongeth, glorifying to honour. How glorifying to honour belongeth, it is not needful to discuss. How justification belongeth to salvation, let us seek some proof. Behold there cometh to mind out of the Gospel: there were some who to themselves were seeming to be just men, and they were finding fault with the Lord because He admitted to the feast sinners, and with publicans and sinners was eating; to such men therefore priding themselves, strong men of earth very much lifted up, much glorying of their own soundness, such as they counted it, not such as they had, the Lord answered what? They that are whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick. Whom calleth He whole, whom calleth He sick? He continueth and saith, I have not come to call just men, but sinners unto repentance. He hath called therefore 'the whole' just men, not because the Pharisees were so, but because themselves they thought so to be; and for this reason were proud, and grudged sick men a physician, and being more sick than those, they slew the Physician. He hath called whole, however, righteous men, sick, the sinners. My being justified therefore, saith that man that leapeth over, from Himself I have: my being glorified, from Himself I have: For God is my salvation and my glory. My salvation, so that saved I am: my glory, so that honoured I am. This thing hereafter: now what? God of my help, and my hope is in God; until I attain unto perfect justification and salvation. For by hope we are saved: but hope which is seen, is not hope. Until I shall come to that glorifying, when the righteous shall shine in the kingdom of their Father as the sun; meanwhile

now amid temptations, amid iniquities, amid scandals, amid open assaults and crafty talkings, amid them that with their mouth bless, and with their heart curse, amid them that ‘mine honour think to drive back,’ here is what? God of my help: for He giveth help to men striving. To men striving against whom? Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. God therefore is of my help, and my hope is in God. Hope it is, so long as that is not yet which hath been promised, and that is believed which is not yet seen: but when it shall have come, there shall be salvation and glorifying: while these things are deferred, however, we are not forsaken: for God is of my help, and my hope is in God.

14. Ver. 8. Hope ye in Him, all the council of the people. Imitate ye Idithun, leap over your enemies; men fighting against you, stopping up your way, men hating you, leap ye over: Hope in Him all the council of the people: pour out before Him your hearts. Do not yield to them that say to you, Where is your God? My tears, he saith, have been made for me bread day and night, while it is said to me, day by day, Where is thy God? Upon these things I have meditated, and have poured out over me my soul. I have called to mind what I hear, Where is thy God? I have remembered these things, and have poured out over me my soul, seeking my God, ‘I have poured out over me my soul,’ that to Him I might attain, not within myself did I abide. Therefore, hope in Him all the council of the people. Pour out before Him your hearts, by imploring, by confessing, by hoping. Do not keep back your hearts within your hearts: Pour out before Him your hearts. That perisheth not which ye pour out. For He is my Taker up. If He taketh up, why fearest thou to pour out? Cast upon the Lord thy care, and hope in Him. What fear ye amid whisperers, slanderers hateful to God, where they are able openly assailing, where they are unable secretly lying in wait, falsely praising, truly at enmity, amid them what fear ye? God is our Helper. Do they anywise equal God? Are they anywise stronger than He? God is our Helper, be ye without care. ‘If God is for us, who is against us?’ Pour out before Him your hearts, by leaping over unto Him, by lifting up your souls: God is our Helper.

15. And now having been set in a fortified place, in a tower of strength from the face of the enemy, have pity on those of whom ye were afraid: for

ye ought to run in thirst: look down therefore upon them, now that ye are in that place stablished, and say ye,

Ver. 9. Nevertheless, vain are the sons of men, and liars are the sons of men. “Sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart?” Sons of men vain, sons of men liars, sons of men wherefore do ye love vanity and seek lying? With pity say these things, and be wise. If ye have leaped over, if ye love your enemies, if ye desire to throw down in order that ye may build up, if Him ye love That ‘judgeth in the nations, and filleth up places that are fallen:’ so to them say ye these things, not hating them, not rendering evil for evil.

Liars are the sons of men in the balances, in order that they may deceive, being at one because of vanity. Certainly many men there are: behold there is that one man, that one man that was cast forth from the multitude of guests. They conspire, they all seek things temporal, and they that are carnal things carnal, and for the future they hope them, whosoever do hope: even if because of variety of opinions they are in division, nevertheless because of vanity they are at one. Divers indeed are errors and of many forms, and the kingdom against itself divided shall not stand: but alike in all is the will vain and lying, belonging to one king, with whom into fire everlasting it is to be thrown headlong—these men because of vanity are at one.

16. And for them see how He thirsteth, see how He runneth in thirst. He turneth therefore Himself to them, thirsting for them: (ver. 10.) Do not hope in iniquity. For my hope is in God. Do not hope in iniquity. Ye that will not draw near and pass over, do not hope in iniquity. For I that have leapt over, my hope is in God: and is there anywise iniquity with God? Do not hope in iniquity. This thing let us do, that thing let us do, of that thing let us think, thus let us adjust our lyings in wait; Because of vanity being at one. Thou thirstest: they that think of those things against thee are given up by those whom thou drinkest, Do not hope in vanity. Vain is iniquity, nought is iniquity, mighty is nothing save righteousness. Truth may be hidden for a time, conquered it cannot be. Iniquity may flourish for a time, abide it cannot. Do not hope upon iniquity: and for robbery be not covetous. Thou art not rich, and wilt thou rob? What findest thou? What lovest thou? O losing gains! Thou findest money, thou lovest righteousness. For robbery be not covetous. Poor I am, I have nothing. Therefore wilt thou rob? What

thou robbest thou seest: by whom thou art robbed seest thou not? Knowest thou not thine enemy goeth about, like a roaring lion, and seeketh what he may rob? That prey which thou desirest to rob is in a trap: thou seizest and art seized. For robbery therefore be not covetous, O poor man, but fix thy desires upon God, That giveth to us all things abundantly for enjoyment. He shall feed thee That hath made thee. Shall He That feedeth a robber not feed an innocent man? He shall feed thee That maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. If He feedeth men that are to be condemned, shall He not feed men that are to be delivered? Therefore for robbery be not covetous. This hath been said to a poor man, that perchance will rob somewhat out of necessity. Let the rich man come forth: I have no necessity, he saith, to rob: to me nothing is wanting, all things abound. And do thou too hear: if riches flow, upon them set not the heart. The former hath not, the latter hath: let not the former seek to rob that which he hath not, let not the latter set heart upon that which he hath. If riches flow, that is, if they overflow, run as though from a fountain, upon them set not the heart: do not on thyself rely, do not in that place fix thyself: certainly even this fear thou, namely, if riches flow. Seest thou not that if there the heart thou shalt have set, thou also wilt flow? Rich thou art, and behold no longer thou covetest further to have, because many things thou hast: hear, Charge the rich men of this world not to be highminded. And what is, upon them set not the heart? Nor hope in the uncertainty of riches. Therefore if riches flow, set not upon them the heart, in riches do not trust, rely not, hope not, lest it be said, Behold a man that hath not set God for his Helper, but hath hoped in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity. Therefore, vain sons of men, lying sons of men, neither rob, nor, if there flow riches, set heart upon them: no longer love vanity, and seek lying. For blessed is the man who hath the Lord God for his hope, and who hath not had regard unto vanities, and lying follies. Ye would deceive, ye would commit a fraud, what bring ye in order that ye may cheat. Deceitful balances. For lying, he saith, are the sons of men in the balances, in order that they may cheat by bringing forth deceitful balances. By a false balance ye beguile men looking on: know ye not that one is he that weigheth, Another He that judgeth of the weight? He seeth not, for whom thou weighest, but He seeth That weigheth thee and him. Therefore neither fraud nor robbery covet ye any longer, nor on those things

which ye have set your hope: I have admonished, have foretold, saith this Idithun.

17. What followeth? (Ver. 11, 12.) Once hath God spoken, these two things I have heard, that power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy, for Thou shalt render to each one after his works. There hath spoken Idithun, he hath sounded from the high place, to which he hath leapt over, he hath heard there somewhat, and hath spoken to us: but I am somewise troubled in that thing which he hath said to us, brethren, and until with you I share either the trouble or, it may be, my breathing again, I would have you attentive. For we have brought the Psalm to an end by the help of the Lord: after these words which we are about to say, there remaineth nothing further for us to explain of this. Therefore strive with me, that we may be able to understand this: and if I shall not have been able, and any one of you understandeth that which I am not able; I shall rejoice rather than envy. Truly it is difficult to trace out in what way hath been placed first: Once hath God spoken: and secondly, when once He hath spoken, how I two things have heard. For if he had said, 'Once hath God spoken, this one thing I have heard:' he would seem to have cut off half of this inquiry, so that we should simply inquire what is Once hath God spoken. But now we are going to inquire both what is, Once hath God spoken: and what is, These two things I have heard, though once He hath spoken.

18. Once hath God spoken. What sayest thou, Idithun? If thou that hadst leapt over them art saying, Once He hath spoken; I turn to another Scripture and it saith to me, In many quarters and in many ways formerly God hath spoken to the fathers in the prophets. What is, Once hath God spoken? Is He not the God that in the beginning of mankind spake to Adam? Did not the Selfsame speak to Cain, to Noe, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to all the Prophets, and to Moses? One man Moses was, and how often to him spake God? Behold even to one man, not once but oftentimes God hath spoken. Secondly, He hath spoken to the Son when standing here, Thou art My beloved Son. God hath spoken to the Apostles, He hath spoken to all the Saints, even though not with voice sounding through the cloud, nevertheless in the heart where He is Himself Teacher. Whence that one saith, I will hear what speaketh in me the Lord God, for He shall speak

peace to His people. What is therefore, Once hath God spoken? Much hath that man leapt over in order to arrive at that place, where once God hath spoken. Behold briefly I have spoken to your Love. Here among men, to men oftentimes, in many ways, in many quarters, through creatures of many forms God hath spoken: by Himself once God hath spoken, because One Word God hath begotten. This Idithun, therefore, leaping over them, had leapt over with the glance of the mind, mighty and potent and surpassing, had leapt over the earth, and whatever in the earth there is; air, all the clouds out of which God hath spoken many things, and oftentimes, and to many men: had leapt over also all Angels with the glances of Faith. For this man leaping over was not held fast by earthly things, but like a flying eagle was borne beyond all the mist whereby is covered the whole earth. For the Wisdom saith, And with mist I have covered the whole earth: he arriveth at something clear, leaping over the whole creation, and seeking God, and pouring out over himself his soul, he arriveth at the Beginning, and at the Word, God with God; and he findeth of One Father, One Word; and he hath seen how once God hath spoken, hath seen the Word by whom have been made all things, and in whom at the same time are all things, not diverse, not severed, not unequal. For it could not be but that God did Himself know that which by the Word He made: but if that which He made He knew, in Him there was that which was made before it was made. For if in Him was not that which was made before it was made, how knew He that which He made? For thou canst not say that God made things He knew not. God therefore hath known that which He hath made. And how knew He before He made, if there cannot be known any but things made? But by things made there cannot be known any but things previously made, by thee, to wit, who art a man made in a lower place, and set in a lower place: but before that all these things were made, they were known by Him by Whom they were made, and that which He knew He made. Therefore in that Word by Which He made all things, before that they were made, were all things; and after they have been made there are all things; but in one way here, in another there, in one way in their own nature wherein they have been made, in another in the art by which they have been made. Who could explain this? We may endeavour: go ye with Idithun, and see.

19. Now therefore as we have been able, we have said in what way God hath spoken once: let us see in what way 'these two things he hath heard.' These two things I have heard. Perchance it is not a consequence, that he should have heard these two things alone; but, these two things, he saith, I have heard; certain two things which to us must needs be said, he hath heard. He hath heard perchance many other things, but it is not needful that they be said to us. For even the Lord saith, Many things I have to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now. What is therefore, These two things I have heard? These two things which to you I am about to say not of myself to you I say, but what things I have heard I say. Once hath God spoken: One Word hath He, the Only-begotten God. In that Word are all things, because by the Word were made all things. One Word hath He, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. One Word He hath, once hath God spoken. These two things, which to you I am about to say, these I have heard: not of myself I speak, not of myself I say: to this belongeth the I have heard. But the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, that he may speak the truth. For he heareth Him, lest by speaking a lie, of his own he should speak: lest thou shouldest say, Who art thou that sayest this thing to me? whence dost thou say this to me? I have heard these two things, and I that speak to thee that I have heard these two things, am one who also doth know that once God hath spoken. Do not despise a hearer saying to thee certain two things for thee so necessary; him, I say, that by leaping over the whole creation hath attained unto the Only-begotten Word of God, where he hath learned that once God hath spoken.

20. Let him therefore now say certain two things. For greatly to us belong these two things. (Ver. 11, 12.) For power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy. Are these the two things, power and mercy? These two evidently: perceive ye the power of God, perceive ye the mercy of God. In these two things are contained nearly all the Scriptures. Because of these two things are the Prophets, because of these two, the Patriarchs, because of these the Law, because of these Himself our Lord Jesus Christ, because of these the Apostles, because of these all the preaching and spreading of the word of God in the Church, because of these two, because of the power of God, and His mercy. His power fear ye, His mercy love ye. Neither so on His mercy rely, as that His power ye despise: nor so the power fear ye, as that of mercy

ye despair. With Him is power, with Him mercy. This man He humbleth, and that man He exalteth: this man He humbleth with power, that man He exalteth in mercy. For if God, willing to shew wrath and to prove His power, hath in much patience borne with the vessels of wrath, which have been perfected unto perdition—thou hast heard of power: inquire for mercy—and that He might make known, He saith, His riches unto the vessels of mercy. It belongeth therefore to His power to condemn unjust men. And to Him who would say, What hast thou done? For thou, O man, who art thou that should make answer to God? Fear therefore and tremble at His power: but hope for His mercy. The devil is a sort of power; oftentimes however he wisheth to hurt, and is not able, because that power is under power. For if the devil could hurt as much as he would; no one of just men would remain, nor could any one of the faithful be on earth. The same through his vessels smiteth against, as it were, a wall bowed down: but he only smiteth against, so far as he receiveth power. But in order that the wall may not fall, the Lord will support: for He that giveth power to the tempter, doth Himself to the tempted extend mercy. For according to measure the devil is permitted to tempt. And, Thou wilt give us to drink in tears in a measure. Do not therefore fear the tempter permitted to do somewhat: for thou hast a most merciful Saviour. So much he is permitted to tempt as is profitable for thee, that thou mayest be exercised, mayest be proved; in order that by thyself thou mayest be found out, that knowest not thyself. For where, or from whence, ought we to be secure, except by this power and mercy of God? After that Apostolic saying, Faithful is God, that doth not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able.

21. Therefore power is of God: ‘for there is no power but of God.’ Do not say, ‘And why doth He give to him a great power?’ And, ‘let Him not give power. Hath He justice that giveth power?’ Unjustly thou canst murmur, He cannot lose justice. Is there anywise injustice with God? Far be it. This thing fix in heart, this thing from thy thought let not the enemy chase away. God may do something so as that thou mayest not know wherefore He doeth it: unjustly however He cannot do, with Whom iniquity there is not. For behold thou censurest God as if it were for injustice: (I am discussing with thee a question, attend to me a little:) thou couldst not censure injustice, except it were by seeing justice. Censurer of iniquity he cannot be

that discerneth not justice, wherewith when compared he censureth iniquity. For whence knowest thou that this thing is unjust, unless thou know what is just? For what if this also is just, which thou callest unjust? "Far be it," thou sayest, "unjust it is:" and thou criest out as if with seeing eyes, seeing this thing to be unjust, by some rule indeed of justice, with which comparing that which thou seest to be crooked, and perceiving it not to tally with the straightness of the rule, thou findest fault; like an artizan, severing straight from crooked. Therefore I ask thee, this thing to be just, whence seest thou? Where, I say, seest thou this just thing, after seeing which, thou censurest an unjust thing? Whence is that something, wherewith thy soul is imbued, (though in many ways being in the dark,) that something which gleameth upon thy mind, whence this thing is pronounced just? Is it possible that it hath not its fountain? From thyself hast thou that which is just, and canst thou to thyself give justice? No one giveth to himself that which he hath not. Therefore when thou art unjust, thou canst not be just, except by turning thee to a certain abiding justice, wherefrom if thou withdrawest, thou art unjust; to which if thou drawest near, thou art just. If thou withdraw, It decreaseth not, if thou draw near, It increaseth not. Where is therefore that justice? Seek in earth: far be it. For not gold or precious stones thou art seeking, when thou art seeking justice. Seek in the sea; seek in the clouds, seek in the stars: seek in Angels, thou findest it in them, but themselves also from the Fountain drink it. For the justice of Angels is in them all, but from One it is received. Look back therefore, mount over, go to that place where once God hath spoken, and there thou wilt find the Fountain of justice, where is the fountain of life. For with Thee is the fountain of life. For if out of a little dew thou wouldest judge what is just and what is unjust; is there anywise iniquity with God, from Whom to thee as it were from a fountain floweth justice, in so far as thou tastest of what is just, because in many ways unjustly thou dost but mistaste? God hath therefore the fountain of justice. Do not there seek iniquity, where is light without shadow. But plainly the reason may escape thee. If the reason escapeth thee, consider thy ignorance, see what thou art: attend to these two things, For power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy. Seek not things too mighty for thee, and things too high for thee examine not, but what things the Lord hath commanded thee, on those things think alway. Because to these two things which God hath commanded thee belong those two

things, For power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy. Fear not the enemy: so much he doeth as he hath received power to do, Him fear thou That hath the chief power: Him fear, That doeth as much as He willeth, and That doeth nothing unjustly, and whatever He shall have done, is just. We might suppose something or other to be unjust: inasmuch as God hath done it, believe it to be just.

22. Therefore, thou sayest, if any one slay an innocent man, doeth he justly or unjustly? Unjustly certainly. Wherefore doth God permit this? See first that thou owe not this debt: break to the hungry thy bread, and the homeless needy man take thou into thy house: if thou shalt have seen a naked man, clothe him. For this is thy justice, for this thing the Lord hath commanded thee: Wash you, be ye clean, take away naughtinesses from your hearts, and from the sight of Mine eyes: learn to do good, judge for the fatherless and the widow: and come and let us dispute, saith the Lord. Thou desirest to dispute before that thou doest any thing in consideration whereof thou mayest be worthy to dispute, why God hath permitted this. The counsel of God to tell to thee, O man, I am not able: this thing however I say, both that the man hath done unjustly that hath slain an innocent person, and that it would not have been done unless God permitted it: and though the man hath done unjustly, yet God hath not unjustly permitted this. Let the reason lie concealed in that person whoever it be, for whose sake thou art moved, whose innocence doth much move thee. For to thee speedily I might make answer. He would not have been slain unless he were guilty: but thou thinkest him innocent. I might speedily say this to thee. For thou couldest not examine his heart, sift his deeds, weigh his thoughts, so that thou couldest say to me, unjustly he was slain. I might easily therefore make answer: but there is forced upon my view a certain Just One, without dispute just, without doubt just, Who had no sin, slain by sinners, betrayed by a sinner; Himself Christ the Lord, of Whom we cannot say that He hath any iniquity, for those things which He robbed not He paid, is made an objection to my answer. And why should I speak of Christ? 'With thee I am dealing,' thou sayest. And I with thee. About Him thou proposest a question, about Him I am solving the question. For therein the counsel of God we know, which except by His own revealing we should not know: so that when thou shalt have found out that counsel of God, whereby He hath

permitted His innocent Son to be slain by unjust men, and such a counsel as pleaseth thee, and such a counsel as cannot displease thee, if thou art just, thou mayest believe that in other things also by His counsel God doeth the same, but it escaped thee. Ah! brethren, need there was of the blood of a just one to blot out the handwriting of sins; need there was of an example of patience, of an example of humility; need there was of the Sign of the Cross to beat down the devil and his angels; need for us there was of the Passion of our Lord; for by the Passion of the Lord redeemed hath been the world. How many good things hath the Passion of the Lord done! And yet the Passion of this Just One would not have been, unless unrighteous men had slain the Lord. What then? is this good thing which to us hath been granted by the Lord's Passion to be ascribed to the unjust slayers of Christ? Far be it. They willed, God permitted. They guilty would have been, even if only they had willed it: but God would not have permitted it, unless just it had been. They willed to slay: suppose that they had not been able: unjust they would have been, man-slayers they would have been; who would doubt it? For the Lord questioneth the just and the ungodly man: and in the thoughts of the ungodly man questioning shall be. God doth scrutinize what each man hath willed, not what he was able to do. Therefore if they had willed, and had not been able and had not slain, unjust they would have continued, to thee Christ's Passion would not have been given: an ungodly man therefore willed to do it to complete his condemnation; he was permitted, in order that to thee it might be granted: that he willed, is ascribed to the iniquity of the ungodly man; that he was permitted to do, is ascribed to the power of God. He therefore unjustly willed, God justly permitted. Accordingly, my brethren, both Judas the foul traitor to Christ, and the persecutors of Christ, malignant all, ungodly all, unjust all, are to be condemned all: and nevertheless the Father His own proper Son hath not spared, but for the sake of us all He hath delivered Him up. Order if thou art able; distinguish if thou art able (these things): render to God thy vows, which thy lips have uttered: see what the unjust hath here done, what the Just One. The one hath willed, the Other hath permitted: the one unjustly hath willed, the Other justly hath permitted. Let unjust will be condemned, just permission be glorified. For what evil thing hath befallen Christ, in that Christ hath died? Both evil were they that evil willed to do, and yet nothing of evil did He suffer on Whom they did it. Slain was mortal flesh, slaying

death by death, giving a lesson of patience, sending before an example of Resurrection. How great good things of the Just One were wrought by the evil things of the unjust! This is the great mystery of God: that even a good thing which thou doest He hath Himself given it to thee, and by thy evil He doeth good Himself. Do not therefore wonder, God permitteth, and in judgment permitteth: He permitteth, and in measure, number, weight, He permitteth. With Him is not iniquity: do thou only belong to Him; on Himself thy hope set thou, let Himself be thy Helper, thy Salvation: in Him be there the fortified place, the tower of strength, thy refuge let Himself be, and He will not suffer thee to be tempted above that which thou art able to bear, but will make with the temptation also an escape, that thou mayest be able to support it: so that His suffering thee to bear temptation, be His power; His suffering not any more on thee to be done than thou art able to bear, be His mercy: for power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy, because Thou wilt render to each one after his works.

After treating of the Psalm, when an astrologer was pointed out among the people about him, he added:

23. That thirst of the Church, would fain drink up that man also whom ye see. At the same time also, in order that ye may know how many in the mixed multitude of Christians with their mouth do bless, and in their heart curse, this man having been a Christian and a believer returneth as a penitent, and being terrified by the power of the Lord, turneth him to the mercy of the Lord. For having been led astray by the enemy when he was a believer, long time he hath been an astrologer, led astray, leading astray, deceived, deceiving, he hath allured, hath beguiled, many lies he hath spoken against God, That hath given to men power of doing that which is good, and of not doing that which is evil. He used to say, that one's own will did not adultery, but Venus; one's own will did not manslaying, but Mars; and God did not what is just, but Jupiter; and many other blasphemous things, and not light ones. From how many Christians do ye think he hath pocketed money? How many from him have bought a lie, to whom we used to say, Sons of men, how long are ye dull of heart, wherefore love ye vanity, and seek a lie? Now, as of him must be believed, he hath shuddered at his lie, and being the allurer of many men, he hath

perceived at length that by the devil he hath himself been allured, and he turneth to God a penitent. We think, brethren, that because of great fear of heart it hath come to pass. For what must we say? If out of a heathen an astrologer were converted, great indeed would be the joy: but nevertheless it might appear, that, if he had been converted, he was desiring the clerical office in the Church. A penitent he is, he seeketh not any thing save mercy alone. He must be recommended therefore both to your eyes and hearts. Him whom ye see in hearts love ye, with eyes guard ye. See ye him, mark ye him, and whithersoever he shall have gone his way, to the rest of the brethren that now are not here, point him out: and such diligence is mercy; lest that leader astray drag back his heart and take it by storm. Guard ye him, let there not escape you his conversation, his way: in order that by your testimony it may be proved to us that truly to the Lord he hath been turned. For report will not be silent about his life, when to you he is thus presented both to be seen and to be pitied. Ye know in the Acts of the Apostles how it is written, that many lost men, that is, men of such arts, and followers of naughty doctrines, brought unto the Apostles all their books; and there were burned so many volumes, that it was the writer's task to make a valuation of them, and write down the sum of the price. This truly was for the glory of God, in order that even such lost men might not be despaired of by Him that knew how to seek that which had been lost. Therefore this man had been lost, is now sought, found, led hither, he bringeth with him books to be burned, by which he had been to be burned, so that when these have been thrown into the fire, he may himself pass over into a place of refreshment. Know ye that he, brethren, once knocked at the Church door before Easter: for before Easter he began to ask of the Church Christ's medicine. But because the art wherein he had been practised is of such sort as that it was suspected of lying and deceit, he was put off that he might not tempt; at length however he was admitted, that he might not more dangerously be tempted. Pray for him through Christ. Straightway to-day's prayer pour out for him to the Lord our God. For we know and are sure, that your prayer effaceth all his impieties. The Lord be with you.

PSALM 63

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. For the sake of those that perchance are as yet unskilled in the name of Christ; for as much as from every quarter He doth gather men together, Who for all men hath given His Blood, we must say in few words something which both they gladly may hear that know, and they may learn that know not. Those Psalms which we sing, before that our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, by the dictation of the Spirit of God were spoken and written down. For David was king among the nation of the Jews, which nation alone did worship One God, that hath made Heaven and earth, the sea and all things which in them are, whether the things which are seen, or the things which are not seen. But the rest of the nations either did worship idols, which with their hands they had made, or the creation of God, not the Creator Himself, that is, either sun, or moon, or stars, or sea, or mountains, or trees. For all these things God hath made; and would have Himself to be praised in them, not them to be worshipped instead of Himself. In this same nation of Jews, I say, David was king, of whose seed was born our Lord Jesus Christ of the Virgin Mary; because from him the Virgin Mary derived her lineage, who did bear Christ: and so were these Psalms spoken: and there was prophesied in them Christ to come after many years: and there was spoken of by those Prophets, that lived before our Lord Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, whatsoever was to be in our times, which now we read of and see: and much we rejoyce, that our Hope hath been foretold by holy men, who saw not that thing fulfilled, but in the Spirit saw it as future: and we now read, and hear from readers, we discourse of those things; and as they are in the Scriptures, so we see them now fulfilled throughout the whole world. For this who would not rejoyce? Who would not hope for those things to come which not yet have come,

because of those things which being now so many, have been fulfilled? For now, brethren, ye see, how the whole world, the whole earth, all nations, all regions run unto the name of Christ, and believe in Christ. Truly ye see this thing, after what sort every where are overthrown the vanities of the heathen, ye see this thing, evident it is to you. Is this too a thing we have read to you from a book, and not one that is doing before your eyes? This whole thing therefore which ye see come to pass before your eyes, was written of, countless revolutions of years before, by those men whom now we read, when already we see those things fulfilled. But forasmuch as those things also have been written which have not yet come; how our Lord Jesus Christ is to come to judge, Who at first came that He might be judged; (for He came at first humble, hereafter He is to come exalted; He came that He might shew an example of patience, hereafter He is to come that He may judge all men according to their deserts, whether good men, or evil men;) because, I say, not yet hath come this thing which we hope for, namely, that Christ is to come as the Judge of quick and of dead, we ought to believe it. The small part which remaineth let us believe is to come, when already we see so many things which then were future, now completed. For fool is he that will not believe the few things which remain, when he seeth so many things to be fulfilled, which then were not, when they were being foretold.

2. This Psalm therefore is spoken in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, both Head and Members. For that One Person that was born of Mary, and suffered and was buried, and rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and at the right hand of the Father now sitteth and intercedeth for us, is our Head. If He is the Head, we are the members: the whole Church of Him which every where is spread abroad, is the Body of the Same, whereof He is Himself the Head. For not only the believers that now are, but they also that have been before us, and that after us are to be even unto the end of the world, do all belong to His Body: of which Body Himself is the Head, That hath ascended into Heaven. Because therefore now we know Head and Body, He is Head, we Body. When we hear the voice of the Same, both from the Head we ought to hear it, and from the Body too: because whatever He hath suffered, therein we also have suffered: because that which we also suffer in ourselves, Himself also suffereth. In like manner as if the head suffer any thing, is the hand able to say that it suffereth not? or if

the hand suffereth any thing, is the head able to say that it suffereth not? or if the foot suffereth any thing, is the hand able to say that it suffereth not? Whenever one member of ours suffereth any thing, all the members haste to succour the member which is suffering. If therefore when He suffered, we in Him did suffer, and He now hath ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father: whatever His Church suffereth in the tribulations of this world, in temptations, in necessities, in difficulties, (for thus She must needs be instructed, in order that with fire like gold She may be purged,) Himself suffereth. We prove this thing, how we in Him have suffered, by the Apostle saying, But if dead ye are with Christ, why yet as though living about this world do ye decree? Also he saith, that our old man hath been crucified together with Him, that the body of sin might be made void. If therefore in Him we are dead, in Him also we have risen again. For the same Apostle saith, But if ye have risen again with Christ, taste those things which are above, those things which are above seek ye, where Christ is on the right hand of God sitting. If therefore in Him we are dead, and in Him have risen again, and if Himself in us dieth, and in us riseth again; (for Himself is the Oneness of Head and Body;) not without reason the voice of the Same is our voice, and our voice is also the voice of the Same. Let us hear therefore the Psalm, and Christ speaking therein let us perceive.

3. This Psalm hath the Title, For David Himself, when he was in the desert of Idumæa. By the name of Idumæa is understood this world. For Idumæa was a certain nation of men going astray, where idols were worshipped. In no good sense is put this Idumæa. If not in a good sense it is put, it must be understood that this life, wherein we suffer so great toils, and wherein to so great necessities we are made subject, by the name of Idumæa is signified. Even here is a desert where there is much thirst, and ye are to hear the voice of One now thirsting in the desert. But if we acknowledge ourselves as thirsting, we shall acknowledge ourselves as drinking also. For he that thirsteth in this world, in the world to come shall be satisfied, according to the Lord's saying, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for the same shall be satisfied. Therefore in this world we ought not to love fulness. Here we must thirst, in another place we shall be filled. But now in order that we may not faint in this desert, He sprinkleth upon us the dew of His word, and leaveth us not utterly to dry up, so that

there should not be in our case any seeking of us again, but that we may so thirst as that we may drink. But in order that we may drink, with somewhat of His Grace we are sprinkled: nevertheless we thirst. And what saith our soul to God?

4. Ver. 1. God, my God, unto Thee from the light I watch. What is to watch? It is, not to sleep. What is to sleep? There is a sleep of the soul; there is a sleep of the body. Sleep of body we all ought to have: because if sleep of body is not taken, a man fainteth, the body itself fainteth. For our frail body cannot long sustain a soul watching and on the stretch on active works; if for a long time the soul shall have been intent on active pursuits, the body being frail and earthly holdeth her not, sustaineth her not for ever in activity, and fainteth and falleth. Therefore God hath granted sleep to the body, whereby are recruited the members of the body, in order that they may be able to sustain the soul watching. But of this let us take heed, namely, that our soul herself sleep not: for evil is the sleep of the soul. Good is the sleep of the body, whereby is recruited the health of the body. But the sleep of the soul is to forget her God. Whatsoever soul shall have forgotten her God, sleepeth. Therefore the Apostle saith to certain persons that forgot their God, and being as it were in sleep, did act the follies of the worship of idols—(For so are they that worship idols, as they that see in slumbers empty visions: but if the soul of the same persons do wake up, she understandeth by whom she hath been made, and worshippeth not that which herself hath made)—The Apostle, I say, saith to certain persons, Rise, thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee. Was the Apostle waking up one sleeping in body? Nay, but he was waking a soul sleeping, in as much as he was waking her, in order that she might be lightened by Christ. Therefore as to these same watchings saith this man, God, my God, unto Thee from the light I watch. For thou wouldest not watch of thyself, unless there should arise thy Light, to wake thee from sleep. For Christ lighteneth souls, and maketh them to watch: but if His light He taketh away, they slumber. For for this cause to Him there is said in another Psalm, Lighten mine eyes, that I may never slumber in death. Or if from Him being turned away they slumber, He is a present light to them, and they are not able to see, because they sleep. In like manner also is he that sleepeth in body during the day; now the sun hath arisen, now

is the day grown hot, and he is as it were in the night, because he watcheth not that he may see the day that is already risen; so in certain men, when Christ is now present, when the truth hath now been preached, there is yet a sleep of the soul. To those men therefore, if ye watch, ye will be saying daily, Rise, thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee. For your life and your manners ought to watch in Christ, in order that those Heathen men sleeping may perceive, and at the sound of your watchings may be awakened, and may themselves shake off sleep, and may begin in Christ with you to say, O God, my God, unto Thee from the light I watch.

5. Ver. 2. My soul hath thirsted for Thee. Behold that desert of Idumæa. See how here he thirsteth: but see what good thing is here, Hath thirsted for Thee. For there are they that thirst, but not for God. For every one that willeth any thing to be granted to him, is in the heat of longing; the longing itself is the thirst of the soul. And see ye what longings there are in the hearts of men: one longeth for gold, another longeth for silver, another longeth for possessions, another inheritance, another abundance of money, another many herds, another a wife, another honours, another sons. Ye see those longings, how they are in the hearts of men. All men are inflamed with longing, and scarce is found one to say, My soul hath thirsted for Thee. For men thirst for the world: and perceive not themselves to be in the desert of Idumæa, where their souls ought to thirst for God. Say we therefore, My soul hath thirsted for Thee: say all we, because in the harmony of Christ all were one soul: let this same soul thirst in Idumæa.

6. Hath thirsted for Thee, he saith, my soul: in how many ways for Thee my flesh also? A small thing it is that my soul hath thirsted, my flesh also hath thirsted. Consider if the soul thirsteth for God, in what manner doth the flesh also thirst for God? For when the flesh thirsteth, for water it thirsteth: when the soul thirsteth, for the Fountain of Wisdom it thirsteth. From that very Fountain shall be made drunken our souls, as saith another Psalm, They shall be made drunken with the fruitfulness of Thy House, and with the flood of Thy delights Thou shalt give them to drink. Wisdom therefore must be thirsted after, righteousness must be thirsted after. With it we shall not be satisfied, with it we shall not be filled, save when this life shall have

been ended, and we shall have come to that which God hath promised. For God hath promised equality with Angels: and now the Angels thirst not as we do, they hunger not as we do; but they have the fulness of truth, of light, of immortal wisdom. Therefore blessed they are, and out of so great blessedness, because they are in that City, the Heavenly Jerusalem, afar from whence we now are sojourning in a strange land, they observe us sojourners, and they pity us, and by the command of the Lord they help us, in order that to this common country sometime we may return, and there with them sometime with the Lord's fountain of truth and eternity we may be filled. Now therefore let our soul thirst: whence doth our flesh also thirst, and this in many ways? In many ways for Thee, he saith, my flesh also. Because to our flesh also is promised Resurrection. As to our soul is promised blessedness, so also to our flesh is promised resurrection. Resurrection of the flesh of such sort is promised to us: hear ye, and learn, and hold fast what is the hope of Christians, on account of which we are Christians. For not to this end are we Christians, that we may seek for ourselves earthly felicity, which oftentimes both robbers and wicked men have. For the sake of another felicity we are Christians, which then we shall receive, when that whole life of this world shall have passed away. Therefore is promised to us resurrection of the flesh also; and such a resurrection of the flesh is promised, as that this flesh which now we bear, shall rise again at the last. And let it not seem to you a thing incredible. For if God hath made us that were not, is it a great thing for Him to make again us that were? Therefore let not this seem to you to be incredible, because ye see dead men as it were decaying, and passing into ashes and into dust. Or if any dead man be burned, or if dogs tear him in pieces, do ye think that from this he will not rise again? All things which are dismembered, and into a sort of dust do decay, are entire with God. For into those elements of the world they pass, whence at first they have come, when we were made: we do not see them; but yet God will bring them forth, He knoweth whence, because even before we were, He created us from whence He knew. Such a resurrection of the flesh therefore to us is promised, as that, although it be the same flesh, that now we carry, which is to rise again, yet it hath not the corruption which now it hath. For now because of the corruption of frailty, if we eat not, we faint and are hungry; if we drink not, we faint and are thirsty; if long time we watch, we faint and sleep; if long time we sleep, we

faint, therefore we watch; if long time we eat and drink, though for refreshment we may eat and drink, the very prolonged refreshment is a cause of fainting; if long time we stand, we are wearied, therefore we sit; and if long time we sit, there also are we wearied, and therefore we rise up. Secondly, see how without any standing is our flesh: for infancy passeth away into boyhood, and thou seekest infancy, and infancy is not, for now instead of infancy is boyhood: again this same also passeth into youth, thou seekest boyhood and findest not: the young man becometh a middle aged man, thou seekest the young man and he is not: the middle aged man becometh an old man, thou seekest a middle aged man and findest not: and an old man dieth, thou seekest an old man and findest not: our age therefore standeth not still: every where is weariness, every where faintness, every where corruption. Observing what a hope of resurrection God promiseth to us, in all those our manifold faintings we thirst for that incorruption: and so our flesh manifoldly doth thirst for God. In this Idumæa, in this desert, manifoldly as it toileth, so manifoldly doth it thirst; manifoldly as it is wearied, so manifoldly doth it thirst for that unwearying incorruption.

7. Nevertheless, my brethren, the flesh of a good Christian and a believer even in this world for God doth thirst: for if the flesh hath need of bread, if it hath need of water, if it hath need of wine, if it hath need of money, if this flesh hath need of a beast, from God it ought to seek it, not from demons and idols and I know not what powers of this world. For there are certain who when they suffer hunger in this world, leave God and ask Mercury or ask Jove to give unto them, or her whom they call 'Heavenly,' or any the like demons: not for God their flesh thirsteth. But they that thirst for God, every where ought to thirst for Him, both soul and in flesh: for to the soul also God giveth His bread, that is the Word of Truth: and to the flesh God giveth the things which are necessary, for God hath made both soul and flesh. For the sake of thy flesh thou askest of demons: hath God made the soul, and the demons made the flesh? He that hath made the soul, the Same hath made the flesh also: He that hath made both of them, the Same feedeth both of them. Let either part of us thirst for God, and after labour manifold let either simply be filled.

8. But where thirsteth our soul, and our flesh manifoldly, not for any one but for Thee, O Lord, that is our God? it thirsteth where? In a land desert, and without way, and without water. Of this world we have spoken, the same is Idumæa, this is the desert of Idumæa, whence the Psalm hath received its title. In a land desert. Too little it is to say desert, where no man dwelleth; it is besides, both without way, and without water. O that the same desert had even a way: O that into this a man running, even knew where he might thence get forth! He seeth no man to his comfort, he seeth no way whereby he may be free from the desert place. Therefore in that place he taketh lodging. O that there were even water, whence he might be refreshed, that from thence cannot get forth. Evil is the desert, horrible, and to be feared: and nevertheless God hath pitied us, and hath made for us a way in the desert, Himself our Lord Jesus Christ: and hath made for us a consolation in the desert, in sending to us preachers of His Word: and hath given to us water in the desert, by fulfilling with the Holy Spirit His preachers, in order that there might be created in them a well of water springing up unto life everlasting. And, lo! we have here all things, but they are not of the desert. Therefore what properly belongs to the desert this Psalm hath first noticed, in order that when thou too hadst heard in what evil case thou wast, whatever consolations thou mightest have here, either of associates, or of way, or of water, thou shouldest not ascribe to the desert, but to Him That hath deigned to visit thee in the desert.

9. Ver. 3. Thus in a holy thing I have appeared to Thee, that I might see Thy power and Thy glory. At first ‘my soul thirsted, and my flesh manifoldly for Thee in a desert, and in a land without way, and without water,’ and thus in a holy thing I have appeared to Thee that I might see Thy power and Thy glory. Unless a man first thirst in that desert, that is in the evil wherein he is, he never arriveth at the good, which is God. But I have appeared to Thee, he saith, in a holy thing. Now in a holy thing is there great consolation. I have appeared to Thee, is what? In order that Thou mightest see me: and for this reason Thou hast seen me, in order that I might see Thee. I have appeared to Thee, that I might see. He hath not said, I have appeared to Thee that Thou mightest see: but, I have appeared to Thee, that I might see Thy power and Thy glory. Whence also the Apostle, But now, he saith, knowing God, nay having been known of God. For first ye have appeared to

God, in order that to you God might be able to appear. That I might see Thy power and Thy glory. In truth in that forsaken place, that is, in that desert, if as though from the desert a man striveth to obtain enough for his sustenance, he will never see the power of the Lord, and the glory of the Lord, but he will remain to die of thirst, and will find neither way, nor consolation, nor water, whereby he may endure in the desert. But when he shall have lifted up himself to God, so as to say to Him out of all his inward parts, My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how manifoldly for Thee also my flesh! lest perchance even the things necessary for the flesh of others he ask, and not of God, or else long not for that resurrection of the flesh, which God hath promised to us: when I say, he shall have lifted up himself, he will have no small consolations.

10. Behold, brethren, in like manner as our flesh, so long as it is mortal, so long as it is frail, before that resurrection hath those comforts whereby we live, as bread, water, fruits, wine, oil: (if all these comforts and succours forsake us, even to continue we are unable;) though not yet this flesh hath received that perfect soundness, wherein it will suffer no difficulty, no need: so also our soul, while here it is in this flesh, amid the temptations and dangers of this world, is still weak; but hath moreover those same comforts of the Word, comforts of prayer, comforts of discourse: these things are to our soul as those to our flesh. But when our flesh shall have risen again, so that no longer of these we have need, it will have a kind of position and condition of its incorruption: so also our soul will have to its food Himself the Word of God, by Which were made all things. Nevertheless, thanks to God, Who now in this desert forsaketh us not, either in giving to us what is necessary for the flesh, or in giving to us what is necessary for the soul: and when by any necessities He instructeth us, He willeth that we should love Him the more; lest perchance through fulness we be corrupted, and forget Him. He withdraweth from us sometimes the things which are necessary, and grindeth us down; in order that we may know that Father and Lord He is, not only when comforting, but also when chastening. For He is preparing us for a certain inheritance incorruptible and great. If one cask, or one vessel of thine, or whatever thou hast in thy house, thou art intending to leave to thy son, and that he may not lose it, thou instructest him, and if with the whip for correction thou chastenest him, that he may not lose that

nothing of thine, which he is himself also to leave here, even as thou dost; wilt thou not have our Father also to instruct us with the whippings even of necessities or tribulations, Who is going to give us such an inheritance as cannot pass away? For as our inheritance God will give us Himself, so that Himself we may possess, and by Himself we may be possessed for everlasting.

11. Therefore in a holy thing let us appear to God, that He may appear to us: let us appear in holy longing, that He may appear to us in the power and glory of the Son of God. For to many He hath not appeared: let them be in the Holy One, that He may appear to them also. For many think Him to have been only man; because He is preached as having been born of man, crucified and dead, as having walked on earth, having eaten and having drunk, and as having done all other things that are human; and they think Him to have been such an one as are the rest of men. But ye have heard but now when the Gospel was being read in what terms He hath notified His Majesty: I and My Father are One. Behold how great a Majesty and how great an Equality with the Father hath come down to the flesh because of our infirmity. Behold how greatly beloved we have been, before that we loved God. If before that we loved God, so much by Him we were beloved, as that His Son, Equal with Himself, He made a Man for our sake, what doth He reserve for us now loving Him? Therefore many men think it to be a very small thing that the Son of God hath appeared on earth; because they are not in the Holy One, to them hath not appeared the power of the Same and the glory of the Same: that is, not yet have they a heart made holy, whence they may perceive the eminence of that virtue, and may render thanks to God, nor that to which for their own sakes so great an One came, unto what a nativity, unto what a Passion, they are not able to see, His glory and His power.

12. Ver. 4. For better is Thy mercy than lives. Many are the lives of men, but one life God promiseth: and He giveth not this to us as if for our merits but for His mercy. For what good thing have we done, to merit this? Or what good deeds of ours have gone before, that God should give to us His Grace? Hath He found righteousnesses to crown and not transgressions to forgive? Nay, it would not have been unjust if He had willed to punish the

transgressions which He hath forgiven. For what is so just a thing, as that a sinner should be punished? Though a just thing it be, that a sinner should be punished; it hath belonged to the mercy of Him not to punish a sinner but to justify him, and of a sinner to make a just man, and of an ungodly man to make a godly man. Therefore His mercy is better than lives. What lives? Those which for themselves men have chosen. One hath chosen for himself a life of business, another a country life, another a life of usury, another a military life; one this, another that. Divers are the lives, but better is Thy life than our lives. Better is that which Thou givest to men amended, than that which perverse men choose. One life Thou givest, which should be preferred to all our lives, whatsoever in the world we might have chosen. For better is Thy mercy than lives: my lips shall praise Thee. My lips would not praise Thee, unless before me were to go Thy mercy. By Thy gift Thee I praise, through Thy mercy Thee I praise. For I should not be able to praise God, unless He gave me to be able to praise Him. For better is Thy mercy than lives: my lips shall praise Thee.

13. Ver. 5. So I will speak good of Thee in my life, and in Thy name I will lift up my hands. 'So I will speak good of Thee in my life.' Now in my life which to me Thou hast given, not in that which I have chosen after the world with the rest among many lives, but that which Thou hast given to me through Thy mercy, that I should praise Thee. So I will speak good of Thee in my life. What is so? That to Thy mercy I may ascribe my life wherein Thee I praise, not to my merits. And in Thy name I will lift up my hands. Lift up therefore hands in prayer. Our Lord hath lifted up for us His hands on the Cross, and stretched out were His hands for us, and therefore were His hands stretched out on the Cross, in order that our hands might be stretched out unto good works: because His Cross hath brought us mercy. Behold, He hath lifted up hands, and hath offered for us Himself a Sacrifice to God, and through that Sacrifice have been effaced all our sins. Let us also lift up our hands to God in prayer: and our hands being lifted up to God shall not be confounded, if they be exercised in good works. For what doth he that lifteth up hands? Whence hath it been commanded that with hands lifted up we should pray to God? For the Apostle saith, Lifting up pure hands without anger and dissension. It is in order that when thou liftest up hands to God, there may come into thy mind thy works. For whereas those

hands are lifted up that thou mayest obtain that which thou wilt, those same hands thou thinkest in good works to exercise, that they may not blush to be lifted up to God. In Thy name I will lift up my hands. Those are our prayers in this Idumæa, in this desert, in the land without water and without way, where for us Christ is the Way, but not the way of this earth.

14. And what shall I say, when I shall lift up my hands in Thy name? what shall I require? Ah! brethren, when ye lift up hands, ask what ye are to require! For from the Almighty ye require. Some great thing require ye, not such things as they require that not yet have believed. Ye see what sort of things are given even to ungodly men. Art thou to require from thy God money? Doth He not give it even to wicked men, that in Him believe not? What great thing therefore art thou to require, which He giveth to evil men also? But let it not displease thee that those things which He giveth to evil men also, are so trifling that even to evil men they are worthy to be given: in order that those things which can be given even to evil men may not seem to thee as if they were great things. God's indeed are all earthly gifts: but see, how those things which He giveth even to evil men, are not to be esteemed as any thing great. There is another thing which He reserveth for us. But let us think of those things which He giveth even to evil men, and hence let us perceive what thing He reserveth for good men. What things He giveth to evil men see ye: He giveth to them this light, see ye that both good men and evil men see it! the rain which cometh down upon the earth; and from hence how great good things do spring? and thence is made distribution both to evil men and to good men, according to the Gospel saying, That maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. Those gifts therefore which do spring either from rain, or from the sun, from our Lord indeed we ought to require, forasmuch as they are things necessary; but not those things alone, because those things are given both to good men and to evil men. What therefore ought we to require, when we lift up hands? For as best it could, the Psalm hath spoken this. What is it that I have said, as best it could? As best could human mouth unto human ears. For by means of human mouths these words have been spoken, and in certain figures they have been spoken, as all the weak, as all the babes could receive them. What hath he said? What hath he required? In Thy name, he saith, I will lift up my hands.

As going to receive what? As though with marrow and fatness my soul should be filled. Do ye think that this soul hath longed for any fatness of flesh, my brethren? For he hath not longed for this as if it were some great matter, namely, that fat rams or fat hogs for him should be killed, or that he should come to some tavern, where he might find choice meats wherewith to fill himself. If we shall have supposed this, we are worthy to hear those words. Therefore something spiritual we ought to perceive. Our soul hath a sort of fatness. For the souls which lack that wisdom, do grow thin; and become so utterly attenuated, as that in all good works they speedily fall short. Why do they speedily fall short in all good works? Because they have not the fatness of their fulness. Hear the Apostle, speaking of a fat soul, giving commandment that every one should work well. He saith what? A cheerful giver God loveth. Whence could a fat soul be fat, except by the Lord it were filled? And nevertheless howsoever fat here it be, what will it be in the world to come, where God will feed us? Meanwhile in this sojourning, what we shall be then, cannot even be told. And perchance that fulness we desire here when we lift up our hands, at the time of which with fatness we shall be so filled, that all our want shall utterly perish, and for nothing we shall long: forasmuch as the whole will be before us, whatever we long for here, whatever as a great matter we love here. Already our fathers are dead, but God liveth: here we could not always have fathers, but there we shall alway have one living Father, when we have our father-land: whatever is our earthly land, there we cannot alway be; and others must needs be born, and sons of elder citizens are born, to shut out from thence their fathers. For to this end a boy is born, to say to his elder, What doest thou here? It must needs be that they that succeed and are born should shut out them that have gone before them. There all we alike shall live: there will be no successor, because there will be no predecessor. What sort of country is that? But thou lovest here riches. God Himself shall be to thee thy riches. But thou lovest a good fountain. What is more passing clear than that wisdom? What more bright? Whatsoever is an object of love here, in place of all thou shalt have Him that hath made all things, as though with marrow and fatness my soul should be filled: and lips of exultation shall praise Thy name. In this desert, in Thy name I will lift up my hands: let my soul be filled as though with marrow and fatness, and my lips with exultation shall praise Thy name. For now is prayer, so long as there is

thirst: when thirst shall have passed away, there passeth away praying and there succeedeth praising. And lips of exultation shall praise Thy name.

15. Ver. 7. If I have remembered Thee upon my bed, in the dawns I did meditate on Thee: (ver. 8.) because Thou hast become my helper. His 'bed' he calleth his rest. When any one is at rest, let him be mindful of God; when any one is at rest, let him not by rest be dissolved, and forget God: if mindful he is of God when he is at rest, in his actions on God he doth meditate. For the dawn he hath called actions, because every man at dawn beginneth to do something. What therefore hath he said? If mindful I have been of Thee on my bed, in the dawns also I was meditating on Thee. If therefore I was not mindful on my bed, in the dawn also I did not meditate on Thee. Can he that thinketh not of God when he is at leisure, in his actions think of God? But he that is mindful of Him when he is at rest, on the Same doth meditate when he is doing, lest in action he should come short. Therefore he hath added what? And in the dawns I was meditating on Thee: because Thou hast become my helper. For unless God aid our good works, they cannot be accomplished by us. And worthy things we ought to work: that is, as though in the light, since by Christ shewing the way we work. Whosoever worketh evil things, in the night he worketh, not in the dawn; according to the Apostle, saying, They that are drunken, in the night are drunken; and they that sleep, in the night do sleep: let us that are of the day, be sober. He exhorteth us that after the day we should walk honestly: As in the day, honestly let us walk. And again, Ye, he saith, are sons of light, and sons of day; we are not of night nor of darkness. Who are sons of night, and sons of darkness? They that work all evil things. To such a degree they are sons of night, that they fear lest the things which they work should be seen: and the evil things which openly they work, for this reason openly they work, because many men work those things: the things which few men work, in secret they work: but they that work such things openly, are indeed in the light of the sun, but in the darkness of the heart. No one therefore in the dawn worketh, except him that in Christ worketh. But he that while at leisure is mindful of Christ, on the Same doth meditate in all his actions, and He is a helper to him in a good work, lest through his weakness he fail.

16. And in the covering of Thy wings I will exult. I am cheerful in good works, because over me is the covering of Thy wings. If thou protect me not, forasmuch as I am a chicken, the kite will seize me. For our Lord Himself saith in a certain place to that Jerusalem, a certain city, where He was crucified: Jerusalem, He saith, Jerusalem, how often I have willed to gather together thy sons, as though a hen her chickens, and thou wouldest not? Little ones we are: therefore may God protect us under the shadow of His wings. What when we shall have grown greater? A good thing it is for us that even then He should protect us, so that under Him the greater, alway we be chickens. For alway He is greater, however much we may have grown. Let no one say, let Him protect me while I am a little one: as if sometime he would attain to such magnitude, as should be self-sufficient. Without the protection of God, nought thou art. Alway by Him let us desire to be protected: then alway in Him we shall have power to be great, if alway under Him little we be. And in the covering of Thy wings I will exult.

17. Ver. 9. My soul hath been glued on behind Thee. See ye one longing, see ye one thirsting, see ye how he cleaveth to God. Let there spring up in you this affection. If already it is sprouting, let it be rained upon and grow: let it come to such strength, that ye also may say from the whole heart, My soul hath been glued on behind Thee. Where is that same glue? The glue itself is love. Have thou love, wherewith as with glue thy soul may be glued on behind God. Not with God, but behind God; that He may go before, thou mayest follow. For he that shall have willed to go before God, by his own counsel would live, and will not follow the commandments of God. Because of this even Peter was rebuked, when he willed to give counsel to Christ Who was going to suffer for us. For as yet Peter was weak, and knew not how great profit there was for mankind in the blood of Christ. Now the Lord, That had come to redeem us, and to give His blood a ransom for us, began to proclaim His Passion. Peter was alarmed for His Lord, as if He were about to die, Whom he would have had here alway to live just as he then saw Him: because being given up to his carnal eyes, by carnal affection about the Lord he was held fast; and he saith to Him, Far be it from Thee, O Lord, be Thou merciful to Thyself. And the Lord, Go back behind Me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things which are of God, but

the things which are of men. Wherefore, the things which are of men? Because to go before Me thou desirest, go back behind Me, in order that thou mayest follow me: so that now following Christ he might say, My soul hath been glued on behind Thee. With reason he addeth, Me Thy right hand hath taken up. My soul hath been glued on behind Thee, me Thy right hand hath taken up. This Christ hath said in us: that is in the Man Which He was bearing for us, Which He was offering for us, He hath said this. The Church also saith this in Christ, she saith it in Her Head: for she too hath suffered here great persecutions, and by Her individual members even now he suffereth. For what man belonging to Christ is not vexed with divers temptations, and do not the devil and his angels daily strive with him, in order that he may be led astray by some lust, by some suggestion, either by promise of gain or fear of loss, or by promise of life or fear of death, either by the enmity of some great man, or the friendship of some great man? By every means the devil striveth in what way he may throw down: and in persecutions we live, and we have for our perpetual enemies, the devil and his angels: but let us not fear. The devil and his angels are as it were kites: under the wings of that Hen let us stay, and he is not able to touch us. For the Hen which protecteth us, is strong. Weak She is for our sake: but strong She is in Herself; our Lord Jesus Christ, the very Wisdom of God. Therefore the Church also saith this: My soul hath been glued on behind Thee, Thy right hand hath taken me up.

18. Ver. 9. But themselves in vain have sought my soul. What have they done to me that have sought to destroy my soul? O that they were seeking my soul, so that they might believe with me: but they have sought my soul to destroy me. For they were not going to carry off the glue, wherewith my soul hath adhered behind Thee. For who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or sword? Thy right hand hath taken me up. Therefore because of that glue, and because of Thy right hand most mighty, in vain they have sought my soul. As many as have persecuted or desire to persecute the Church, of them this may be understood: chiefly, however, let us take this of the Jews, who sought to destroy the Soul of Christ, both in Himself our Head Which they crucified, and in His disciples whom afterwards they persecuted. They have sought my soul. They shall go unto the lower places of the earth. Earth they

were unwilling to lose, when they crucified Christ: into the lower places of the earth they have gone. What are the lower places of the earth? Earthly lusts. Better it is to walk upon earth, than by lust to go under earth. For every one that in prejudice of his salvation desireth earthly things, is under the earth: because earth he hath put before him, earth upon himself he hath put, and himself beneath he hath laid. They therefore fearing to lose earth, said what of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they saw great multitudes go after Him, forasmuch as He was doing wonderful things? If we shall have let Him go alive, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and nation. They feared to lose earth, and they went under the earth: there befel them even what they feared. For they willed to kill Christ, that they might not lose earth; and earth they therefore lost, because Christ they slew. For when Christ had been slain, because the Lord Himself had said to them, The kingdom shall be taken from you, and shall be given up to a nation doing righteousness: there followed them great calamities of persecutions: there conquered them Roman emperors, and kings of the nations: they were shut out from that very place where they crucified Christ, and now that place is full of Christian praisers: it hath no Jew, it hath been cleared of the enemies of Christ, it hath been fulfilled with the praisers of Christ. Behold, they have lost at the hands of the Romans the place, because Christ they slew, who to this end slew, that they might not lose the place at the hands of the Romans. Therefore, They shall enter into the lower places of the earth.

19. Ver. 10. They shall be delivered unto the hands of the sword. In truth, thus it hath visibly befallen them, they have been taken by storm by enemies breaking in. Portions of foxes they shall be. Foxes he calleth the kings of the world, that then were when Judæa was conquered. Hear in order that ye may know and perceive, that those he calleth foxes. Herod the king the Lord Himself hath called a fox. Go ye, He saith, and tell that fox. See and observe, my brethren: Christ as King they would not have, and portions of foxes they have been made. For when Pilate the deputy governor in Judæa slew Christ at the voices of the Jews, he said to the same Jews, Your King shall I crucify? Because He was called King of the Jews, and He was the true King. And they rejecting Christ said, We have no king

but Cæsar. They rejected a Lamb, chose a fox: deservedly portions of foxes they were made.

20. Ver. 11. The King in truth, is so written, because they chose a fox, a King in truth they would not have. The King in truth: that is, the true King, to whom the title was inscribed, when He suffered. For Pilate set this title inscribed over His Head, The King of the Jews, in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues: in order that all they that should pass by might read of the glory of the King, and the infamy of the Jews themselves, who, rejecting the true King, chose the fox Cæsar. The King in truth shall rejoice in God. They have been made portions of foxes: The King in truth shall rejoice in God. He Whom they seemed to themselves as if to overcome, when they crucified Him, at the time when He was crucified did shed the ransom, wherewith He bought the round world. The King in truth shall rejoice in God: every one shall be praised that sweareth in the Same. Why shall every one be praised that sweareth in the Same? Because for himself he hath chosen Christ, not a fox: because when those Jews insulted, then He gave that whence they might be redeemed. To Himself therefore we belong, that hath redeemed us, that for us hath conquered the world, not with armed soldiery, but with despised Cross. The King in truth shall rejoice in God: every one shall be praised that sweareth in the Same. Who sweareth in Him? He that promiseth to Him his life, that voweth to Him and payeth, he that becometh a Christian: this is what he saith in, Every one shall be praised that sweareth in the Same. For stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things. How many unjust things have the Jews spoken? How many evil things have spoken, not only the Jews, but also all men that for the sake of idols have persecuted the Christians? When they were raging against the Christians, they were thinking that they could make an end of Christians: while they were thinking that they could make an end, the Christians grew, and they themselves have been made an end of. Stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things. No one dareth now openly to speak against Christ, now all men fear Christ. For stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things. When in weakness the Lamb was, even foxes were bold against the Lamb. There conquered the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the foxes were silenced. For stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things.

PSALM 64

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

While keeping to-day the festival of the holy Martyrs' Passion, in the recollection of them let us rejoice, calling to mind what they suffered, and perceiving unto what they looked. For so great tribulations in the flesh they never would have endured, unless they had perceived with the mind a great rest. Over this Psalm, therefore, as beseemeth the aforesaid celebration, let us hastily pass. For yesterday many things your Love heard, and yet not even to-day have we been able to withhold our service from this festivity. Therefore though chiefly the Lord's Passion is noticed in this Psalm, neither could the Martyrs have been strong, unless they had beheld Him, That first suffered; nor such things would they have endured in suffering, as He did, unless they had hoped for such things in the Resurrection as He had shewed of Himself: but your Holiness knoweth that our Head is our Lord Jesus Christ, and that all that cleave unto Him are the members of Him the Head; and ye now have the voice of Him very well known to you, forasmuch as not from Head alone, but also from Body He speaketh, and the voices of Him either signify or foretel not only Himself the Lord Jesus Christ, that hath now ascended into Heaven, but also the members of Him about to follow their own Head: let us acknowledge here not only His voice, but also our own. And let no one say, that now-a-days in tribulation of passions we are not. For alway ye have heard this fact, how in those times the whole Church together as it were was smitten against, but now through individuals she is tried. Bound indeed is the devil, that he may not do as much as he could, that he may not do as much as he would: nevertheless, he is permitted to tempt as much as is expedient to men advancing. It is not expedient for us to be without temptations: nor should we beseech God that we be not tempted, but that we be not 'led into temptation.'

2. Ver. 1. Say we, therefore, ourselves also: Hearken, O God, to my prayer, while I am troubled; from fear of the enemy deliver my soul. Enemies have raged against the Martyrs: for what was that voice of Christ's Body praying? For this it was praying, to be delivered from enemies, and that enemies might not have power to slay them. Were they not therefore hearkened to, because they were slain; and hath God forsaken His servants of a contrite heart, and despised men hoping in Him? Far be it. For who hath called upon God, and hath been forsaken; who hath hoped in Him, and hath been deserted by Him? They were hearkened to therefore, and they were slain; and yet from enemies they were delivered. Others being afraid gave consent, and lived, and yet the same by enemies were swallowed up. The slain were delivered, the living were swallowed up. Thence is also that voice of thanksgiving, Perchance alive they would have swallowed us up. Many men were swallowed up, and alive they were swallowed up, many dead were swallowed up. They that thought the Christian faith to be vain, dead were swallowed up: but they who, knowing the preaching of the Gospel to be truth, knowing Christ to be the Son of God; and believing this, and holding this inwardly, nevertheless yielded to the pains, and to idols did sacrifice, alive were swallowed up. Those were swallowed up, because they were dead: but these because they were swallowed up are dead. For being swallowed up they could not live, although alive they were swallowed up. Therefore for this prayeth the voice of the Martyrs, From fear of the enemy deliver Thou my soul: not so that the enemy may not slay me, but that I may not fear an enemy slaying. For that to be fulfilled in the Psalm the servant prayeth, which but now in the Gospel the Lord was commanding. What but now was the Lord commanding? Fear not them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill; but Him rather fear ye, that hath power to kill both body and soul in the hell of fire. And He repeated, Yea, I say unto you, fear Him. Who are they that kill the body? Enemies. What was the Lord commanding? That they should not be feared. Be prayer offered, therefore, that He may grant what He hath commanded. From fear of the enemy deliver my soul. Deliver me from fear of the enemy, and make me submit to the fear of Thee. I would not fear him that killeth the body, but I would fear Him that hath power to kill both body and soul in the hell of fire. For not from fear would I be free: but from fear of the enemy being free, under fear of the Lord a servant.

3. Ver. 2. Thou hast protected me from the gathering together of malignants, and from the multitude of men working iniquity. Now upon Himself our Head let us look. Like things many Martyrs have suffered: but nothing doth shine out so brightly as the Head of Martyrs; in Him rather let us behold what they have gone through. Protected he was from the multitude of malignants, God protecting Himself, the Son Himself and the Manhood which He was carrying protecting His flesh: because Son of Man He is, and Son of God He is; Son of God because of the form of God, Son of Man because of the form of a servant: having in His power to lay down His life: and to take it again. To Him what could enemies do? They killed body, soul they killed not. Observe. Too little therefore it were for the Lord to exhort the Martyrs with word, unless He had enforced it by example. Ye know what a gathering together there was of malignant Jews, and what a multitude there was of men working iniquity. What iniquity? That wherewith they willed to kill the Lord Jesus Christ. So many good works, He saith, I have shewn to you, for which of these will ye to kill Me? He endured all their infirm, He healed all their sick, He preached the Kingdom of Heaven, He held not His peace at their vices, so that these same should have been displeasing to them, rather than the Physician by whom they were being made whole: for all these His remedies being ungrateful, like men delirious in high fever raving at the physician, they devised the plan of destroying Him that had come to heal them; as though therein they would prove whether He were indeed a man, that could die, or were somewhat above men, and would not suffer Himself to die. The word of these same men we perceive in the wisdom of Solomon: with death most vile, say they, let us condemn Him; let us question Him, for there will be regard in the discourses of Him; for if truly Son of God He is, let Him deliver Him. Let us see therefore what was done.

4. Ver. 3. For they have whet like a sword their tongues. ‘Sons of men; their teeth are arms and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword,’ which saith another Psalm also; so also here, They have whet like a sword their tongues. Let not the Jews say, we have not killed Christ. For to this end they gave Him to Pilate the judge, in order that they themselves might seem as it were guiltless of His death. For when Pilate had said to them, kill ye Him; they replied, For us it is not lawful to kill any one. The iniquity of their deed

upon a human judge they wished to lay: but did they deceive God the Judge? With regard to what Pilate did, in the very fact that he did it, he was somewise an accomplice, but in comparison with them he is himself much less guilty. For he strove as far as he could to deliver Him out of their hands. For to this end he scourged Him, and led Him forth to them. Not in persecution he scourged the Lord, but wishing to satisfy their fury, that even so they might at length be appeased, and might cease to wish to kill, when they saw Him scourged. He did this also. But when they persisted, ye know how he washed his hands, and said, that he himself did it not, that he was pure of the blood of that Man. He did it nevertheless. But if he is guilty because he did it though unwillingly, are they innocent who compelled him to do it? By no means. But he gave sentence against Him, and commanded Him to be crucified: and in a manner himself killed Him; ye also, O ye Jews, killed Him. Whence did ye kill Him? With the sword of the tongue: for ye did whet your tongues. And when did ye smite, except when ye cried out, Crucify, Crucify?

5. But on this account we must not pass over that which hath come into mind, lest perchance the reading of the Divine Scriptures should disquiet any one. One Evangelist saith that the Lord was crucified at the sixth hour, and another at the third hour: unless we understand it, we are disquieted. And when the sixth hour was already beginning, Pilate is said to have sat on the judgment-seat: and in reality when the Lord was lifted up upon the tree, it was the sixth hour. But another Evangelist, looking unto the mind of the Jews, how they wished themselves to seem guiltless of the death of the Lord, by his account proveth them guilty, saying, that the Lord was crucified at the third hour. But considering all the circumstance of the history, how many things might have been done, when before Pilate the Lord was being accused, in order that He might be crucified; we find that it might have been the third hour, when they cried out, Crucify, Crucify. Therefore with more truth they killed at the time when they cried out. The ministers of the magistrate at the sixth hour crucified, the transgressors of the law at the third hour cried out: that which those did with hands at the sixth hour, these did with tongue at the third hour. More guilty are they that with crying out were raging, than they that in obedience were ministering. This is the whole of the Jews' sagacity, this is that which they sought as

some great matter. Let us kill and let us not kill: so let us kill, as that we may not ourselves be judged to have killed. They have whetted like a sword their tongues.

6. They have bended the bow, a bitter thing. The bow he calleth lyings in wait. For he that with sword fighteth hand to hand, openly fighteth: he that shooteth an arrow deceiveth, in order to strike. For the arrow smiteth, before it is foreseen to come to wound. But whom could the lyings in wait of the human heart escape? Would they escape our Lord Jesus Christ, Who had no need that any one should bear witness to Him of man? For Himself knew what was in man, as the Evangelist testifieth. Nevertheless, let us hear them, and look upon them in their doings as if the Lord knew not what they devise. They have bended the bow, a deadly thing, (ver. 4.) in order that they may shoot in secret One unspotted. The expression he used, they have bended the bow, is the same as, in secret: as if they were deceiving by lyings in wait. For ye know by what artifices they did this, how with money they bribed a disciple that clave to Him, in order that He might be betrayed to them, how they procured false witnesses; with what lyings in wait and artifices they wrought, in order that they might shoot in secret one unspotted. Great iniquity! Behold from a secret place there cometh an arrow, which striketh One unspotted, who had not even so much of spot as could be pierced with an arrow. A Lamb indeed He is unspotted, wholly unspotted, alway unspotted; not one from whom spots have been removed, but that hath contracted not any spots. For He hath made many unspotted by forgiving sins, being Himself unspotted by not having sins. That they may shoot in secret One unspotted.

7. Suddenly they shall shoot Him, and shall not fear. O heart hardened, to wish to kill a Man that did raise the dead! Suddenly: that is, insidiously, as if unexpectedly, as if not foreseen. For the Lord was like to one knowing not, being among men knowing not what He knew not and what He knew: yea, knowing not that there was nothing that He knew not, and that He knew all things, and to this end had come in order that they might do that which they thought they did by their own power. Suddenly they shall shoot Him, and shall not fear.

8. Ver. 5. They have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. ‘Have confirmed:’ there were done so great miracles, they were not moved, they persisted in the design of the evil discourse. He was given up to the judge: trembleth the judge, and they tremble not that to the judge have given Him up: trembleth power, and ferocity trembleth not: he would wash his hands, and they stain their tongues. But wherefore this? They have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. How many things did Pilate, how many things that they might be restrained! What said he? what did he? But they have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse: “Crucify, crucify.” The repetition is the confirmation of the malignant discourse. Let us see in what manner they have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. “Your King shall I crucify?” They said, “We have no king but Cæsar alone.” They have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. He was offering for King the Son of God: to a man they betook themselves: worthy were they to have the one, and not have the Other. Further hear, in what manner they confirmed malignant discourse. “I find not any thing in this Man,” saith the judge, “wherefore He is worthy of death.” And they that confirmed malignant discourse, said, “His blood be upon us and upon our sons.” They confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. Confirmed malignant discourse, not to the Lord, but to themselves. For how not to themselves, when they say, Upon us and upon our sons? That which therefore they confirmed, to themselves they confirmed: because the same voice is elsewhere, They dug before my face a ditch, and fell into it. Death killed not the Lord, but He death: but them iniquity killed, because they would not kill iniquity.

9. Doubtless, brethren, certain it is, that either thou killest iniquity, or art killed of iniquity. But do not seek to kill iniquity as though it were something without thee. To thyself look, see what fighteth with thee, and take heed lest it defeat thee: thy iniquity, thy enemy will not be slain: for it is without thyself, and against thyself thy soul rebelleth, not any other thing. With some part thou adherest to God, with some part thou pleasest thyself in the world. That wherewith thou pleasest thyself in the world fighteth against the mind which adhereth to God. Let it adhere, let it adhere, let it not faint, let it not give way, great help it hath. It conquereth that which in it rebelleth against itself, if it persevereth in fighting. There is sin in thy body,

but let it not reign. Let not therefore, he saith, sin reign in your mortal body, to obey the lusts thereof. But if thou shalt not have obeyed; even if there be that which may persuade, that which may allure unto evil, by not obeying thou bringest it about that there reign not that which is, and thus it will come to pass hereafter that there be not that which was. When? When death shall be swallowed up into victory, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, in that case there shall not be that which may fight against thee, there shall not be any other thing which may delight thee but God. Therefore also those Jews hated the Lord, sovereignty did delight them. Certain men saw that by Him sovereignty was being taken away from them, and because of their delight they rebelled against the Lord: whereas, if they had rebelled against their evil delight, the very hatred they would have conquered, and they would not have been conquered by it, and the Lord would have been to them a Saviour, Who had come to make them whole. But now they fostered the fever: they fought against the Physician: whatsoever the fever suggested, they did: whatsoever on the other hand the Physician commanded they neglected. Therefore they rather were killed, not the Lord: for in the Lord death was killed, in them iniquity lived: but because iniquity lived in them, they were dead.

10. Ver. 5. They told, in order that they might hide traps: they said, Who shall see them? They thought they would escape Him, Whom they were killing, that they would escape God. Behold, suppose Christ was a man, like the rest of men, and knew not what was being contrived for Him: doth God also know not? O heart of man! wherefore hast thou said to thyself, Who seeth me? when He seeth That hath made thee? They said, Who shall see them? God did see, Christ also was seeing: because Christ is also God. But wherefore did they think that He saw not? Hear the words following.

11. Ver. 6. They have searched out iniquity, they have failed, searching searchings: that is, deadly and acute designs. Let Him not be betrayed by us, but by His disciple: let Him not be killed by us, but by the judge: let us do all, and let us seem to have done nothing. And where is the cry of the tongue, Crucify, Crucify? So blind ye are, as deaf also to be. Feigned innocence is not innocence; pretended equity is not equity, but double iniquity; because both iniquity it is and pretence. Therein therefore those

men failed searching searchings. By how much the more acutely they seemed to think it out for themselves, so much the more they failed; because from the light of truth and equity into the depths of evil designs they were sunk. Justice hath a certain light of its own, it bedeweth and lighteneth a soul adhering to itself: but a soul turning away itself from the light of justice by how much the more it seeketh what it may find against justice, by so much the more from light it is thrust back, and in darkness it is sunk down. With reason therefore those men also, while searching out what they designed against the Just One, from justice were departing: and by how much the more from justice they were departing, by so much the more they were failing in searching searchings. Deep is their counsel for innocence: when Judas himself repented that he had betrayed Christ, and he threw down before them the money which they had given, they would not cast it into the treasury, and said, Money of blood it is, let us not cast it into the treasury. What is the treasury? The chest of God into which were gathered those things which were cast for the need of the servants of God. O man, let thy heart be rather the chest of God, where may dwell the riches of God, where may be the coin of God, thy mind, I say, having the image of thy Emperor. If it be so, what a pretence of innocence was that, not to cast into the chest the money of blood; and the blood itself to cast upon the conscience!

12. But what befel them? They failed searching searchings. Whence? Because he saith, Who shall see them? that is, that no one saw them. This they were saying, this among themselves they thought, that no one saw them. See what befalleth an evil soul: it departeth from the light of truth, and because itself seeth not God, it thinketh that itself is not seen by God. So also those men by departing went into darkness, in order that themselves might not see God: and they said, Who seeth us? He also saw whom they were crucifying: they in their failing neither saw that Son nor the Father. If therefore He also saw, why did He suffer Himself to be held by them, to be killed by them? Wherefore, if He saw, willed He that their counsels should prevail against Him? Wherefore? Because man He was for the sake of man, and being God hid in man, that had come to give an example of patience to men knowing not, therefore Himself knowing He endured all things.

13. For what followeth? Ver. 6. There shall draw near a man and a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. They said, Who shall see us? They failed in searching searchings, evil counsels. There drew near a man to those same counsels, He suffered Himself to be held as a man. For He would not have been held except He were man, or have been seen except He were man, or have been smitten except He were man, or have been crucified or have died except He were man. There drew near a man therefore to all those sufferings, which in Him would have been of no avail except He were Man. But if He were not Man, there would not have been deliverance for man. There hath drawn near a Man and a deep heart, that is, a secret heart: presenting before human faces Man, keeping within God: concealing the form of God, wherein He is equal with the Father, and presenting the form of a servant, wherein He is less than the Father. For Himself hath spoken of both: but one thing there is which He saith in the form of God, another thing in the form of a servant. He hath said in the form of God, I and the Father are one: He hath said in the form of a servant, For the Father is greater than I. Whence in the form of God saith He, I and the Father are one? Because when He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Whence in the form of a servant saith He, For the Father is greater than I? Because He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. There drew near therefore a Man, and a deep heart, and God was exalted. Slain is the Man, and exalted is God. For His being slain was of human weakness, His rising again and ascending was of power divine. There shall draw near a Man and a deep heart, heart secret, heart hidden: not shewing that which it knew, not shewing what it was. They thinking that it was the whole which was seen, kill a Man in deep heart, and there is exalted God in heart divine: for by the power of His Majesty exalted He was. And whither went He exalted? To that place from whence He withdrew not humbled.

14. There shall draw near a Man and a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. For this reason now attend ye, my brethren, to the deep heart of the Man. Of what Man? Mother Sion, a Man shall say; and Man He was made in Her, and Himself the Most Highest hath founded her. In that very city He was made Man, which He founded Himself, the same Most Highest that in Her was made Man. Therefore there hath drawn near a man and a deep heart.

Behold Man in a deep heart: see, as much as thou art able, if thou art able, God also in a deep heart. There drew near a Man: and because God He was, and because He was about to suffer willingly, and because He was about to give an example to the weak, as though God were about to suffer, but in man, but in the flesh, there followeth what? (Ver. 7.) Arrows of infants have been made the strokes of them. Where is that savageness? where is that roar of the lion, of the people roaring and saying, Crucify, Crucify? Where are the lyings in wait of men bending the bow? Have not the strokes of them been made the arrows of infants? Ye know in what manner infants make to themselves arrows of little canes. What do they strike, or whence do they strike? What is the hand, or what the weapon? what are the arms, or what the limbs? Arrows of infants have been made the strokes of them.

15. Ver. 8. And the tongues of them have been made weak upon them. Let them whet now their tongues like a sword, let them confirm to themselves malignant discourse. Deservedly to themselves they have confirmed it, because the tongues of them have been made weak upon them. Could this be strong against God? 'Iniquity,' he saith, 'hath lied to itself:' their tongues have been made weak upon them. Behold, the Lord hath risen, That was killed. They were passing by before the Cross, or were standing and were looking upon Him, as so long before a Psalm had foretold: They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have told all My bones, but themselves have beheld and have looked upon Me. Then the head they wagged, saying, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. They made trial in a manner whether He was Son of God; and as it were they found out that He was not, because, on their reviling Him, from the Cross He came not down: if He had come down from the Cross, Son of God He would have been. What thinkest thou of Him Who from the cross came not down, and from the tomb rose again? What therefore did they effect? But even if the Lord had not risen again, what would they have effected, except what the persecutors of the Martyrs have also effected? For the Martyrs have not yet risen again, and nevertheless they have effected nothing; of them not yet rising again we are now celebrating the nativities. Where is the madness of their raging? Arrows of infants have the strokes of them been made, and the tongues of them have been made weak upon them. To what did they bring those their searchings, in which searchings they failed, so that even, when

the Lord was dead and buried, they set guards at the tomb? For they said to Pilate, That deceiver; (by this name the Lord Jesus Christ was called, for the comfort of His servants when they are called deceivers;) they say therefore to Pilate, That deceiver said when yet living, After three days I will rise again: command therefore that the sepulchre be guarded even unto the third day, lest perchance there come His disciples, and steal Him, and say to the people, He hath risen from the dead, and the last error shall be worse than the former. Pilate saith to them, Ye have a guard, go ye, keep it as ye know how. But they departing made fast the sepulchre, sealing the stone, and setting the guards. They set for guards soldiers at the sepulchre. At the earth quaking, the Lord rose again: such miracles were done about the sepulchre, that even the very soldiers that had come for guards were made witnesses, if they chose to tell the truth: but the same covetousness which had led captive a disciple, the companion of Christ, led captive also the soldier that was guard of the sepulchre. We give you, they say, money; and say ye, while yourselves were sleeping there came His disciples, and took Him away. Truly they failed searching searchings.

What is it that thou hast said, O unhappy guile? Dost thou so far forsake the light of the counsel of godliness, and sinkest into the depths of craftiness, as to say this, Say ye that while yourselves were sleeping, there came His disciples and took Him away? Sleeping witnesses ye adduce: truly thou thyself hast fallen asleep, that in searching such devices hast failed. If they were sleeping, what could they see? if nothing they saw, how are they witnesses? But they failed in searching searchings: failed of the light of God, failed in the very completion of their designs: when that which they willed, nowise they were able to complete, surely they failed. Wherefore this? Because there drew near a Man and a deep heart, and God was exalted. For this reason afterwards when the resurrection of Christ had been made known, and the Holy Spirit came and filled with boldness certain disciples that feared, so that no longer fearing death, they dared to preach what they had seen, after God had been exalted in His Majesty, Who for our weakness' sake humble was judged; and when the heavenly trumpets began to sound forth Him to come as Judge, Whom at first they had seen judged, then were troubled all men that saw them. God being exalted, as I have said, Christ being preached, Jews were seen by certain Jews, were seen failing in

their searchings. For those men saw, in the name of Him that had been crucified and killed by their hands, so great miracles performed: they withdrew in heart from those that continued in ungodliness: the hard-heartedness of the others was displeasing to them, they sought counsel for their own salvation, and they said to the Apostles, ‘What shall we do?’ There were troubled, therefore, all men that saw them: that is, they that perceived how their tongues were made weak upon them, they that perceived how in all their evil searchings of designs every where they failed. Those men were troubled.

16. Ver. 9. And every man feared. They that feared not, were not even men. Every man feared; that is, every one using reason to perceive the things which were done. Whence they that feared not, must rather be called cattle, rather beasts savage and cruel. A lion ramping and roaring is that people as yet. But in truth every man feared: that is, they that would believe, that trembled at the judgment to come. And every man feared: and they declared the works of God. He that said, From fear of the enemy deliver my soul, was the every man that feared. From fear of the enemy he was being delivered, but to the fear of God was being made subject. He did not fear those that kill the body, but Him That hath power to cast both body and soul into Hell. They preached the Lord: for at first Peter feared, and feared the enemy, not yet was his soul delivered from the enemy. Having been questioned by the maid because he had been among His disciples, he denied the Lord thrice. The Lord rose again, confirmed the Pillar: now Peter preacheth without fear and with fear; without fear of them that kill the body, with fear of Him that both body and soul hath power of killing in the Hell of fire. Every man feared; and they declared the works of God. For those Apostles declaring the works of God the chief priests brought before them, and threatened them, saying, that in the name of Jesus they should not preach. And they said, “Tell us, whom it behoveth us rather to obey, God or men?” What would they say? men rather than God? Without doubt they would answer nothing but, God rather. But they knew what things God commanded, and they despised the threatening priests. Because therefore every man feared, man terrified not: and they declared the works of God. If man feareth, let not man terrify: for a man ought to fear Him by Whom man was made. That which is above men fear thou, and men shall not terrify

thee. Death everlasting fear thou, and for that which is present thou wilt not care. That pleasure uncorrupt, and the rest without spot, desire thou: and one promising those gifts temporal, and the whole world, thou wilt deride. Love therefore and fear: love that which God promiseth, fear that which God threateneth: thou wilt neither be corrupted by that which man promiseth, nor wilt be frightened by that which he threateneth. And every man hath feared: and they have declared the works of God, and His doings they have perceived. What is, His doings they have perceived? Was it, O Lord Jesu Christ, that Thou wast silent, and like a sheep for a victim wast being led, and didst not open before the shearer Thy mouth, and we thought Thee to be set in smiting and in grief, and knowing how to bear weakness? Was it that Thou wast hiding Thy beauty, O Thou beautiful in form before the sons of men? Was it that Thou didst not seem to have beauty nor grace? Thou didst bear on the Cross men reviling and saying, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. What servant of Thine and beloved of Thine, perchance knowing Thy power, cried not out and said, O that now He would come down, and all these that revile would be confounded! But it was not so: He must needs have died for the sake of men to die, and must rise again for the sake of men alway to live. This thing they, that would have had Him come down from the Cross, perceived not: but when He rose again, and being glorified ascended into Heaven, they perceived the works of God. They declared the works of God, and His doings they perceived.

17. Ver. 10. The just man shall rejoice in the Lord. Now the just man is not sad. For sad were the disciples at the Lord's being crucified; overcome with sadness, sorrowing they departed, they thought they had lost hope. He rose again, even when appearing to them He found them sad. He held the eyes of two men that walked in the way, so that by them he was not known, and He found them groaning and sighing, and He held them until He had expounded the Scriptures, and by the same Scriptures had shewn that so it ought to have been done as it was done. For He shewed in the Scriptures, how after the third day it behoved the Lord to rise again. And how on the third day would He have risen again, if from the Cross He had come down? Now ye that are sad in the way, if at the Jews reviling ye had seen the Lord come down from the Cross, how much would ye have been elated? Ye would have rejoiced that the mouths of the Jews He had so stopped. Await

the design of the Physician: in that He descendeth, in that He willeth to be killed, He is compounding an antidote. Behold now He hath risen again, behold now He speaketh, not yet is He known, in order that the more joyfully He may be known. Afterwards He opened the eyes of them in the breaking of bread: they know Him, rejoice, cry out, The just man shall rejoice in the Lord. It was told one that was more hard-hearted, The Lord hath been seen, the Lord hath risen again. As yet he is sad, he believeth not. Except I shall have put forth, he saith, my hand, and shall have touched the scars of the nails, I will not believe. There is presented even the Body to be touched, he thrusteth the hand, handleth, crieth out, "My Lord and my God." The just man shall rejoice in the Lord. Those just men therefore rejoiced in the Lord, that saw, touched, and believed: what of the just that now are? because they see not, because they touch not, rejoice they not in the Lord? And where is that voice of the Lord to Thomas himself, Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed? Therefore let us all rejoice in the Lord, let us all after the faith be One Just Man, and let us all in one Body hold One Head, and let us rejoice in the Lord, not in ourselves: because our Good is not ourselves to ourselves, but He that hath made us. Himself is our good to make us glad. And let no one rejoice in himself, no one rely on himself, no one despair of himself: let no one rely on any man, whom he ought to bring in to be the partner of his own hope, not the giver of the hope.

18. Ver. 10. The just man shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him; and all men shall be praised that are right in heart. Now because the Lord hath risen again, now because He hath ascended into Heaven, now because He hath shewed that there is another life, now because it is evident that His counsels, wherein He lay concealed in deep heart, were not empty, because to this end That Blood was shed to be the price of the redeemed; now because all things are evident, because all things have been preached, because all things have been believed, under the whole of Heaven, the just man shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him; and all men shall be praised that are right in heart. Who are the right in heart? Ah! my brethren, we are always saying, and good it is for you to know, who are the right in heart? They that all those things whatsoever in this life they suffer, do ascribe not to any ignorance, but to the counsel of God for their healing;

and rely not on their own justice, so as to think that they unjustly suffer what they suffer, or that God is unjust, because he that sinneth more suffereth no more. See, brethren, these things we often speak of. Something thou feelest, either affecting the body, or the expenditure of thy property, or it is some bereavement of those most dear to thee: do not regard those whom thou knowest to be more wicked than thyself, (for perchance thou darest not to call thyself righteous, but thou knowest men worse than thyself,) both how they prosper in those respects, and are not chastised, so that the counsel of God should be displeasing to thee, and thou shouldest say, Grant I am a sinner, and for that reason I am chastened, why is he not chastened, in whom very great outrages I know? Whatsoever of evil I have done, have I by any means done so much as he? Perverted is thy heart. How good is the God of Israel, but to men right in heart. But thy feet are slipping, because thou art jealous of sinners, beholding the peace of sinners. Allow Him to heal: He knoweth what He doeth, that knoweth the wound. The other is not lanced. What if he is despaired of? what if thou art being lanced, because thou art not despaired of? Suffer therefore whatever thou sufferest, with right heart. God knoweth what to give to thee, what to withhold from thee. Let that which He giveth thee serve for comfort, not for corruption: and let what He withholdeth from thee serve for patience, not for blasphemy. But if thou blasphemest, and God is displeasing to thee, and thou art pleasing to thyself, of perverted and crooked heart thou art: and this is the worse, that the heart of God thou wouldest correct by thy heart, to make Him do what thou wilt have, whereas thou oughtest to do what He willeth. What then? Thou wouldest make crooked the heart of God which always is right, according to the depravity of thy own heart? How much better to correct thy heart by the rectitude of God? Hath not thy Lord taught thee this, of Whose Passion but now we were speaking? Was He not bearing thy weakness, when He said, Sad is My soul even unto death? Was He not figuring thyself in Himself, when He was saying, Father, if it be possible, let there pass from Me this cup? For the hearts of the Father and of the Son were not two and different: but in the form of a servant He carried thy heart, that He might teach it by His example. Now behold trouble found out as it were another heart of thine, which willed that there should pass away that which was impending: but God would not. God consenteth not to thy heart,

do thou consent to the heart of God. Hear the voice of Himself: Yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt, Father.

19. There shall be praised, therefore, all men right in heart. What followeth? If there shall be praised all men right in heart, there shall be condemned the crooked in heart. Two things are set before thee now, choose while there is time. If of right heart thou shalt have been, at the right hand thou wilt be, and thou wilt be praised. In what manner? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world. But if of crooked heart thou shalt have been, if thou shalt have mocked God, if His Providence thou shalt have derided, if thou shalt have said in thy mind, truly God careth not for things human: if He did care for things human, would that robber have so much, and I innocent be in want? of crooked heart thou hast become, there will come that Judgment, there will appear all the reasons on account of which God doeth all these things: and thou, that wouldest not in this life correct thy heart by the rectitude of God, and prepare thyself for the right hand, where there shall be praised all men right in heart, wilt be on the left, where at that time thou shalt hear, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. And will there be then time to correct the heart? Now therefore correct, brethren, now correct. Who doth hinder? Psalm is chanted, Gospel is read, Reader crieth, Preacher crieth; long-suffering is the Lord; thou sinnest, and He spareth; still thou sinnest, still He spareth, and still thou addest sin to sin. How long is God long-suffering? Thou wilt find God just also. We terrify because we fear; teach us not to fear, and we terrify no more. But better it is that God teach us to fear, than that any man teach us not to fear. For every man hath feared, and they have declared the works of God. May God count us among those that have feared and have declared. Because we fear, we declare to you, brethren. We see your eagerness to hear the word, and we see your wishes to demand it, we see your yearnings. The soil is well watered with rain, may it bear grain, not thorns: for grain the barn is prepared, fire for thorns. Dost thou know what to do with thy land, and doth not God know what to do with His servant? That which raineth upon a fruitful field is sweet, and that which raineth upon a thorny field is sweet. Doth it find fault with the rain, because it hath borne thorns? Will not that rain be witness in the Judgment of God, and say, sweet I have come upon

all? Do thou therefore take heed what thou bringest forth, that thou mayest attend to what is being prepared for thee. Thou bringest forth grain, barn expect thou; bringest forth thorns, fire expect thou. But not yet hath come either the time of the barn or the time of the fire: now let there be preparation, and there will not be fear. In the name of Christ both we who speak are living, and ye to whom we speak are living: for amending our plan, and changing evil life into a good life, is there no place, is there no time? Can it not, if thou wilt, be done to-day? Can it not, if thou wilt, be now done? What must thou buy in order to do it, what specifics must thou seek? To what Indies must thou sail? What ship prepare? Lo, while I am speaking, change the heart; and there is done what so often and so long while is cried out for, that it be done, and which bringeth forth everlasting punishment if it be not done.

PSALM 65

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

The voice of holy prophecy must be confessed in the very title of this Psalm. It is inscribed, Unto the end, a Psalm of David, a song of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, on account of the people of transmigration when they were beginning to go forth. How it fared with our fathers in the time of the transmigration to Babylon, is not known to all, but only to those that diligently study the Holy Scriptures, either by hearing or by reading. For the captive people Israel from the city of Jerusalem was led into slavery unto Babylon. But holy Jeremiah prophesied, that after seventy years the people would return out of captivity, and would rebuild the very city Jerusalem, which they had mourned as having been overthrown by enemies. But at that time there were prophets in that captivity of the people dwelling in Babylon, among whom was also the prophet Ezekiel. But that people was waiting until there should be fulfilled the space of seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah. It came to pass, when the seventy years had been completed, the temple was restored which had been thrown down: and there returned from captivity a great part of that people. But whereas the Apostle saith, these things in figure happened unto them, but they have been written for our sakes, upon whom the end of the world hath come: we also ought to know first our captivity, then our deliverance: we ought to know the Babylon wherein we are captives, and the Jerusalem for a return to which we are sighing. For these two cities, according to the letter, in reality are two cities. And the former Jerusalem indeed by the Jews is not now inhabited. For after the crucifixion of the Lord vengeance was taken upon them with a great scourge, and being rooted up from that place where, with impious licentiousness being infuriated, they had madly raged against their Physician, they have been dispersed throughout all nations, and that

land hath been given to Christians: and there is fulfilled what the Lord had said to them, Therefore the kingdom shall be taken away from you, and it shall be given to a nation doing justice. But when they saw great multitudes then following the Lord, preaching the kingdom of Heaven, and doing wonderful things, the rulers of that city said, If we shall have let Him go, all men will go after Him, and there shall come the Romans, and shall take from us both place and nation. That they might not lose their place, the Lord they killed; and they lost it, even because they killed. Therefore that city, being one earthly, of a certain city everlasting in the Heavens did bear the figure: but when that which was signified began more evidently to be preached, the shadow, whereby it was being signified, was thrown down: for this reason in that place now the temple is no more, which had been constructed for the image of the future Body of the Lord. We have the light, the shadow hath passed away: nevertheless, still in a kind of captivity we are: So long as we are, he saith, in the body, we are sojourning afar from the Lord.

2. And see ye the names of those two cities, Babylon and Jerusalem. Babylon is interpreted confusion, Jerusalem vision of peace. Observe now the city of confusion, in order that ye may perceive the vision of peace; that ye may endure that, sigh for this. Whereby can those two cities be distinguished? Can we anywise now separate them from each other? They are mingled, and from the very beginning of mankind mingled they run on unto the end of the world. Jerusalem received beginning through Abel, Babylon through Cain: for the buildings of the cities were afterwards erected. That Jerusalem in the land of the Jebusites was builded: for at first it used to be called Jebus, from thence the nation of the Jebusites was expelled, when the people of God was delivered from Egypt, and led into the land of promise. But Babylon was builded in the most interior regions of Persia, which for a long time raised its head above the rest of nations. These two cities then at particular times were builded, so that there might be shewn a figure of two cities begun of old, and to remain even unto the end in this world, but at the end to be severed. Whereby then can we now shew them, that are mingled? At that time the Lord shall shew, when some He shall set on the right hand, others on the left. Jerusalem on the right hand shall be, Babylon on the left. Jerusalem is to hear, Come, ye blessed of My

Father, receive the kingdom which for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world. Babylon is to hear, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. Nevertheless, we can bring forward something, as far as the Lord alloweth, whereby may be distinguished the godly believers even at this time, citizens of Jerusalem, from the citizens of Babylon. Two loves make up these two cities: love of God maketh Jerusalem, love of the world maketh Babylon. Therefore let each one question himself as to what he loveth: and he shall find of which he is a citizen: and if he shall have found himself to be a citizen of Babylon, let him root out cupidity, implant charity: but if he shall have found himself a citizen of Jerusalem, let him endure captivity, hope for liberty. For many citizens of holy mother Jerusalem were being held corrupted by the lusts of Babylon, and by the very corruption of lusts were made as it were citizens of that city, and many still are so, and many that are to be after us on this earth will be so: but the Lord, the Builder of Jerusalem, knoweth what citizens of His He hath predestinated, whom He seeth under the dominion of the devil, and who must be redeemed with the blood of Christ: the Same knoweth them before they know themselves. Under this figure then is sung this Psalm. In the title of which are set even two Prophets, who at that time were in the captivity, Jeremiah and Ezechiel, and they were singing certain things when they were beginning to go forth. He beginneth to go forth, that is beginning to love. For there go forth many men secretly, and the feet of them going forth are the heart's affections: but they go forth from Babylon. What is, from Babylon? From confusion. How do men go forth from Babylon, that is, from confusion? They that at first were confounded together with like lusts, begin by charity to be distinct: being now distinct, they are not confounded. Even if yet in body they are mingled, yet by holy longing they are severed; and because of the corporal mingling not yet they have gone forth, because of the affection of the heart they have begun to go forth. Now therefore let us hear of, brethren, hear of, and sing of, and long for, that city whereof we are citizens. And what are the joys which are sung of to us? In what manner in ourselves is formed again the love of our city, which by long sojourning we had forgotten? But our Father hath sent from thence letters to us, God hath supplied to us the Scriptures, by which letters there should be wrought in us a longing for return: because by loving our

sojourning, to enemies we had turned our face, and our back to our fatherland. What then is here sung?

3. Ver. 1. For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion. That fatherland is Sion: Jerusalem is the very same as Sion; and of this name the interpretation ye ought to know. As Jerusalem is interpreted vision of peace, so Sion 'Beholding,' that is, vision and contemplation. Some great inexplicable sight to us is promised: and this is God Himself that hath builded the city. Beauteous and graceful the city, how much more beauteous a Builder it hath! For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, he saith. But where? In Sion: in Babylon it is not meet. For when a man beginneth to be renewed, already with heart in Jerusalem he singeth, with the Apostle saying, Our conversation is in the Heavens. For in the flesh though walking, he saith, not after the flesh we war. Already in longing we are there, already hope into that land, as it were an anchor, we have sent before, lest in this sea being tossed we suffer shipwreck. In like manner therefore as of a ship which is at anchor, we rightly say that already she is come to land, for still she rolleth, but to land in a manner she hath been brought safe in the teeth of winds and in the teeth of storms; so against the temptations of this sojourning, our hope being grounded in that city Jerusalem causeth us not to be carried away upon rocks. He therefore that according to this hope singeth, in that city singeth: let him therefore say, For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion. In Sion, not in Babylon. But now there thou art yet in Babylon. There I am, saith that lover and that citizen: there I am; but in flesh, not in heart. But whereas of two things I have spoken, namely, that I am there in flesh not in heart, with the latter I sing, not with the former: for not in flesh I sing, but in heart. The flesh indeed sounding even the citizens of Babylon hear, but the heart's sound heareth the Builder of Jerusalem. Whence saith the Apostle, exhorting those same citizens to certain loving songs, and longings to return to that most fair city, the vision of peace, Singing, he saith, and chanting Psalms in your hearts to the Lord. What is, singing in your hearts? Sing not from thence where ye are, namely, in Babylon: but from thence sing, where above ye dwell. Therefore, For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion. In Sion for Thee a hymn is meet, not in Babylon. They that sing in Babylon are citizens of Babylon; even the hymn

of God unmeetly they sing. Hear the voice of Scripture. 'Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner.' For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion.

4. And to Thee shall there be paid a vow in Jerusalem. Here we vow, and a good thing it is that there we should pay. But who are they that here do vow and pay not? They that persevere not even unto the end in that which they have vowed. Whence saith another Psalm, Vow ye, and pay ye unto the Lord your God: and, to Thee shall it be paid in Jerusalem. For there shall we be whole, that is, entire in the resurrection of just men: there shall be paid our whole vow, not soul alone, but the very flesh also, no longer corruptible, because no longer in Babylon, but now a body heavenly and changed. What sort of change is promised? For we all shall rise again, saith the Apostle, but we shall not all be changed. But who shall be, himself hath said: In the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for there shall sound the trumpet, and the dead shall rise again incorrupt, (that is, entire,) and we shall be changed. But of what sort will be that change he continueth and saith: for it must needs be that this corruptible put on incorruption, and that this mortal put on immortality: but when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying which hath been written, Death hath been swallowed up in victory. Where is, O death, thy sting? For now while there begin in us the first-fruits of the mind, from whence is the longing for Jerusalem, many things of corruptible flesh do contend against us, which will not contend, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory. Peace shall conquer, and war shall be ended. But when peace shall conquer, that city shall conquer which is called the vision of peace. On the part of death therefore shall be no contention. Now with how great a death do we contend! For thence are carnal pleasures, which to us even unlawfully do suggest many things: to which we give no consent, but nevertheless in giving no consent we contend. At first therefore the lust of the flesh hath led us following it, afterwards struggling against it hath dragged us; then after grace received it hath begun neither to lead nor to drag, but still to contend with us: after contention will be also victory. Now although it cometh against thee, let it not overcome thee: hereafter, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, even from fighting it will desist. What hath been said? The last enemy shall be destroyed, even death. "I will pay my vow." What vow? As

it were a holocaust. For a holocaust is then spoken of when fire consumeth the whole: a holocaust is a sacrifice where the whole is consumed: for ὅλον is translated whole, καῦσις burning. Holocaust is a whole burned. Let there seize us then a fire, a fire divine in Jerusalem: let us begin to burn with love, until the whole mortal thing be consumed, and let that which may have been against us, go for a sacrifice unto the Lord. Whence elsewhere is said, Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion, that builded may be the walls of Jerusalem: then Thou shalt accept the sacrifice of righteousness, oblations, and holocausts. For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion, and to Thee shall be paid a vow in Jerusalem. We ask here, whether perchance mention is made to us of the King of that same city; of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; let us sing then until we arrive at more manifest tokens. For I could now say, that it is He to whom is said, For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion; and to Thee shall be rendered a vow in Jerusalem. But if I were to say it, I rather than the Scripture should be believed, and thus perchance I should not be believed. Let us hear the following words.

5. Ver. 2. Harken, he saith, to my prayer, unto Thee every flesh shall come. And we have the Lord saying, that there was given to Him power over every flesh. That King therefore began even now to appear, when there was being said, Unto Thee every flesh shall come. To Thee, he saith, every flesh shall come. Wherefore to Him shall every flesh come? Because flesh He hath taken to Him. Whither shall there come every flesh? He took the first-fruits thereof out of the womb of the Virgin; and now that the first-fruits have been taken to Him, the rest shall follow, in order that the holocaust may be completed. Whence then every flesh? Every man. And whence every man? Have all been foretold, as going to believe in Christ? Have not many ungodly men been foretold, that shall be condemned also? Do not daily many men not believing die in their own unbelief? After what manner therefore do we understand, Unto Thee every flesh shall come? By every flesh he hath signified flesh of every kind: out of every kind of flesh they shall come to Thee. What is, out of every kind of flesh? Have there come poor men, and have there not come rich men? Have there come humble men, and not come lofty men? Have there come unlearned men, and not come learned men? Have there come men, and not come women? Have there come masters, and not come servants? Have there come old men, and

not come young men; or have there come young men, and not come youths; or have there come youths, and not come boys; or have there come boys, and have there not been brought infants? In a word, have there come Jews, (for thence were the Apostles, thence many thousands of men at first betraying, afterwards believing,) and have there not come Greeks; or have there come Greeks, and not come Romans; or have there come Romans, and not come Barbarians? And who could number all nations coming to Him, to Whom hath been said, Unto Thee every flesh shall come? Harken unto my prayer, unto Thee every flesh shall come.

6. Ver. 3. The discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us, and our iniquities Thou shalt propitiate. What is, the discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us, and our iniquities Thou shalt propitiate? For as much as we were born on this earth, we found those unjust men, whom we have heard speaking. If I be able to explain what I mean, let the attention of your Love aid me. Every man, in whatsoever place he is born, of that same land or region or city learneth the language, is habituated to the manners and life of that place. What should a boy do, born among Heathens, to avoid worshipping a stone, in as much as his parents have suggested that worship? from them the first words he hath heard, that error with his milk he hath sucked in; and because they that used to speak were elders, and the boy that was learning to speak was an infant, what could the little one do but follow the authority of elders, and deem that to be good, which they recommended? Therefore nations that are converted to Christ afterwards, and taking to heart the impieties of their parents, and saying now what the prophet Jeremias himself said, Truly a lie our fathers have worshipped, vanity which hath not profited them—when, I say, now they say this, they renounce the opinions and blasphemies of their unjust parents. But because, in being imbued with such-like opinions and blasphemies, they acted upon the persuasions of those men, who in proportion as in age they had precedence, so were thought to have precedence due to them in authority; now he desiring to return to Jerusalem from Babylon, confesseth and saith, The discourses of unjust men have prevailed against us. There have led us away men teaching evil things, citizens of Babylon they have made us, we have left the Creator, have adored the creature: have left Him by whom we were made, have adored that which we ourselves have made. For the

discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us: but nevertheless they have not crushed us. Wherefore? 'Our impieties Thou shalt propitiate.' Let your Love observe. Our impieties Thou shalt propitiate, is not said except to some priest offering somewhat, whereby impiety may be expiated and propitiated. For impiety is then said to be propitiated, when God is made propitious to the impiety. What is it for God to be made propitious to impiety? It is, His becoming forgiving, and giving pardon. But in order that God's pardon may be obtained, propitiation is made through some sacrifice. There hath come forth therefore, sent from God the Lord, One our Priest; He took upon Him from us that which He might offer to the Lord; we are speaking of those same first-fruits of the flesh from the womb of the Virgin. This holocaust He offered to God. He stretched out His hands on the Cross, in order that He might say, Let My prayer be directed as incense in Thy sight, and the lifting up of My hands an evening sacrifice. As ye know, the Lord about eventide hung on the Cross: and our impieties were propitiated; otherwise they had swallowed us up: the discourses of unjust men had prevailed over us; there had led us astray preachers of Jupiter, and of Saturn, and of Mercury: the discourses of ungodly men had prevailed over us. But what wilt Thou do? Our impieties Thou wilt propitiate. Thou art the priest, Thou the victim; Thou the offerer, Thou the offering. Himself is the Priest, that now having entered into the places within the vail, alone there of those that have borne flesh, maketh intercession for us. For a figure of which thing, in that first people, and in that first temple, one priest used to enter into the Holy of Holies, all the people without used to stand: and he that alone entered into the parts within the vail, offered sacrifice for the people standing without. If it be understood rightly, the Spirit maketh alive: if it be not understood, the letter killeth. But now when the Apostle was being read ye heard, The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. For what was being enacted in that people, the Jews knew not; nay, not even now do they know. For of them hath been said, So long as Moses is being read, a vail is upon their heart. There the vail is a figure: but there shall be taken away the figure, and there shall appear truth in themselves. But when shall the vail be taken away? Hear the Apostle: When thou shalt have passed over to the Lord, the vail shall be removed. Wherefore so long as they pass not over to the Lord, so long as they read Moses, a vail they have upon the heart. For this sacrament shone at that time the face of Moses, so as that the

sons of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of him: (ye heard it but now when it was being read:) and a vail there was between the face of Moses speaking, and the people hearing the words. Through a vail they heard words, face they saw not. And what saith the Apostle? So that the sons of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of Moses. They looked not stedfastly, he saith, even unto the end. What is, even unto the end? Even until they perceived Christ. For, saith the Apostle, For the end of the law is Christ for righteousness unto every man believing. There is indeed splendour in the face of Moses, but only as in a face carnal and mortal: could that be long-lasting or everlasting? For death supervening, straightway it will be taken away. But the splendour of the glory of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is everlasting. But that was a figure temporal, but this, which by that figure was being signified, is truth. They read therefore and perceive not Christ, they bring not down their stedfast looking even unto the end, because a vail set in the way withholdeth from them the sight of the interior splendour. And see there under the vail Christ: Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith, If ye believed Moses, ye would believe also in Me, for of Me he wrote. But our sins and impieties being propitiated through that evening sacrifice, we pass over to the Lord, and the vail is taken away: for which reason also when the Lord had been crucified, the vail of the temple was rent. Hearken to my prayer, unto Thee every flesh shall come. The discourses of ungodly men have prevailed over us, and to our impieties Thou shalt be propitious.

7. Ver. 4. Blessed is he whom Thou hast chosen, and hast taken to Thee. Who is he that is chosen by Him and taken to Him? Was any one chosen by our Saviour Jesu Christ, or was Himself after the flesh, because He is man, chosen and taken to Him? Thus it might be spoken as it were to the Word of God, that was in the beginning, as saith the Evangelist, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: because also the same Son of God is the Word of God, of Whom also he saith, All things through Him were made, and without Him there was not made any thing: wherefore there is said to that Son of God, because He is Himself our Priest, afterward when He had taken to Him flesh, Blessed is he whom Thou hast chosen, and hast taken to Thee: that is that Man wherewith Thou hast been invested, who had his beginning in time, being born of a woman,

for a sort of temple of Him Who is alway for everlasting, and for everlasting hath been. Or hath not rather Christ Himself taken to Him some blessed one, and the same whom He hath taken to Him is not spoken of in the plural number but in the singular? For one man He hath taken to Him, because unity He hath taken to Him. Schisms He hath not taken to Him, heresies He hath not taken to Him: a multitude they have made of themselves, there is not one to be taken to Him. But they that abide in the bond of Christ and are the members of Him, make in a manner one man, of whom saith the Apostle, Until we all arrive at the acknowledging of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ. Therefore one man is taken to Him, to which the Head is Christ; because the Head of the man is Christ. The same is that blessed man that hath not departed in the counsel of ungodly men, and the like things which there are spoken of: the same is He that is taken to Him. He is not without us, in His own members we are, under one Head we are governed, by one Spirit we all live, one father-land we all long for. Let us see therefore what is spoken to Christ, whether to us it belong, and whether of ourselves it be said: let us question our consciences, that love let us search out diligently, and if as yet little is that love, and but lately born, (for perchance in some one lately it hath sprung up,) let him diligently root up the thorns springing beside it, that is, worldly cares, lest in growing they choke the holy seed. Blessed is He whom Thou hast chosen and taken to Thee. In Him let us be, and be taken to Him; in Him let us be, and chosen we shall be.

8. And to us He will give what? He shall inhabit, he saith, in Thy courts. Jerusalem, that is, to which they sing that begin to go forth from Babylon: He shall inhabit in Thy courts: we shall be filled with the good things of Thy House. What are the good things of the House of God? Brethren, let us set before ourselves some rich house, with what numerous good things it is crowded, how abundantly it is furnished, how many vessels there are there of gold and also of silver; how great an establishment of servants, how many horses and animals, in a word, how much the house itself delights us with pictures, marble, ceilings, pillars, recesses, chambers:—all such things are indeed objects of desire, but still they are of the confusion of Babylon. Cut off all such longings, O citizen of Jerusalem, cut them off; if thou wilt return, let not captivity delight thee. But hast thou already begun to go

forth? Do not look back, do not loiter on the road. Still there are not wanting foes to recommend thee captivity and sojourning: no longer let there prevail against thee the discourses of ungodly men. For the House of God long thou, and for the good things of that House long thou: but do not long for such things as thou art wont to long for either in thy house, or in the house of thy neighbour, or in the house of thy patron. Other is the good thing of that House. What need is there that we declare what are the good things of that House? Let that same man point them out, that singeth going out of Babylon. We shall be filled, he saith, with the good things of Thy House. What are those good things? We had lifted up perchance the heart to gold, to silver, and other precious things: do not seek such things, they weigh down, they lift not up. Here therefore now upon those good things of Jerusalem, upon those good things of the House of the Lord, upon those good things of the temple of the Lord, let us meditate: because the House of the Lord, is the very same as the Temple of the Lord. We shall be filled with the good things of Thy House: Thy holy Temple is (ver. 5.) marvellous in righteousness. These are the good things of that House. He hath not said, Thy holy Temple is marvellous in pillars, marvellous in marbles, marvellous in gilded ceilings; but is marvellous in righteousness. Without thou hast eyes wherewith thou mayest see marbles, and gold: within is an eye wherewith may be seen the beauty of righteousness. If there is no beauty in righteousness, why is a righteous old man loved? What bringeth he in body that may please the eyes? Crooked limbs, brow wrinkled, head blanced with grey hairs, dotage every where full of complaints. But perchance because thine eyes this decrepit old man pleaseth not, thine ears he pleaseth: with what words? with what song? Even if perchance when a young man he sang well, all with age hath been lost. Doth perchance the sound of his words please thine ears, that can hardly articulate whole words for loss of teeth? Nevertheless, if righteous he is, if another man's goods he coveteth not, if of his own that he possesseth he distributeth to the needy, if he giveth good advice, and soundly judgeth, if he believeth the entire faith, if for his belief in the faith he is ready to expend even those very shattered limbs, for many Martyrs are even old men; why do we love him? What good thing in him do we see with the eyes of the flesh? Not any. There is therefore a kind of beauty in righteousness, which we see with the eye of the heart, and we love, and we kindle with affection: how much men found to love in those

same Martyrs, though beasts tare their limbs! Is it possible but that when blood was staining all parts, when with the teeth of monsters their bowels gushed out, the eyes had nothing but objects to shudder at? What was there to be loved, except that in that hideous spectacle of mangled limbs, entire was the beauty of righteousness? These are the good things of the House of God, with these prepare thyself to be satisfied. But in order that with them thou mayest be satisfied, when thou shalt have arrived there, for this it behoveth thee to hunger and thirst while thou art sojourning: for this thirst thou, for this hunger thou; because those same will be the good things of God. Hear thou that king to whom these things are said, Who hath come that He may bring thee back, and for thy sake hath made Himself the Way. He saith what? "Blessed they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Thy holy Temple is marvellous in righteousness. And that same temple, brethren, do not imagine to be ought but yourselves. Love ye righteousness, and ye are the Temple of God.

9. Ver. 5. Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour. He hath disclosed now Whom he nameth as God. The Saviour specially is the Lord Jesus Christ. It hath appeared now more openly of Whom he had said, "Unto Thee every flesh shall come." Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour. That One Man that is taken unto Him into the Temple of God, is both many and is One. In the person of One he hath said, Hearken, O God, to my hunger: and because the same One of many is composed, now he saith, Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour. Hear Him now more openly preached: Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour, the Hope of all the ends of the earth and in the sea afar. Behold wherefore hath been said, Unto Thee every flesh shall come. From every quarter they come. Hope of all the ends of the earth, not hope of one corner, not hope of Judæa alone, not hope of Africa alone, not hope of Pannonia, not hope of East or of West: but Hope of all the ends of the earth, and in the sea afar: of the very ends of the earth. And in the sea afar: and because in the sea, therefore afar. For the sea by a figure is spoken of this world, with saltiness bitter, with storms troubled; where men of perverse and depraved appetites have become like fishes devouring one another. Observe the evil sea, bitter sea, with waves violent, observe with what sort of men it is filled. Who desireth an inheritance except through the death of another? Who desireth gain except by the loss of another? By the fall of others how many

men wish to be exalted? How many, in order that they may buy, desire for other men to sell their goods? How they mutually oppress, and how they that are able do devour! And when one fish hath devoured, the greater the less, itself also is devoured by some greater. O evil fish, prey thou wilt have of a little fish, prey thou wilt be made to a great fish. Daily those things happen, before our faces they are; we see them, let us shudder at them. Let us not do these things, brethren, because the hope He is of the ends of the earth. If He were not the hope, and in the sea afar, He would not have said to His disciples, I will make you fishers of men. Now in the sea being taken by the nets of the Faith, we rejoice that we there are swimming yet within the nets; because this sea yet is raging with storms, but the nets, which have taken us, will be drawn out to shore. The shore is the end of the sea. Therefore the landing will be at the end of the world. Meanwhile within those same nets, brethren, let us live righteously: let us not by breaking the nets go forth without. For many have broken the nets, and have made schisms, and have gone forth without. Because evil fishes that were taken within the nets they said they would not endure; they themselves have become more evil than they whom they said they could not endure. For those nets did take fishes both good and evil. The Lord saith, The kingdom of Heaven is like to a sein cast into the sea, which gathereth of every kind, which, when it had been filled, drawing out, and sitting on the shore, they gathered the good into vessels, but the evil they cast out: so it shall be, He saith, in the consummation of the world. He sheweth what is the shore, He sheweth what is the end of the sea. The angels shall go forth, and shall sever the evil from the midst of the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Ha! ye citizens of Jerusalem that are within the nets, and are good fishes; endure the evil, the nets break ye not: together with them ye are in a sea, not together with them will ye be in the vessels. For Hope He is of the ends of the earth, Himself is Hope also in the sea afar. Afar, because also in the sea.

10. Ver. 6. Preparing mountains in His strength. Not in their strength. For He hath prepared great preachers, and those same He hath called mountains; humble in themselves, exalted in Him. Preparing mountains in His strength. What saith one of those same mountains? We ourselves in our own selves have had the answer of death, in order that in ourselves we

should not trust, but in God that raiseth the dead. He that in himself doth trust, and in Christ trusteth not, is not of those mountains which He hath prepared in His strength. Preparing mountains in His strength: girded about in power. Power, I understand: girded about, is what? They that put Christ in the midst, girded about they make Him, that is on all sides begirt. We all have Him in common, therefore in the midst He is: all we gird Him about that believe in Him: and because our faith is not of our strength, but of His power; therefore girded about He is in His power; not in our own strength.

11. Ver. 7. That troublest the bottom of the sea. He hath done this: it is seen what He hath done. For He hath prepared mountains in His strength, hath sent them to preach: girded about He is by believers in power: and moved is the sea, moved is the world, and it beginneth to persecute His saints. Girded about in power: that troublest the bottom of the sea. He hath not said, that troublest the sea; but the bottom of the sea. The bottom of the sea is the heart of ungodly men. For just as from the bottom more thoroughly all things are stirred, and the bottom holdeth firm all things: so whatsoever hath gone forth by tongue, by hands, by divers powers for the persecution of the Church, from the bottom hath gone forth. For if there were not the root of iniquity in the heart, all those things would not have gone forth against Christ. The bottom He troubled, perchance in order that the bottom He might also empty: for in the case of certain evil men He emptied the sea from the bottom, and made the sea a desert place. Another Psalm saith this, That turneth sea into dry land. All ungodly and heathen men that have believed were sea, have been made land; with salt waves at first barren, afterwards with the fruit of righteousness productive. That troublest the bottom of the sea: the sound of its waves who shall endure? Who shall endure, is what? What man shall endure the sound of the waves of the sea, the behests of the high powers of the world? But whence are they endured? Because He prepareth mountains in His strength. In that therefore which he hath said who shall endure? he saith thus; We ourselves of our own selves should not be able to endure those persecutions, unless He gave strength. That troublest the bottom of the sea: the sound of its waves who shall endure?

12. Ver. 8. The nations shall be troubled. At first they shall be troubled: but those mountains prepared in the strength of Christ, are they troubled? Troubled is the sea, against the mountains it dasheth: the sea breaketh, unshaken the mountains have remained. The nations shall be troubled, and all men shall fear. Behold now all men fear: they that before have been troubled do now all fear. The Christians feared not, and now the Christians are feared. All that did persecute do now fear. For He hath overcome That is girded about with power, to Him hath come every flesh in such sort, that the rest by their very minority do now fear. And all men shall fear, that inhabit the ends of the earth, because of Thy signs. For miracles the Apostles wrought, and thence all the ends of the earth have feared and have believed.

13. Outgoings in morning and in evening Thou shalt delight: that is, Thou makest delightful. Already in this life what is there being promised to us? Outgoings thou shalt delight in morning and in evening. There are outgoings in morning, there are outgoings in the evening. By the morning he signifieth the prosperity of the world, by the evening he signifieth the trouble of the world. Let your Love give heed, (for in both a human soul is tried, both in prosperity lest it be corrupted, and in adversity lest it be crushed)—The morning signifieth prosperity, because the morning is glad, the sadness, as it were, of the night being overpast. But sad is the darkness, when the evening cometh on: therefore when the evening, as it were, of the world came, He offered an evening sacrifice. Let each one therefore not fear the evening; neither in the morning let him be corrupted. Behold, some one or other, in order that thou mayest do some evil thing, hath promised gain; it is morning: there smileth upon thee a large sum of money, morning to thee it becometh. Do not be bribed, and thou wilt have an outgoing in the morning. For if thou hast an outgoing, thou wilt not be caught. For the promise of gain is like a bait in a trap; thou art squeezed close, and there is no way of going out, thou art caught in the trap. But the Lord thy God hath given to thee an outgoing, lest with gain thou be caught, when He saith to thee in heart, I am thy riches. Do not give heed to what the world promiseth, but to what the Maker of the world promiseth. Thou mindest what God hath promised to thee doing righteousness, thou despisest what man promiseth thee to draw thee away from righteousness. Heed not then what the world promises, but what the Maker of the world, and thou wilt

have an outgoing in the morning through the Lord's word saying, What doth it profit a man, if the whole world he gain, but to his soul suffer loss. But he that could not with promised gain corrupt and allure thee to iniquity, will menace penalties, and will resort to hostility, and will begin to say to thee, If thou wilt not do this thing, I will shew thee, I will be doing, thou shalt have me for an enemy. At first when he was promising gain, it was morning to thee: but now evening draweth on, sad thou hast become. But He that hath given thee an outgoing in the morning, will give one also in the evening. In the same manner as thou hast contemned the morning of the world by the light of the Lord, so condemn the evening also by the sufferings of the Lord, in saying to thy soul, What more will this man do to me, than my Lord hath suffered for me? May I hold fast justice, not consent to iniquity. Let him vent his rage on the flesh, the trap will be broken, and I will fly to my Lord, That saith to me, Do not fear them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill. And for the body itself He hath given security, saying, A hair of your head shall not perish. Nobly here he hath set down, Thou wilt delight outgoings in morning and in evening. For if thou take not delight in the very outgoing, thou wilt not labour to go out thence. Thou runnest thy head into the promised gain, if thou art not delighted with the promise of the Saviour. And again thou yieldest to one tempting and terrifying, if thou find no delight in Him that suffered before thee, in order that He might make an outgoing for thee. Outgoings in morning and in evening Thou wilt delight.

14. Ver. 9. Thou hast visited the earth, and hast inebriated it. Whence hast inebriated the earth? Thy cup inebriating how glorious it is! Thou hast visited the earth, and hast inebriated it. Thou hast sent Thy clouds, they have rained down the preaching of the truth, inebriated is the earth. Thou hast multiplied to enrich it. Whence hast thou 'multiplied to enrich it?' The river of God is filled with water. What is the river of God? The people of God. The first people was filled with water, wherewith the rest of the earth might be watered. Hear Him promising water: If any man thirst, let Him come to Me and drink: he that believeth on Me, rivers of living water from His belly shall flow: if rivers, one river also; for in respect of unity many are one. Many Churches and one Church, many faithful and one Bride of Christ: so many rivers and one river. Many Israelites believed, and were

fulfilled with the Holy Spirit; from thence they were scattered abroad through the nations, they began to preach the truth, and from the river of God that was filled with water, was the whole earth watered. Thou hast prepared food for them: because thus is Thy preparing. Not because they have deserved of Thee, whom Thou hast forgiven sins: the merits of them were evil, but Thou for Thy mercy's sake, because thus is Thy preparing, thus Thou hast prepared food for them.

15. Ver. 10. The furrows thereof inebriate Thou. Let there be made therefore at first furrows to be inebriated: let the hardness of our breast be opened with the share of the word of God, The furrows thereof inebriate Thou: multiply the generations thereof. We see, they believe, and by them believing other men believe, and because of those others believe; and it is not sufficient for one man, that having become himself a believer, he should gain one. So is multiplied seed too: a few grains are scattered, and fields spring up. The furrows thereof inebriate Thou, multiply the generations thereof: in the drops thereof it shall rejoice, when it shall rise up. That is, before it be perchance enlarged to the bulk of a river, when it shall rise up, in its drops, that is, in those meet for it, it shall rejoice. For upon those that are yet babes, and upon the weak, are dropped some portions of the sacraments, because they cannot receive the fulness of the truth. Hear in what manner he droppeth upon babes, while they are rising up, that is, in their recent rising having small capacities: the Apostle saith, To you I could not speak as if to spiritual, but as if to carnal, as if to babes in Christ. When he saith, to babes in Christ, he speaketh of them as already risen up, but not yet meet to receive that plenteous wisdom, whereof he saith, Wisdom we speak among perfect men. Let it rejoice in its drops, while it is rising up and is growing, when strengthened it shall receive wisdom also: in the same manner as an infant is fed with milk, and becometh fit for meat, and nevertheless at first out of that very meat for which it was not fit, for it milk is made. In its drops it shall rejoice, when it shall rise up.

16. Ver. 11. Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness. Seed is now sowing, that which is sown is growing, there will be the harvest too. And now over the seed the enemy hath sown tares; and there have risen up evil ones among the good, false Christians, having like leaf, but not like

fruit. For those are properly called tares, which spring up in the manner of wheat, for instance darnel, for instance wild oats, and all such as have the first leaf the same. Therefore of the sowing of the tares thus saith the Lord: There hath come an enemy, and hath sown over them tares; but what hath he done to the grain? The wheat is not choked by the tares, nay, through endurance of the tares the fruit of the wheat is increased. For the Lord Himself said to certain workmen desiring to root up the tares, Suffer ye both to grow unto the harvest, lest perchance while ye desire to root up the tares, ye root up at the same time the wheat also: but in time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind in bundles for burning, but the wheat store ye in the barn. This is the end of the year, the harvest of the world. Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness. Of crown when thou hearest, the glory of victory is implied. Conquer the devil, and thou wilt have a crown. Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness. Again he maketh reference to the goodness of God, lest any one boast of his own merits.

17. Thy plains shall be filled with abundance: (ver. 12.) the ends of the desert shall grow fat, and the hills shall be encircled with exultation. Plains, hills, ends of the desert, the same are also men. Plains, because of the equality: because of equality, I say, from thence just peoples have been called plains. Hills, because of lifting up: because God doth lift up in Himself those that humble themselves. Ends of the desert are all nations. Wherefore ends of the desert? Deserted they were, to them no Prophet had been sent: they were in like case as is a desert where no man passeth by. No word of God was sent to the nations: to the people Israel alone the Prophets preached. We came to the Lord; the wheat believed among that same people of the Jews. For He said at that time to the disciples, Ye say, far off is the harvest; look back, and see how white are the lands to harvest. There hath been therefore a first harvest, there will be a second in the last age. The first harvest was of Jews, because there were sent to them Prophets proclaiming a coming Saviour. Therefore the Lord said to His disciples, See how white are the lands to harvest: the lands, to wit, of Judæa. Other men, He saith, have laboured, and into their labours ye have entered. The Prophets laboured to sow, and ye with the sickle have entered into their labours. There hath been finished therefore the first harvest, and thence, with that

very wheat which then was purged, hath been sown the round world; so that there ariseth another harvest, which at the end is to be reaped. In the second harvest have been sown tares, now here there is labour. Just as in that first harvest the Prophets laboured until the Lord came: so in that second harvest the Apostles laboured, and all preachers of the truth labour, even until at the end the Lord send unto the harvest His Angels. Aforetime, I say, a desert there was, but the ends of the desert shall grow fat. Behold where the Prophets had given no sound, the Lord of the Prophets hath been received, The ends of the desert shall grow fat, and with exultation the hills shall be encircled.

18. Ver. 13. Clothed have been the rams of the sheep: 'with exultation' must be understood. For with what exultation the hills are encircled, with the same are clothed the rams of the sheep. Rams are the very same as hills. For hills they are because of more eminent grace; rams, because they are leaders of the flocks. Therefore those rams, the Apostles, were clothed with exultation, they rejoice over their fruits, not without cause they have laboured, not without cause they have preached. Clothed have been the rams of the sheep: and the valleys shall abound in wheat. And the humble peoples shall bring forth much fruit. They shall shout: thence they shall abound with wheat, because they shall shout. What shall they shout? For a hymn they shall say. For one thing it is to shout against God, another thing to say a hymn; one thing to shout iniquities, another thing to shout the praises of God. If thou shout in blasphemy, thorns thou hast brought forth: if thou shoutest in a hymn, thou aboundest in wheat.

PSALM 66

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

This Psalm hath on the title the inscription, For the end, a song of a Psalm of Resurrection. When ye hear for the end, whenever the Psalms are repeated, understand it for Christ: the Apostle saying, For the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness to every one believing. In what manner therefore here Resurrection is sung, ye will hear, and whose Resurrection it is, as far as Himself deigneth to give and disclose. For the Resurrection we Christians know already hath come to pass in our Head, and in the members it is to be. The Head of the Church is Christ, the members of Christ are the Church. That which hath preceded in the Head, will follow in the Body. This is our hope; for this we believe, for this we endure and persevere amid so great perverseness of this world, hope comforting us, before that hope becometh reality. For reality it will be when both we shall have risen again, and being changed into a heavenly form, shall have been made equal to the Angels. What man for this would dare to hope, unless Truth had promised it? But this hope promised to themselves the Jews had, and of their good and as it were just works they gloried much, because they had received the Law, by living according to which both here they would have carnal good things, and in the Resurrection of the dead, they hoped for such things as here they delighted in. For this cause to the Sadducees, who denied a future Resurrection, the Jews were not able to make answer when they propounded a question which the same Sadducees propounded to the Lord. For hence we perceive that they could not solve this question, because on the Lord's solving it they wondered. The Sadducees, I say, were propounding a question respecting a certain woman, who had seven husbands, not at the same time, but succeeding one another. For there was this provision of the Law for multiplying the people, that if a man

perchance died without children, his brother (if brother he had) should take his wife to raise up seed unto his brother. When that woman then was brought forward, who had had seven husbands who had all died without children, and who to fulfil this duty had married their brother's wife, they asked a question and said, In the Resurrection, of which of them shall she be the wife? Without doubt the Jews would not have been hard bested, would not have failed in that question, unless in the Resurrection for themselves they had hoped for such things as they were in the habit of doing in this life. But the Lord promising equality with Angels, not any human corruption of the flesh, saith to them, Ye err, knowing not the Scriptures, neither the power of God; for in the Resurrection, neither shall the women marry, nor shall the men take wives: for neither shall they begin to die, but shall be equal with the Angels of God. He hath proved that succession is necessary in a place where decease is mourned: there because there shall be no deceased, neither should successors be looked for. For unto this He hath subjoined For they shall not begin to die. Nevertheless, because the Jews, though it be carnally, did hold the hope of future resurrection, they were glad that answer had been made to the Sadducees, with whom they had a dispute about this doubtful and obscure question. The Jews therefore did hold the hope of the resurrection of the dead: and they hoped that themselves alone would rise again to a blessed life because of the work of the Law, and because of the justifications of the Scriptures, which the Jews alone had, and the Gentiles had not. Crucified was Christ, blindness in part happened unto Israel, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in: as the Apostle saith. The resurrection of the dead beginneth to be promised to the Gentiles also that believe in Jesus Christ, that He hath risen again. Thence this Psalm is against the presumption and pride of the Jews, for the comfort of the Gentiles that are to be called to the same hope of resurrection.

2. In a manner, my brethren, the mind of the Psalm ye have heard. Upon this which I have said, upon this which I have set before you, let your whole attention be fixed; from hence let not any thought divert you: against the presumption of the Jews it is spoken, who because of the justifications of the Law were hoping to themselves resurrection, and crucified Christ, Who was the First to rise again, Who will not have for His members to rise again

the Jews alone, but all men that have believed in Him, that is, all nations. Thence he beginneth, (ver. 1.) Be joyful in God. Who? Every land. Not therefore Judæa alone. See, brethren, after what sort is set forth the universality of the Church in the whole world spread abroad: and mourn ye not only the Jews, who envied the Gentiles that grace, but still more for heretics wail ye. For if they are to be mourned, that have not been gathered together, how much more they that being gathered together have been divided? Jubilate in God every land. What is jubilate? Into the voice of rejoicings break forth if ye cannot into that of words. For ‘jubilation’ is not of words, but the sound alone of men rejoicing is uttered, as of a heart labouring and bringing forth into voice the pleasure of a thing imagined which cannot be expressed. Be joyful in God every land: let no one jubilate in a part: let every land be joyful, let the Catholic Church jubilate. The Catholic Church embraceth the whole: whosoever holdeth a part and from the whole is cut off, should howl, not jubilate. Be joyful in God every land.

3. Ver. 2. But play ye to His name. What hath he said? By you playing let His name be blessed. But what it is to play, I told you yesterday, and I suppose Your Love to remember it. To play is also to take up an instrument which is called a psaltery, and by the striking and action of the hands to accompany voices. If therefore ye jubilate so that God may hear; play also something that men may both see and hear: but not to your own name. For take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men that ye may be seen of them. And for whose name, thou wilt say, shall I play, so that my works may not be seen of men? Attend to another passage, Let your works shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Let them see your good deeds, and glorify not you, but God. For if for the sake of yourselves being glorified ye do good works, we make the same reply as He made to certain of such men, Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward: and again, Otherwise no reward ye will have with your Father That is in Heaven. Thou wilt say, ought I, then, to hide my works, that I do them not before men? No. But what saith He? Let your works shine before men. In doubt then I shall remain. On one side Thou sayest to me, Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men: on the other side Thou sayest to me, Let your good works shine before men; what shall I keep? what do? what leave undone? A man can as well serve

two masters commanding different things as one commanding different things. I command not, saith the Lord, different things. The end observe, for the end sing: with what end thou doest it, see thou. If for this reason thou doest it, that thou mayest be glorified, I have forbidden it: but if for this reason, that God may be glorified, I have commanded it. Play therefore, not to your own name, but to the name of the Lord your God. Play ye, let Him be lauded: live ye well, let Him be glorified. For whence have ye that same living well? If for everlasting ye had had it, ye would never have lived ill; if from yourselves ye had had it, ye never would have done otherwise than have lived well. But play ye to His name.

4. Give glory to His praise. Our whole attention upon the praise of God he directeth, nothing for us he leaveth whence we should be praised. Let us glory thence the more, and rejoice: to Him let us cleave, in Him let us be praised. Ye heard when the Apostle was being read, See ye your calling, brethren, how not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, but the foolish things of the world God hath chosen to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world God hath chosen to confound the strong; and the mean things of the world God hath chosen, and those things which are not as though they were things that are, that those things which are might be made void. What hath he willed to say? What hath he willed to shew? There hath come down the Lord, our God Jesus Christ, to restore the human race, and to give His Grace to all men perceiving that it is His Grace, not their merits: and that no person whatever should glory in the flesh, the weak He chose. For thence was not chosen even that Nathanael. For why dost thou suppose that He chose Matthew the publican, sitting at the receipt of custom, and chose not Nathanael, to whom the same Lord had borne witness, saying, Behold a true Israelite, in whom guile is not? This Nathanael, I say, is found to have been learned in the law. Not that learned men He was not going to choose: but if the same at first He had chosen, on account of their learning they would have thought themselves to have been chosen; so those men's knowledge would have been praised, and the praise of the Grace of Christ would have been lessened. He bare witness to one being a good trustworthy man, in whom guile was not: but, nevertheless, him He took not among those disciples, for whom at first He chose but ignorant men. And whence perceive we that he was skilled in the Law?

When he heard from one of those that had followed the Lord, saying, We have found the Messiah, which is interpreted Christ: he enquired whence, and it was told him, from Nazareth: then he, From Nazareth there may be some good thing. Without doubt he, that perceived that from Nazareth there might be some good thing, was skilled in the Law, and had well examined the Prophets. I know that there is in these words another way of reading, but by the wiser sort it is not approved, namely, that he seemed as it were to have despaired, when he heard and said, From Nazareth can there be any good thing? That is, can there any wise be? So uttering it as if he were in despair. But there followeth in that place, Come and see. These words, to wit, Come and see, may follow after either way of reading. If thou sayest, as if not believing, From Nazareth can there be any good thing? The answer is, Come and see that which thou believest not. Again, if thou sayest in confirmation, From Nazareth there may be some good thing; the answer is, Come and see how truly good is that which I tell thee of from Nazareth; and how rightly thou believest, come and experience. From hence nevertheless this man is supposed to have been learned in the Law, because, to wit, he was not chosen among the disciples by Him, Who chose the foolish things of this world first, though the Lord had borne so great testimony to him, saying, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. But the Lord chose afterwards orators also; but they would have been proud, if He had not first chosen fishermen; He chose rich men; but they would have said that on account of their riches they had been chosen, unless at first He had chosen poor men: He chose Emperors afterwards; but better is it, that when an Emperor hath come to Rome, he should lay aside his crown, and weep at the monument of a fisherman, than that a fisherman should weep at the monument of an Emperor. For the weak things of the world God hath chosen to confound the strong; and the mean things of the world God hath chosen, and those things which are not as though things that are, that those things which are might be made void. And what followeth? The Apostle hath concluded, That there might not glory before God any flesh. See ye how from us He hath taken away, that He might give glory: hath taken away ours, that He might give His own; hath taken away empty, that He might give full; hath taken away insecure, that He might give solid. How much more strong and firm is our glory, because in God it is? Thou oughtest not therefore in thyself to glory; Truth hath forbidden it; but that which the

Apostle saith, Truth hath commanded, 'He that glorieth, in God let him glory.' Give therefore glory to His praise. Do not imitate the Jews, who as if to their merits desired to ascribe their justifications; and envied the Gentiles drawing near to Evangelical Grace, in order that all sins might be forgiven them; as if the former had not any thing to be forgiven them; already, as if they were good workmen, were expecting their hire. And though yet they were sick, they thought themselves to be whole, and on that account more dangerously were they sick. For if they had but been more slightly sick, they would not, as if they were phrensied, have slain the Physician. Give ye glory to His praise.

5. Ver. 3. Say ye to God, How to be feared are Thy works! Wherefore to be feared and not to be loved? Hear thou another voice of a Psalm: Serve ye the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. What meaneth this? Hear the voice of the Apostle: With fear, he saith, and trembling, your own salvation work ye out. Wherefore with fear and trembling? He hath subjoined the reason: for God it is that worketh in you both to will and to work according to good will. If therefore God worketh in thee, by the Grace of God thou workest well, not by thy strength. Therefore if thou rejoicest, fear also: lest perchance that which was given to a humble man be taken away from a proud one. For that ye may know this thing to have come to pass because of that very pride of the Jews, who justified themselves as though by the works of the Law, and therefore fell; another Psalm saith, These in chariots and those in horses, as though it were in certain steps and instruments of theirs for their raising up: but we, he saith, in the name of the Lord our God will be magnified. These in chariots and these in horses: but we in the name of the Lord our God will be magnified. See how the former were exalted in themselves: see how the latter were glorying in God. Wherefore what followed: Their feet have been bound fast and they have fallen: but we have risen and are erect. Hear our Lord Himself saying this same thing: I, He saith, have come, that they which see not may see: and they that see may be made blind. See on one side goodness, on the other ill intent as it were. But what is better than He? What more merciful? What more just? Why then, they that see not may see? Because of goodness. Why, and they that see may be made blind? Because of arrogance. And did they really see, and were they made blind? They saw not, but they thought

they saw. For behold, see brethren, when the Jews themselves said, Are we blind, the Lord saith to them, If blind ye were, sin ye would not have: but now because ye say, we see, your sin in you abideth. To the Physician thou hast come; that thou seest sayest thou? Then no more of eye-salves, always blind thou wilt remain: confess thyself blind, that thou mayest deserve to be enlightened. Observe the Jews, observe the Gentiles. They that see not, may see, He saith: to this end I have come, that they which see may be made blind. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the Flesh the Jews saw, the Gentiles saw not: behold they that saw, crucified; they that saw not believed. Therefore what hast Thou done, O Christ, against proud men? What hast Thou done? We see, because Thou hast so deigned, and Thy members we are: we see. Thou hast hidden God, hast put forth Man. Wherefore this? That blindness in part to Israel might happen, and the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in. To this end Thou hast hidden God, and Man before their faces Thou hast put. They saw, and saw not: they saw what Thou hadst taken, and they saw not what Thou wast: they saw the form of a servant, they saw not the form of God: the form of a servant, than which the Father is greater, not the form of God, because of which but now ye have heard, I and the Father are One. They held what they saw, they crucified what they saw; they insulted Him whom they saw, they acknowledged not Him that was concealed. Hear the Apostle saying, For if they had known, the Lord of glory they would never have crucified. Therefore ye Gentiles that have been called, observe the branches cut off because of severity, but yourselves grafted in because of goodness, and made partakers of the fatness of the olive, not being high-minded, that is, not being proud. For thou bearest not the root, he saith, but the root thee. Rather be afraid, because ye see the natural branches lopped off. For through the Patriarchs the Jews came, from the flesh of Abraham they were born. And what saith the Apostle? But thou sayest, broken were the branches, that I might be grafted in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off: but thou, he saith, by faith standest, be not highminded, but fear: for if the natural branches God hath not spared, neither thee will He spare. Observe therefore the branches broken, and thyself grafted in: be not exalted above the broken branches, but rather say thou to God, How to be feared are Thy works! Brethren, if against the Jews of old, cut off from the root of the Patriarchs, we ought not to exalt ourselves, but rather to fear and to say to God, How to be feared are Thy

works: how much less ought we not to exalt ourselves against the fresh wounds of the cutting off! Before there had been cut off Jews, grafted in Gentiles; from the very graft there have been cut off heretics; but neither against them ought we to exalt ourselves; lest perchance he deserve to be cut off, that delighteth to revile them that are cut off. My brethren, a bishop's voice, however unworthy, hath sounded to you: we pray you to beware, whosoever ye are in the Church, do not revile them that are not within; but pray ye rather, that they too may be within. For God is able again to graft them in. Of the very Jews the Apostle said this, and it was done in their case. The Lord rose again, and many believed: they perceived not when they crucified, nevertheless afterwards they believed in Him, and there was forgiven them so great a transgression. The shedding of the Lord's blood was forgiven the man-slayers, not to say, God-slayers: for if they had known, the Lord of glory they never would have crucified. Now to the manslayers hath been forgiven the shedding of the blood of Him innocent: and that same blood which through madness they shed, though grace they have drunk. Say ye, therefore, to God, How to be feared are Thy works! Whence to be feared? Because blindness in part to Israel hath happened, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in. O fulness of Gentiles, say thou to God, How to be feared are Thy works! and so rejoice thou as that thou mayest fear, be not exalted above the branches cut off. Say ye unto God, How to be feared are Thy works.

6. Ver. 2. In the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie to Thee. For this purpose he saith, to Thee thine enemies shall lie, in order that great may be Thy power. What is this? With more attention hearken. The power of our Lord Jesus Christ most chiefly appeared in the Resurrection, from whence this Psalm hath received its title. And rising again, He appeared to His disciples. He appeared not to His enemies, but to His disciples. Crucified He appeared to all men, rising again to believers: so that afterwards also he that would might believe, and to him that should believe, resurrection might be promised. Many holy men wrought many miracles; no one of them when dead did rise again: because even they that by them were raised to life, were raised to life to die. Let your Love attend. The Lord making mention of His works said, The works believe ye, if Me ye will not believe. And there are mentioned also the past works of the

Prophets; and if they be not the same, yet many are the same, many of the same power. The Lord walked upon the sea, He bade Peter also walk. Was the same Lord not in that place when the sea divided herself, that Moses with the people of Israel might pass over? The same Lord was doing those things. He that did them through His flesh, the Same did them through the flesh of His servants. Nevertheless, this thing through His servants He did not, (for Himself did all things,) that any one of themselves should have died and risen again unto life everlasting. Because therefore the Jews might say, when the Lord did miracles, Moses hath done these things, Elias hath done, Eliseus hath done them: they might for themselves say these words, because those men also did raise to life dead men, and did many miracles: therefore when from Him a sign was demanded, of the peculiar sign making mention which in Himself alone was to be, He saith, This generation crooked and provoking seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it, except the sign of Jonas the Prophet: for as Jonas was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so shall be also the Son of Man in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. In what way was Jonas in the belly of the whale? Was it not so that afterwards alive he was vomited out? Hell was to the Lord what the whale was to Jonas. This sign peculiar to Himself He mentioned, this is the most mighty sign. It is more mighty to live again after having been dead, than not to have been dead. The greatness of the power of the Lord as He was made Man, in the virtue of the Resurrection doth appear. This the Apostle also noticeth, when he saith, Not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, which is of God righteousness in faith, to know Him and the virtue of His Resurrection. Thus it is noticed also in another place: although He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth in the virtue of God. Whereas therefore this great power of the Lord is in the Resurrection perceived, whence this Psalm hath received its title, what meaneth, in the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie unto Thee, but that thou understand it thus, Thine enemies shall lie to Thee in order that Thou mayest be crucified, Thou shalt be crucified in order that Thou mayest rise again? The lie therefore of them shall redound to the praise of Thy great power. Wherefore are enemies wont to lie? To lessen the power of some person, about whom they lie. To Thee, he saith, contrariwise it

chanceth. For less would Thy power have appeared, if they had not lied to Thee.

7. Observe also the very lie of the false witnesses in the Gospel, and see how it is about Resurrection. For when to the Lord had been said, What sign shewest Thou to us, that Thou doest these things? besides that which He had spoken about Jonah, through another similitude of this same thing also He spake, that ye might know this peculiar sign had been especially pointed out: Destroy this Temple, He saith, and in three days I will raise it up. And they said, In forty and six years was builded this temple, and wilt Thou in three days raise it up? And the Evangelist explaining what it was, But this, he saith, spake Jesus of the Temple of His Body. Behold this His power He said He would shew to men in the same thing as that from whence He had given the similitude of a Temple, because of His flesh, which was the Temple of the Divinity hidden within. Whence the Jews outwardly saw the Temple, the Deity dwelling within they saw not. Out of those words of the Lord false witnesses made up a lie to say against Him, out of those very words wherein He mentioned His future Resurrection, in speaking of the Temple. For false witnesses, when they were asked what they had heard Him say, alleged against Him: We heard Him saying, I will destroy this Temple, and after three days I will raise it up. 'After three days I will raise up,' they had heard: I will destroy, they had not heard: but had heard 'destroy ye.' One word they changed and a few letters, in order to support their false testimony. But for whom changest thou a word, O human vanity, O human weakness? For the Word, the Unchangeable, dost thou change a word? Thou changest thy word, dost thou change God's Word? Whence in another place is said, And iniquity hath lied to themselves. Why therefore to Thee have Thine enemies lied, to Whom every land shouteth for joy? In the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie to Thee. They will say, I will destroy, though Thou hast said, Destroy ye. Wherefore said they that Thou hadst said, I will destroy; and said not that which Thou saidest, destroy ye? It was, as it were, in order that they might defend themselves from the charge of destroying the Temple without cause. For Christ, because He willed it, died: and nevertheless ye killed Him. Behold we grant you, O ye liars, Himself destroyed the Temple. For it hath been said by the Apostle, That loved me, and gave up Himself for me. It hath

been said of the Father, That His own Son spared not, but gave Him up for us all. If therefore the Father gave up the Son, and the Son gave up His own Self, Judas did what? The Father in giving up the Son to death for us did well: Christ in delivering up Himself for us did well: Judas in giving up his Master for his covetousness, did evil. For that which hath been given to us by the Passion of Christ, shall not be ascribed to the malice of Judas: he shall have the reward of malice, Christ the praise of bounty. By all means be it that Himself destroyed the Temple, Himself destroyed that said, Power I have to lay down My Soul, and power I have again to take it: no one taketh it from Me, but I Myself lay it down from Me, and again I take it. Be it that Himself hath destroyed the Temple in His Grace, in your malice. In the multitude of Thy power thine enemies shall lie to Thee. Behold they lie, behold they are believed, behold Thou art oppressed, behold Thou art crucified, behold Thou art insulted, behold head is wagged at Thee, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Behold when Thou wilt, life Thou layest down, and with lance in the side art pierced, and Sacraments from Thy side flow forth; Thou art taken down from the Tree, wound in linens, laid in the sepulchre, there are set guards lest Thy disciples take Thee away; there cometh the hour of Thy Resurrection, earth is shaken, tombs are cloven, Thou risest again in secret, appearest openly. Where then are those liars? Where is the false testimony of evil will? Have not Thine enemies in the multitude of Thy power lied to Thee?

8. Give them also those guards at the Tomb, let them recount what they have seen, let them take money and lie too: let them too speak, crooked men by crooked men admonished, let there speak by Jews corrupted, they that in Christ would not be uncorrupted; let them speak, let them too lie. What will they say? Let us see, speak ye: ye also will lie in the multitude of the power of the Lord. What will ye say? While we were sleeping, there came His disciples, and took Him away from the Tomb. O folly, asleep indeed! Either thou wast awake, and shouldest have prevented it: or thou wast asleep, and what was done thou knewest not. They too were added to the lie of the enemies: increased was the number of liars, that increased might be the reward of believers: because in the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie to Thee. Therefore they lied, in the multitude of Thy power they lied: to confound liars Thou hast appeared to men of truth, and

Thou hast appeared to those men of truth whom Thou hast made men of truth.

9. Let Jews remain in their lies: to Thee, because in the multitude of Thy power they lied, let there be done that which followeth, (ver. 4.) Let every land worship Thee, and play to Thee, play to Thy name, O Most Highest. A little before, Most Lowly, now Most Highest: Most Lowly in the hands of lying enemies; Most Highest above the head of praising Angels. Let every land worship Thee, and play to Thee, play to Thy name, O Most Highest.

10. Come ye, and see the works of the Lord. O ye Gentiles O most distant nations, leave lying Jews, come confessing. Come ye, and see the works of the Lord: terrible in counsels above the sons of men. Son of Man indeed He too hath been called, and verily Son of Man He became: very Son of God in the form of God; very Son of Man in form of a servant: but do not judge of that form by the condition of others alike: terrible He is in counsels above the sons of men. Sons of men took counsel to crucify Christ, being crucified He blinded the crucifiers. What then have ye done, sons of men, by taking keen counsels against your Lord, in whom was hidden Majesty, and to sight shewn weakness? Ye were taking counsels to destroy, He to blind and save; to blind proud men, to save humble men: but to blind those same proud men, to the end that, being blinded they might be humbled, being humbled might confess, having confessed might be enlightened. Terrible in counsels above the sons of men. Terrible indeed. Behold blindness in part to Israel hath happened: behold the Jews, out of whom was born Christ, are without: behold the Gentiles, that were against Judæa, in Christ are within. Terrible in counsels above the sons of men.

11. Wherefore what hath He done by the terror of His counsel? He hath turned the sea into dry land. For this followeth, (ver. 6.) That hath turned the sea into dry land. A sea was the world, bitter with saltness, troubled with tempest, raging with waves of persecutions, sea it was: truly into dry land the sea hath been turned, now there thirsteth for sweet water the world that with salt water was filled. Who hath done this? He that hath turned the sea into dry land. Now the soul of all the Gentiles saith what? 'My soul is as it were land without water to Thee.' That hath turned the sea into dry land. In the river they shall pass over on foot. Those same persons that have been

turned into dry land, though they were before sea, in the river on foot shall pass over. What is the river? The river is all the mortality of the world. Observe a river: some things come and pass by, other things that are to pass by do succeed. Is it not thus with the water of a river, that from earth springeth and floweth? Every one that is born must needs give place to one going to be born: and all this order of things rolling along is a kind of river. Into this river let not the soul greedily throw herself, let her not throw herself, but let her stand still. And how shall she pass over the pleasures of things doomed to perish? Let her believe in Christ, and she will pass over on foot: she passeth over with Him for Leader, on foot she passeth over. What is, to pass over on foot? To pass over easily. She requireth no horse to pass over, she is not lifted up with pride to pass over the river: humble she passeth over, and the more safely she passeth over. In the river they shall pass over on foot.

12. There we will be joyous in Him. O ye Jews, of your own works boast ye: lay aside the pride of boasting of yourselves, take up the Grace of being joyous in Christ. For therein we will be joyous, but not in ourselves: there we will be joyous in Him. When shall we joy? When we shall have passed over the river on foot. Life everlasting is promised, resurrection is promised, there our flesh no longer shall be a river: for a river it is now, while it is mortality. Observe whether there standeth still any age. Boys desire to grow up; and they know not how by succeeding years the span of their life is lessened. For years are not added to but taken from them as they grow: just as the water of a river alway draweth near, but from the source it withdraweth. And boys desire to grow up that they may escape the thralldom of elders; behold they grow up, it cometh to pass quickly, they arrive at youth: let them that have emerged from boyhood retain, if they are able, their youth: that too passeth away. Old age succeedeth: let even old age be everlasting; with death it is removed. Therefore a river there is of flesh that is born. This river of mortality, so that it doth not by reason of concupiscence of things mortal undermine and carry him away, he easily passeth over, that humbly, that is on foot, passeth over, He being leader That first hath passed over, That of the flood in the way even unto death hath drunk, and therefore hath lifted up the head. Passing over therefore on foot that river, that is, easily passing over that mortality that glideth along,

there we will be joyous in Him. But now in what save in Him, or in the hope of Him? For even if we are joyous now, in hope we are joyous; but then in Him we shall be joyous. And now in Him, but through hope: but then face to face.

13. There we will be joyous in Him. In whom? In Him (ver. 7.) That reigneth in His virtue for everlasting. For what virtue have we? and is it everlasting? If everlasting were our virtue, we should not have slipped, should not have fallen into sin, we should not have deserved penal mortality. He, of His good pleasure, took up that whereunto our desert threw us down. That reigneth in His virtue for everlasting. Of Him partakers let us be made, in Whose virtue we shall be strong, but He in His own. We enlightened, He a light enlightening: we, being turned away from Him, are in darkness; turned away from Himself He cannot be. With the heat of Him we are warmed; from whence withdrawing we had grown cold, to the Same drawing near again we are warmed. Therefore let us speak to Him that He may keep us in His virtue, because in Him we will be joyous That reigneth in His virtue for everlasting.

14. But this thing is not granted to believing Jews alone. Because the Jews did greatly lift themselves up relying on their own virtue, afterwards they understood in Whose virtue they were strong to their health, and certain of them believed: but that is not enough for Christ; much is that which He hath given, a great price He hath given, not for Jews alone was that to avail which He hath given. The eyes of Him do look upon the Gentiles. Therefore, "The eyes of Him upon the Gentiles look. And what do we?" The Jews will murmur; the Jews will say, "what He hath given to us, the same to them also; to us Gospel, to them Gospel; to us the Grace of Resurrection, and to them the Grace of Resurrection; doth it profit us nothing that we have received the Law, and that in the justifications of the Law we have lived, and have kept the commandments of the fathers? Nothing will it avail? The same to them as to us." Let them not strive, let them not dispute. Let not them that are bitter be exalted in their own selves. O flesh miserable and wasting, art thou not sinful? Why crieth out thy tongue? Let the conscience be listened to. For all men have sinned, and need the glory of God. Know thyself, human weakness. Thou didst receive

the Law, in order that a transgressor also of the Law thou mightest be: for thou hast not kept and fulfilled that which thou didst receive. There hath come to thee because of the Law, not the justification which the Law enjoineth, but the transgression which thou hast done. If therefore there hath abounded sin, why enviest thou Grace more abounding. Be not bitter, for let not them that are bitter be exalted in their own selves. He seemeth in a manner to have uttered a curse in Let not them that are bitter be exalted; yea, be they exalted, but not in themselves. Let them be humbled in themselves, exalted in Christ. For, "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be humbled." Let not them that are bitter be exalted in their own selves.

15. Ver. 8. Bless our God, ye nations. Behold, there have been driven back they that are bitter, reckoning hath been made with them: some have been converted, some have continued proud. Let not them terrify you that grudge the Gentiles Gospel Grace: now hath come the Seed of Abraham, in Whom are blessed all nations. Bless ye Him in Whom ye are blessed, Bless our God, ye nations: and hear ye the voice of His praise. Praise not yourselves, but praise Him. What is the voice of His praise? That by His Grace we are whatever of good we are. (Ver. 9.) Who hath set my Soul unto life. Behold the voice of His praise: Who hath set my Soul unto life. Therefore in death she was: in death she was, in thyself. Thence it is that ye ought not to have been exalted in yourselves. Therefore in death she was in thyself: where will it be in life, save in Him that said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Just as to certain believers the Apostle saith, Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. Darkness therefore in yourselves, light in the Lord: so death in yourselves, life in the Lord. Who hath set my Soul unto life. Behold, He hath set our Soul in life, because we believe in Him; unto life He hath set our Soul: but what further need is there, save that we persevere even unto the end? And this who shall give, save He of whom in continuation hath been said, and hath not given unto motion my feet? He hath set my Soul unto life, He guideth the feet that they stumble not, be not moved and given unto motion; He maketh us to live, He maketh us to persevere even unto the end, in order that for everlasting we may live. And hath not given unto motion my feet.

16. Wherefore hath He said this, And hath not given unto motion my feet? For what hast thou suffered, or what couldest thou suffer, that thy feet should be moved? What? Hear the words which follow. Wherefore have I said, hath not given unto motion my feet? Because many things we have suffered, on account of which our feet would have been moved from the way, unless He had guided, and not given them unto motion. What are these things? (ver. 10.) For thou hast proved us, O God; Thou hast fired us as silver is fired. Hast not fired us like hay, but like silver: by applying to us fire, Thou hast not turned us into ashes, but Thou hast washed off uncleanness, Thou hast fired us, as silver is fired. And see in what manner God is wroth against them, whose Soul He hath set unto life. Thou hast led us into a trap: not that we might be caught and die, but that we might be tried and delivered from it. Thou hast laid tribulations upon our back. For having been to ill purpose lifted up, proud we were: having been to ill purpose lifted up, we were bowed down, in order that being bowed down, we should be lifted up for good. Thou hast laid tribulations on our back: (Ver. 11.) Thou hast set men over our heads. All these things the Church hath suffered in sundry and divers persecutions: She hath suffered this in Her individual members, even now doth suffer it. For there is not one, that in this life could say that he was exempt from these trials. Therefore there are set even men over our heads: we endure those whom we would not, we suffer for our betters those whom we know to be worse. But if sins be wanting, a man is justly superior: but by how much there are more sins, by so much he is inferior. And it is a good thing to consider ourselves to be sinners, and thus endure men set over our heads: in order that we also to God may confess that deservedly we suffer. For why dost thou suffer with indignation that which He doeth Who is just? Thou hast laid tribulations upon our back: Thou hast set men over our heads. God seemeth to be wroth, when He doeth these things: fear not, for a Father He is, He is never so wroth as to destroy. When ill thou livest, if He spareth, He is more angry. In a word, these tribulations are the rods of Him correcting, lest there be a sentence from Him punishing. Thou hast laid tribulations upon our back: Thou hast set men over our heads.

17. We have passed through fire and water. Fire and water are both dangerous in this life. Certainly water seemeth to extinguish fire, and fire

seemeth to dry up water. Thus also these are the trials, wherein aboundeth this life. Fire burneth, water corrupteth: both must be feared, both the burning of tribulation and the water of corruption. Whenever there is adversity, and any thing which is called unhappiness in this world, there is as it were fire: whenever there is prosperity, and the world's plenty floweth about one, there is as it were water. See that fire burn thee not, nor water corrupt. Be thou strong against the fire, thou must needs be baken; as though thou wert a clay vessel, thou art cast into the furnace of fire, in order that the thing which hath been formed may be made strong. The vessel then now by fire being made strong feareth not the water: but if the vessel shall not have been hardened by fire, like mud in water it will be dissolved. Hasten not to the water: through fire pass over to the water, that thou mayest pass over the water also. Therefore also in the mystic rites, and in catechising and in exorcising, there is first used fire. For whence oftentimes do the unclean spirits cry out, 'I burn,' if that is not fire? But after the fire of Exorcism we come to Baptism: so that from fire to water, from water unto refreshment. But as in the Sacraments, so it is in the temptations of this world: the straitness of fear draweth near first, in place of fire; afterwards fear being removed, we ought to be afraid lest worldly happiness corrupt. But when the fire hath not made thee burst, and when thou hast not sunk in the water, but hast swum out; through discipline thou passest over to rest, and passing over through fire and water, thou art led forth into a place of refreshment. For of those things whereof the signs are in the Sacraments, there are the very realities in that perfection of life everlasting. So soon as we shall have passed over to that place of refreshment, dearly beloved brethren, there no enemy we shall fear, no tempter, no envious person, no fire, no water; there an everlasting place of refreshment there will be. A place of coolness it is called, because of the rest therein. For if thou say, it is heat, it is true: if thou say, it is a cool place, it is true. For if the cool place thou understand amiss, we are as it were torpid there. But we are not torpid there, but we rest: nor though it be called heat, shall we be hot there, but we shall be fervent in spirit. Observe that same heat in another Psalm: nor is there any one that hideth himself from the heat thereof. What saith also the Apostle? In spirit fervent. Therefore, we have gone over through fire and water: and Thou hast led us forth into a cool place.

18. Observe how not only concerning a cool place, but neither of that very fire to be desired he hath been silent: (ver. 13.) I will enter into Thy House in holocausts. What is a holocaust? A whole sacrifice burned up, but with fire divine. For a sacrifice is called a holocaust, when the whole is burned. One thing are the parts of sacrifices, another thing a holocaust: when the whole is burned and the whole consumed by fire divine, it is called a holocaust: when a part, a sacrifice. Every holocaust indeed is a sacrifice: but not every sacrifice a holocaust. Holocausts therefore he is promising, the Body of Christ is speaking, the Unity of Christ is speaking, I will enter into Thy House in holocausts. All that is mine let Thy fire consume, let nothing of mine remain to me, let all be Thine. But this shall be in the Resurrection of just men, when both this corruptible shall be clad in incorruption, and this mortal shall be clad in immortality: then shall come to pass that which hath been written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' Victory is, as it were, fire divine: when it swalloweth up our death also, it is a holocaust. There remaineth not any thing mortal in the flesh, there remaineth not any thing culpable in the spirit: the whole of mortal life shall be consumed, in order that in life everlasting it may be consummated, that from death we may be preserved in life. These therefore will be the holocausts.

19. And what shall there be in the holocausts? I will render to Thee my vows, (ver. 14.) which my lips have distinguished. What is the distinction in vows? This is the distinction, that thyself thou censure, Him thou praise: perceive thyself to be a creature, Him the Creator: thyself darkness, Him the Enlightener, to Whom thou shouldest say, Thou shalt light my lamp, O Lord my God, Thou shalt enlighten my darkness. For whenever thou shalt have said, O soul, that from thyself thou hast light, thou wilt not distinguish. If thou wilt not distinguish, thou wilt not render distinct vows. Render distinct vows, confess thyself changeable, Him unchangeable: confess thyself without Him to be nothing, but Himself without thee to be perfect; thyself to need Him, but Him not to need thee. Cry to Him, I have said to the Lord, My God art Thou, for my good things Thou needest not. Now though God taketh thee to Him for a holocaust, He groweth not, He is not increased, He is not richer, He becometh not better furnished: whatsoever He maketh of thee for thy sake, is the better for thee, not for Him that maketh. If thou

distinguishest these things, thou renderest the vows to thy God which thy lips have distinguished. I will render to Thee my vows, which my lips have distinguished.

20. And my mouth hath spoken in my tribulation. How sweet ofttimes is tribulation, how necessary? In that case what hath the mouth of the same spoken in his tribulation? (Ver. 15.) Holocausts marrowed I will offer to Thee. What is marrowed? Within may I keep Thy love, it shall not be on the surface, in my marrow it shall be that I love Thee. For there is nothing more inward than our marrow: the bones are more inward than the flesh, the marrow is more inward than those same bones. Whosoever therefore on the surface loveth God, desireth rather to please men, but having some other affection within, he offereth not holocausts of marrow: but into whosoever marrow He looketh, him He receiveth whole. Holocausts marrowed I will offer to Thee, with incense and rams. The rams are the rulers of the Church: the whole Body of Christ is speaking: this is the thing which he offereth to God. Incense is what? Prayer. With incense and rams. For especially the rams do pray for the flocks. I will offer to Thee oxen with he-goats. Oxen we find treading out corn, and the same are offered to God. The Apostle hath said, that of the preachers of the Gospel must be understood that which hath been written, Of the ox treading out corn the mouth thou shalt not muzzle. Doth God care for oxen? Therefore great are those rams, great the oxen. What of the rest, that perchance are conscious of certain sins, that perchance in the very road have slipped, and, having been wounded, by penitence are being healed? Shall they too continue, and to the holocausts shall they not belong? Let them not fear, he hath added he-goats also. Holocausts, he saith, marrowed I will offer to Thee, with incense and rams; I will offer to Thee oxen with he-goats. By the very yoking are saved the he-goats; of themselves they have no strength, being yoked to bulls they are accepted. For they have made friends of the mammon of iniquity, that the same may receive them into everlasting tabernacles. Therefore those he-goats shall not be on the left, because they have made to themselves friends of the mammon of iniquity. But what he-goats shall be on the left? They to whom shall be said, I hungred, and ye gave me not to eat: not they that have redeemed their sins by alms-deeds.

21. Ver. 16. Come ye, hear, and I will tell, all ye that fear God. Let us come, let us hear, what he is going to tell, Come ye, hear, and I will tell. But to whom, Come ye, and hear? All ye that fear God. If God ye fear not, I will not tell. It is not possible that it be told to any where the fear of God is not. Let the fear of God open the ears, that there may be something to enter in, and a way whereby may enter in that which I am going to tell. But what is he going to tell? How great things He hath done to my soul. Behold, he would tell: but what is he going to tell? Is it perchance how widely the earth is spread, how much the sky is extended, and how many are the stars, and what are the changes of sun and of moon? This creation fulfillleth its course: but they that have very curiously sought it out, the Creator thereof have not known. This thing hear, this thing receive, O ye that fear God, how great things He hath done to my soul: if ye will, to yours also. How great things He hath done to my soul. (Ver. 17.) To Him with my mouth I have cried. And this very thing, he saith, hath been done to his soul; that to Him with his mouth he should cry, hath been done, he saith, to his soul. Behold, brethren, Gentiles we were, even if not in ourselves, in our parents. And what saith the Apostle? Ye know, when Gentiles ye were, to idols without speech how ye went up, being led. Let the Church now say, how great things He hath done to my soul. To Him with my mouth I have cried. I a man to a stone was crying, to a deaf stock I was crying, to idols deaf and dumb I was speaking: now the image of God hath been turned to the Creator thereof. I that was saying to a stock, My father thou art; and to a stone, Thou hast begotten me: now say, "Our Father, Which art in Heaven." To Him with my mouth I have cried. 'With my mouth' now, not with the mouth of another. When I was crying to stones in the vain conversation of fathers' tradition, with the mouth of others I was crying: when I have cried to the Lord, that which Himself hath given, that which Himself hath inspired, to Him with my own mouth I have cried, and have exalted Him under my tongue. What is, I have cried with my mouth, and have exalted Him under my tongue? Him in public I have preached, Him in secret I have confessed. Too little it is to exalt God with tongue; but also under the tongue, so that of what thou speakest being assured, of the same in silence thou mayest meditate. To Him with my mouth I have cried, and I have exalted Him under my tongue. See how in secret he would be uncorrupt that offereth marrowed holocausts. This do ye, brethren, this imitate, so that ye

may say, Come ye, see how great things He hath done to my soul. For all those things of which he telleth, by His Grace are done in our soul. See the other things of which he speaketh.

22. Ver. 18. If I have beheld iniquity in my heart, may not the Lord hearken. Consider now, brethren, how easily, how daily men blushing for fear of men do censure iniquities; He hath done ill, He hath done basely, a villain the fellow is: this perchance for man's sake he saith. See whether thou beholdest no iniquity in thy heart, whether perchance that which thou censurest in another, thou art meditating to do, and therefore against him dost exclaim, not because he hath done it, but because he hath been found out. Return to thyself, within be to thyself a judge. Behold in thy hid chamber, in the very inmost recess of the heart, where thou and He that seeth are alone, there let iniquity be displeasing to thee, in order that thou mayest be pleasing to God. Do not regard it, that is, do not love it, but rather despise it, that is, condemn it, and turn away from it. Whatever pleasing thing it hath promised to allure thee to sin; whatever grievous thing it hath threatened, to drive thee on to evil doing; all is nought, all passeth away: it is worthy to be despised, in order that it may be trampled upon; not to be eyed lest it be accepted. [For it maketh suggestion sometimes through thoughts, or through the words of evil men in conference. For evil communications do corrupt good manners: do thou regard them not. But too little it is to do so in countenance, too little it is to do so in tongue: in heart do not regard, that is, do not love it, do not accept it. For to put 'regard' for love is of daily occurrence: in the first place, because of God we say, He hath regarded me. What is, hath regarded me? For saw He not thee before? Or was He looking upward, and by thy prayers hath He been reminded to cast His eyes upon thee? He did see thee before too; but in, He hath regarded me, thou meanest, He hath loved me. And to a man that seeth thee, and of whom thou makest request, that he may pity thee, thou sayest, Regard me. What is, regard me? Love; attend to me; pity me. Therefore he hath not said, If I have beheld iniquity in my heart, because no iniquity at all is suggested to the human heart. There it is suggested, there will not cease suggestion; but let there be made no regard. For if thou regardest iniquity, thou lookest back; and incurrst the condemnation of the Lord, saying in the Gospel, No one putting hand upon the plough and looking

back is fit for the kingdom of God. What, therefore, ought I to do? What the Apostle saith, Those things which are behind forgetting, unto those things which are before stretching forth. For behind, all our doings which have passed away are iniquitous. No one out of good hath come to Christ: all men have sinned, by believing they are justified. Perfect righteousness there will not be, save in that life: nevertheless for our progress in goodness good morals by Himself are inspired, by Himself are given. Do not therefore reckon up thine own merits, do not. And if iniquity maketh suggestion, do not consent, for he saith what?] If I have beheld iniquity in my heart, may not the Lord hearken.

23. Ver. 19. Therefore God hath hearkened to me. Because I have not beheld iniquity in my heart. And He hath listened to the voice of my prayer.

24. Ver. 20. Blessed be my God, that hath not thrust away my supplication and His mercy from me. Gather the sense from that place, where he saith, Come ye, hear, and I will tell you, all ye that fear God, how great things He hath done to my soul: he hath both said the words which ye have heard, and at the end thus he hath concluded: Blessed be my God, that hath not thrust away my supplication and His mercy from me. For thus there arriveth at the Resurrection he that speaketh, where already we also are by hope: yea both it is we ourselves, and this voice is ours. So long therefore as here we are, this let us ask of God, that He thrust not from us our supplication, and His mercy, that is, that we pray continually, and He continually pity. For many become feeble in praying, and in the newness of their own conversion pray fervently, afterwards feebly, afterwards coldly, afterwards negligently: as if they have become secure. The foe watcheth: thou sleepest. The Lord Himself hath given commandment in the Gospel, how it behoveth men always to pray and not to faint. And he giveth a comparison from that unjust judge, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, whom that widow daily importuned to hear her; and he yielded for weariness, that was not influenced by pity: and the naughty judge saith to himself, Though neither God I fear, nor men I regard, even because of the weariness which this widow daily putteth upon me, I will hear her cause, and will avenge her. And the Lord saith, If a naughty judge hath done this, shall not your Father avenge His chosen, that to Him do cry day and night? Yea, I say unto you,

He shall make judgment of them speedily. Therefore let us not faint in prayer. Though He putteth off what He is going to grant, He putteth it not away: being secure of His promise, let us not faint in praying, and this is by His goodness. Therefore he hath said, Blessed is my God, that hath not thrust away my supplication and His mercy from me. When thou hast seen thy supplication not thrust away from thee, be secure, that His mercy hath not been thrust away from thee.

PSALM 67

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. Your Love remembereth, that in two Psalms, which have been already treated of, we have stirred up our soul to bless the Lord, and with godly chant have said, Bless thou, O my soul, the Lord. If therefore we have stirred up our soul in those Psalms to bless the Lord, in this Psalm is well said, (ver. 1.) May God have pity on us, and bless us. Let our soul bless the Lord, and let God bless us. When God blesseth us, we grow, and when we bless the Lord, we grow, to us both are profitable. He is not increased by our blessing, nor is He lessened by our cursing. He that curseth the Lord, is himself lessened: he that blesseth the Lord, is himself increased. First, there is in us the blessing of the Lord, and the consequence is that we also bless the Lord. That is the rain, this the fruit. Therefore there is rendered as it were fruit to God the Husbandman, raining upon and tilling us. Let us chant these words with no barren devotion, with no empty voice, but with true heart. For most evidently God the Father hath been called a Husbandman. The Apostle saith, God's husbandry ye are, God's building ye are. In things visible of this world, the vine is not a building, and a building is not a vineyard: but we are the vineyard of the Lord, because He tilleth us for fruit; the building of God we are, since He Who tilleth us, dwelleth in us. And what saith the same Apostle? I have planted, Apollo hath watered, but the increase God hath given. Therefore neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but He that giveth the increase, even God. He it is therefore That giveth the increase. Are those perchance the husbandmen? For a husbandman he is called that planteth, that watereth: but the Apostle hath said, I have planted, Apollo hath watered. Do we enquire whence himself hath done this? The Apostle maketh answer, Yet not I, but the Grace of God with me. Therefore whithersoever thou turn thee, whether

through Angels, thou wilt find God thy Husbandman; whether through Prophets, the Same is thy Husbandman; whether through Apostles, the very Same acknowledge to be thy Husbandman. What then of us? Perchance we are the labourers of that Husbandman, and this too with powers imparted by Himself, and by Grace granted by Himself. Himself therefore both tilleth, and giveth the increase. But a human husbandman tilleth a vineyard only so far as to plough, prune, apply other means which belong to the diligence of husbandmen: to rain upon his vineyard he is not able. But if perchance he is able to water, of whose power is it? Himself indeed guideth the water into a channel, but God filleth the spring. Lastly, in his vineyard he cannot give increase to his tender shoots, he cannot shape the fruit, he cannot qualify the seeds, he cannot rule the seasons of production. But God, that can do all things, is our Husbandman; we are secure. Perchance some one saith, "Thou sayest that our Husbandman is God. Nay, but I say that the Apostles are husbandmen, who have said, I have planted, Apollo hath watered." If I of myself say it, let no one believe: if Christ saith it, woe to him that believeth not. The Lord Christ therefore saith what? I am the Vine, ye the branches, My Father the Husbandman. Let therefore earth thirst, and give forth the voices of her thirst: as it hath been written, My soul is as earth without water for Thee. Let therefore our earth, we ourselves, longing for the rain of God, say, May God have pity on us, and bless us.

2. Lighten His countenance upon us. Thou wast perchance going to enquire, what is bless us? In many ways men would have themselves to be blessed of God: one would have himself to be blessed, so that he may have a house full of the necessary things of this life; another desireth himself to be blessed, so that he may obtain soundness of body without flaw; another would have himself to be blessed, if perchance he is sick, so that he may acquire soundness; another longing for sons, and perchance being sorrowful because none are born, would have himself to be blessed so that he may have posterity. And who could number the divers wishes of men desiring themselves to be blessed of the Lord God? But which of us would say, that it was no blessing of God, if either husbandry should bring him fruit, or if any man's house should abound in plenty of things temporal, or if the very bodily health be either so maintained that it be not lost, or, if lost, be regained? For the fruitfulness of women and the chaste vows of men

desiring sons, belong to whom save to the Lord God? For He that created when there was nothing, doth Himself by succession of offspring cause to continue that which He hath builded. God maketh these things, God giveth these things. Too little it is for us to say, God maketh these things, God giveth these things; but alone He maketh, alone He giveth. For what if God maketh these things, but some one also maketh these things, that is not God? He maketh these things, and alone maketh them. And without reason these things are sought either from men, or from demons; and whatsoever good things the enemies of God receive, from Him they receive; and while from others they seek them, when they receive, unknowingly from Him they receive them. In like manner as when they are punished, and think themselves by others to be punished, unknowingly by Him they are punished: so also, when they abound, are filled, are saved, are delivered, even though they know not this, and either to men or demons or to angels they ascribe it, they have it not except from Him with whom is power over all things. May we so have spoken of these things, brethren, that whosoever longeth for even those earthly things, either for the cravings of necessity, or for any infirmity, should long for them from no one except from Him Who is the Fountain of all good things, and the Creator and Renewer of the universe.

3. But some gifts there are which God giveth even to His enemies, others which God keepeth only for His friends. What are the gifts which He giveth to His enemies? Those which I have enumerated. For not good men alone have houses full of things necessary, nor do good men alone either in health abide or from sickness grow well, nor do good men alone have sons, good men alone money, good men alone other things meet for this life temporal and transient: evil men also have these things, and sometimes they are wanting to good men: but they are wanting to evil men also, and oftentimes to these rather than to those; sometimes to those rather than to these they abound. God hath willed these temporal things to be promiscuous: because if to good men alone He were to give them, evil men also would think that for the sake of these things God must be worshipped: again, if to evil men alone He were to give these things, weak good men would fear to be converted, lest those things to them should perchance be wanting. For a soul being as yet weak is less able to receive the kingdom of God, God our

Husbandman must feed her. For even the tree that now mightily withstandeth tempests, when from the ground it sprung, was but a herb. That Husbandman therefore knoweth how not only to prune and purge mighty trees: but also how to protect the tender plants at their first springing. For this reason, dearly beloved, as I began to say, if to good men alone these things were given, all men for the sake of receiving these things would wish to be converted to God: again, if to evil men alone they were given, weak men would fear lest when they were converted, they should lose that which evil men alone could have. Indiscriminately they are given both to good men and evil men. Again, if from good men alone they should be taken away, there would be that same fear on the part of weak men, so that they would not be converted to God: again, if from evil men alone they should be taken away, the only punishment would be thought to be that same wherewith evil men are smitten. In that therefore He giveth them to good men, He comforteth them on their journey: in that He giveth them to evil men also, He warneth good men to long for other things which they have not with evil men in common. Again, from good men He taketh them away whenever He willeth, in order that they may question themselves of their own powers, and they may find out themselves, that perchance were hidden from themselves, whether now they be able to say, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done; be the name of the Lord blessed. For that soul both blessed the Lord, and, being rained upon with the fatness of blessing, rendered back her fruits: The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. He hath withdrawn the gifts, but hath not withdrawn the Giver. Every soul that is blessed is simple, not cleaving to things earthly nor with glued wings grovelling, but beaming with the brightness of virtues, on the twin wings of twin love doth spring into the free air; and seeth how from her is withdrawn that whereon she was treading, not that whereon she was resting, and she saith securely, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. He hath given, and He hath taken away: there remaineth He that hath given, and He hath taken away that which He hath given: be His name blessed. To this end therefore these things are taken away from good men. But let not perchance any weak man say, when shall I be of so great virtue, as was holy Job? The mightiness of the tree thou wonderest at, because but now thou hast been born: this

great tree, whereat thou wonderest, under the branches and shade whereof thou coolest thyself, hath been a switch. But dost thou fear lest there be taken away from thee these things, when such thou shalt have become? Observe that they are taken away from evil men also. Why therefore dost thou delay conversion? That which thou fearest when good to lose, perchance if evil thou wilt lose still. If being good thou shalt have lost them, there is by thee the Comforter that hath taken them away: the coffer is emptied of gold; the heart is full of faith: without, poor thou art, but within, rich thou art: thy riches with thee thou carriest, which thou wouldest not lose, even if naked from shipwreck thou shouldest escape. Why doth not the loss, that perchance, if evil, thou wilt lose, find thee good; forasmuch as thou seest evil men also suffer loss? But with greater loss they are stricken: empty is the house, more empty the conscience is. Whatsoever evil man shall have lost these things, hath nothing to hold by without, hath nothing within whereon he may rest. He fleeth when he hath suffered loss from the place where before the eyes of men with the display of riches he used to vaunt himself; now in the eyes of men to vaunt himself he is not able: to himself within he returneth not, because he hath nothing. He hath not imitated the ant, he hath not gathered to himself grains, while it was summer. What have I meant by, while it was summer? While he had quietude of life, while he had this world's prosperity, when he had leisure, when happy he was being called by all men, his summer it was. He should have imitated the ant, he should have heard the Word of God, he should have gathered together grains, and he should have stored them within. There had come the trial of tribulation, there had come upon him a winter of numbness, tempest of fear, the cold of sorrow, whether it were loss, or any danger to his safety, or any bereavement of his family; or any dishonour and humiliation; it was winter; the ant falleth back upon that which in summer she hath gathered together; and within in her secret store, where no man seeth, she is recruited by her summer toils. When for herself she was gathering together these stores in summer, all men saw her: when on these she feedeth in winter, no one seeth. What is this? See the ant of God, he riseth day by day, he hasteneth to the Church of God, he prayeth, he heareth lection, he chanteth hymn, he digesteth that which he hath heard, with himself he thinketh thereon, he storeth within grains gathered from the threshing-floor. They that providently hear those very things which even

now are being spoken of, do thus, and by all men are seen to go forth to the Church, go back from Church, to hear sermon, to hear lection, to choose a book, open and read it: all these things are seen, when they are done. That ant is treading his path, carrying and storing up in the sight of men seeing him. There cometh winter sometime, for to whom cometh it not? There chanceth loss, there chanceth bereavement: other men pity him perchance as being miserable, who know not what the ant hath within to eat, and they say, miserable he whom this hath befallen, or what spirits, dost thou think, hath he whom this hath befallen? how afflicted is he? He measureth by himself, hath compassion according to his own strength; and thus he is deceived: because the measure wherewith he measureth himself, he would apply to him whom he knoweth not. He seeth him that hath suffered loss, or is humbled, or is stricken with bereavement. What thinkest thou? 'That man hath done some evil thing, that this should befall him. Such a heart, such a mind let mine enemies have.' Thou knowest not, O man, thou art indeed thine own enemy, that through the summer gatherest not together for thyself what he hath gathered. Now within the ant is feeding on the labours of summer: but her gathering together thou wast able to see, her eating thou canst not see. In these words, brethren, as far as the Lord hath allowed, as far as He hath deigned to supply and instruct our infirmity and lowliness, as much as we are capable of according to our measure, we have explained why God giveth all these things promiscuously, both to good men and to evil men, and why He taketh them away both from good men and evil men. He hath given to thee, be not lifted up. He hath taken away from thee, be not heart-broken. Thou fearest lest He take away, He can take away from an evil man also: it is better that being good that which is of God thou lovest, but God thou keepest. So also it is with that evil man, him we are exhorting: thou art going to suffer loss, (who is not going to suffer bereavement?) some chance will fall upon thee, some calamity by a side blow, every where the world is full of such, instances are never wanting: I am speaking to thee in summer, grains for thee to gather are not wanting: observe the ant, O sluggard, gather in summer while thou art able; winter will not suffer thee to gather, but to eat that which thou shalt have gathered. For how many men so suffer tribulation, that there is no opportunity either to read any thing, or to hear any thing, and they obtain no admittance, perchance, to those that would comfort them. The ant hath remained in her nest, let her see if she

hath gathered any thing in summer, whereby she may recruit herself in winter.

4. But now since God blesseth us, why doth He bless us? What blessing doth this voice require, That God may bless us? The blessing which He keepeth for His friends, which to good men alone He giveth. Do not for a great matter desire that which evil men also receive: because God is good, He doth those things, the Same that maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. What therefore is there especially for good men? What especially for just men? May He lighten His face upon us. That Sun's face Thou lightenest upon good men and evil men, Thine own face lighten Thou upon us. There see that light as well beasts, as both good men and evil men. But 'blessed they of pure heart; for they shall see God.' May He lighten His face upon us. There is a double interpretation, both must be given: lighten, he saith, Thy face upon us, shew to us Thy countenance. For God doth not ever light His countenance, as if ever it had been without light: but He lighteth it upon us, so that what was hidden from us, is opened to us, and that which was, but to us was hidden, is unveiled upon us, that is, is lightened. Or else surely it is, 'Thy image lighten upon us:' so that he said this, in, lighten Thy countenance upon us: Thou hast imprinted Thy countenance upon us; Thou hast made us after Thine image and Thy likeness, Thou hast made us Thy coin; but Thine image ought not in darkness to remain: send a ray of Thy wisdom, let it dispel our darkness, and let there shine in us Thy image; let us know ourselves to be Thine image, let us hear what hath been said in the Song of Songs, If Thou shalt not have known Thyself, O Thou fair one among women. For there is said to the Church, If Thou shalt not have known Thyself. What is this? If Thou shalt not have known Thyself to have been made after the image of God. O Soul of the Church, precious, redeemed with the blood of the Lamb immaculate, observe of how great value Thou art, think what hath been given for Thee. Let us say, therefore, and let us long that He may lighten His face upon us. We wear His face: in like manner as the faces of emperors are spoken of, truly a kind of sacred face is that of God in His own image: but unrighteous men know not in themselves the image of God. In order that the countenance of God may be lightened upon them, they ought to say what? Thou shalt light my candle, O Lord my

God, Thou shalt light my darkness. I am in the darkness of sins, but by the ray of Thy wisdom dispelled be my darkness, may Thy countenance appear; and if perchance through me it appeareth somewhat deformed, by Thee be there reformed that which by Thee hath been formed. May He lighten, therefore, His face upon us.

5. Ver. 2. That we may know on earth Thy way. On earth, here, in this life, we may know Thy way. What is, Thy way? That which leadeth to Thee. May we acknowledge whither we are going, acknowledge where we are as we go; neither in darkness we can do. Afar Thou art from men sojourning, a way to us Thou hast presented, through which we must return to Thee. Let us acknowledge on earth Thy way. What is His way wherein we have desired, That we may know on earth Thy way? We are going to enquire this ourselves, not of ourselves to learn it. We can learn of it from the Gospel: I am the Way, the Lord saith: Christ hath said, I am the Way. But dost thou fear lest thou stray? He hath added, And the Truth. Who strayeth in the Truth? He strayeth that hath departed from the Truth. The Truth is Christ, the Way is Christ: walk therein. Dost thou fear lest thou die before thou attain unto Him? I am the Life: I am, He saith, the Way and the Truth and the Life. As if He were saying, What fearest thou? Through Me thou walkest, to Me thou walkest, in Me thou retest. What therefore meaneth, We may know on earth Thy Way, but ‘we may know on earth Thy Christ?’ But let the Psalm itself reply: lest ye think that out of other Scriptures there must be adduced testimony, which perchance is here wanting: by repetition he hath shewn what signified, That we may know on earth Thy Way: and as if thou wast inquiring, “In what earth, what way?” In all nations Thy Salvation. In what earth, thou art inquiring? Hear: In all nations. What way art thou seeking? Hear: Thy Salvation. Is not perchance Christ his Salvation? And what is that which the old Symeon hath said, that old man, I say, in the Gospel, preserved full of years even unto the infancy of the Word? For that old man took in his hands the Infant Word of God. Would He that in the womb deigned to be, disdain to be in the hands of an old man? The Same was in the womb of the Virgin, as was in the hands of the old man, a weak infant both within the bowels, and in the old man’s hand, to give us strength, by Whom were made all things; (and if all things, even His very mother.) He came humble, He came weak, but clothed with a

weakness to be changed into strength, because though He was crucified of weakness, yet He liveth of the virtue of God, the Apostle saith. He was then in the hands of an old man. And what saith that old man? Rejoicing that now he must be loosed from this world, seeing how in his own hand was held He by Whom and in Whom his Salvation was upheld; he saith what? Now Thou lettest go, he saith, O Lord, Thy servant in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation. Therefore, May God bless us, and have pity on us; may He lighten His countenance upon us, that we may know on earth Thy Way! In what earth? In all nations? What Way? Thy Salvation.

6. What followeth, because the Way of God is known on earth, because the Salvation of God is known in all nations? (Ver. 3.) Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God; confess to Thee, he saith, all peoples. There standeth forth a heretic, and he saith, In Africa I have peoples: and another from another quarter, And I in Galatia have peoples. Thou in Africa, he in Galatia: therefore I require one that hath them every where. Ye have indeed dared to exult at that voice, when ye heard, Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God. Hear the following verse, how he speaketh not of a part: Let there confess to Thee all peoples. Walk ye in the Way together with all nations; walk ye in the Way together with all peoples, O sons of peace, sons of the One Catholic Church, walk ye in the Way, seeing as ye walk. Wayfarers do this to beguile their toil. Sing ye in this Way; I implore you by that Same Way, sing ye in this Way: a new song sing ye, let no one there sing old ones: sing ye the love-songs of your father-land, let no one sing old ones. New Way, new wayfarer, new song. Hear thou the Apostle exhorting thee to a new song: Whatever therefore is in Christ is a new creature; old things have passed away, behold they have been made new. A new song sing ye in the way, which ye have learned on the earth. In what earth? In all nations. Therefore even the new song doth not belong to a part. He that in a part singeth, singeth an old song: whatever he please to sing, he singeth an old song, the old man singeth: divided he is, carnal he is. Truly in so far as carnal he is, so far he is old; and in so far as he is spiritual, so far new. See what saith the Apostle; I could not speak to you as if to spiritual, but as if to carnal. Whence proveth he them carnal? For while one saith, I am of Paul; but another, I of Apollos: are ye not, he saith, carnal? Therefore in the Spirit a new song sing thou in the safe way. Just as wayfarers sing, and oftentimes in

the night sing. Awful round about all things do sound, or rather they sound not around, but are still around; and the more still the more awful; nevertheless, even they that fear robbers do sing. How much more safely thou singest in Christ! That way hath no robber, unless thou by forsaking the way fallest into the hands of a robber. Sing, I say, safely a new song in the way which thou hast known upon earth, that is, in all nations. See thou how he singeth not with thee that new song, that would be in a part. Sing ye, he saith, to the Lord a new song, and in continuation, Sing ye to the Lord all the earth. Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God. They have found out Thy way, let them confess to Thee. The very singing is confession, confession of thy sins and of the virtue of God. Thine own iniquity confess thou, the Grace of God confess thou: thyself blame thou, Him glorify thou; thyself censure thou, Him praise thou: in order that also when Himself cometh He may find thee thine own punisher, and He may hold out to thee Himself as thy Saviour. For why fear ye to confess, that have found out this way in all nations? Why fear ye to confess, and in your confession to sing a new song together with all the earth; in all the earth, in catholic peace, dost thou fear to confess to God, lest He condemn thee that hast confessed? If having not confessed thou liest concealed, having confessed thou wilt be condemned. Thou fearest to confess, that by not confessing canst not be concealed: thou wilt be condemned if thou hast held thy peace, that mightest have been delivered, by having confessed. Let there confess to Thee peoples, O God, confess to Thee all peoples.

7. And because this confession leadeth not to punishment, he continueth and saith, (ver. 4.) Let the nations rejoice and exult. If robbers after confession made do wail before man, let the faithful after confessing before God rejoice. If a man be judge, the torturer and his fear exact from a robber a confession: yea sometimes fear wringeth out confession, pain extorteth it: and he that waileth in tortures, but feareth to be killed if he confess, supporteth tortures as far as he is able: and if he shall have been overcome by pain, he giveth his voice for death. Nowise therefore is he joyful; nowise exulting: before he confesseth the claw teareth him; when he hath confessed, the executioner leadeth him along a condemned felon: wretched in every case. But let the nations rejoice and exult. Whence? Through that same confession. Why? Because good He is to Whom they confess: He

exacteth confession, to the end that He may deliver the humble; He condemneth one not confessing, to the end that He may punish the proud. Therefore be thou sorrowful before thou confessest; after having confessed exult, now thou wilt be made whole. Thy conscience had gathered up evil humours, with boil it had swollen, it was torturing thee, it suffered thee not to rest: the Physician applieth the fomentations of words, and sometimes He lanceth it, He applieth the surgeon's knife by the chastisement of tribulation: do thou acknowledge the Physician's hand, confess thou, let every evil humour go forth and flow away in confession: now exult, now rejoice, that which remaineth will be easy to be made whole. Let there confess to Thee peoples, O God: confess to Thee all peoples. And because they confess, let the nations rejoice and exult, for Thou judgest the peoples in equity. No one deceiveth Thee: let him be glad that must be judged, that hath feared Him that was to judge. For he hath looked before, and hath come before the face of Him in confession; but He, when He shall have come, shall judge the peoples in equity. What will avail there the cunning of the accuser, where conscience is witness, where thou wilt be and thy cause, where the Judge requireth no witness? An Advocate He hath sent to thee: for the sake of Him and through Him confess thou, plead thy cause, and He is Counsel for the penitent, and the Petitioner of pardon for him if confessing, and the judge of him if innocent. Wilt thou indeed possibly fear for thy cause where thy Advocate will be thy Judge? Let the nations rejoice, therefore, and exult, for Thou judgest the peoples in equity. But they will have to fear lest they be judged to their hurt: let them give up themselves to be amended to Him who seeth them that must be judged. Here let them be amended, and not fear when they shall be judged. See thou what he saith in another Psalm: O God, in Thy name save me, and in Thy virtue judge me. What saith he? Unless first Thou save me in Thy name, I ought to fear the time when Thou shalt judge me in Thy virtue: but if first Thou save me in Thy name: why shall I fear Him judging in virtue, whose safety hath gone before in His name? So also in this passage, let there confess to Thee all peoples. And lest ye should suppose that something must be feared in confession, let the nations rejoice, he saith, and exult. Why rejoice and exult? Because Thou judgest the peoples in equity. No one giveth bribe against us, no one bribeth Thee, no one beguileth Thee. Therefore be thou secure. But what of thy cause? No one bribeth God, it is evident: let Him

not perchance therefore be more to be feared, because no wise He can be bribed. How therefore art thou secure? According to that which but now hath been said, O God, in Thy name save me, and in Thy virtue judge me. So here also; let the nations rejoice and exult, for Thou judgest the peoples in equity. And that unrighteous men may not fear, he hath added, and the nations on the earth Thou directest. Depraved were the nations and crooked were the nations, perverse were the nations; for the ill desert of their depravity, and crookedness and perverseness, the Judge's coming they feared: there cometh the hand of the same, it is stretched out mercifully to the peoples, they are guided in order that they may walk the straight way; why should they fear the Judge to come, that have first acknowledged Him for a Corrector? To His hand let them give up themselves, Himself guideth the nations on the earth. But guided nations are walking in the Truth, are exulting in Him, are doing good works; and if perchance there cometh in any water (for on sea they are sailing) through the very small holes, through the crevices into the hold, pumping it out by good works, lest by more and more coming it accumulate, and sink the ship, pumping it out daily, fasting, praying, doing almsdeeds, saying with pure heart, Forgive us our debts, as also we forgive our debtors—saying such words walk thou secure, and exult in the way, sing in the way. Do not fear the Judge: before thou wast a believer, thou didst find a Saviour. Thee ungodly He sought out that He might redeem, thee redeemed will He forsake so as to destroy? And the nations on earth Thou directest.

8. He exulteth, rejoiceth, exhorteth, he repeateth those same verses in exhortation. (Ver. 5.) Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God, let all peoples confess to Thee. (Ver. 6.) The earth hath given her fruit. What fruit? Let all peoples confess to Thee. Earth it was, of thorns it was full; there came the hand of One rooting them up, there came a calling by His majesty and mercy, the earth began to confess; now the earth giveth her fruit. Would she give her fruit unless first she were rained on? Would she give her fruit, unless first the mercy of God had come from above? Let them read to me, thou sayest, how the earth being rained upon gave her fruit. Hear of the Lord raining upon her: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He raineth, and that same rain is thunder; it terrifieth: fear thou Him thundering, and receive Him raining. Behold, after that voice of a

thundering and raining God, after that voice let us see something out of the Gospel itself. Behold that harlot of ill fame in the city burst into a strange house into which she had not been invited by the host, but by One invited she had been called; called not with tongue, but by Grace. The sick woman knew that she had there a place, where she was aware that her Physician was sitting at meat. She is gone in, that was a sinner; she dareth not draw near save to the feet: she weepeth at His feet, she washeth with tears, she wipe with hair, she anointeth with ointment. Why wonderest thou? The earth hath given her fruit. This thing, I say, came to pass by the Lord raining there through His own mouth; there came to pass the things whereof we read in the Gospel; and by His raining through His clouds, by the sending of the Apostles and by their preaching the truth, the earth more abundantly hath given her fruit, and that crop now hath filled the round world.

9. See what secondly is said; May God bless us, even our God; (ver. 7.) May God bless us. Bless us, as already I have said, is again and again may He bless, may He multiply blessings. Let Your Love observe that even now the fruit of the earth was first in Jerusalem. For from thence began the Church: there came there the Holy Spirit, and filled full the holy men gathered together in one place; miracles were done, with the tongues of all men they spake. They were filled full of the Spirit of God, the people were converted that were in that place, fearing and receiving the divine shower, by confession they brought forth so much fruit, that all their goods they brought together into a common stock, making distribution to the poor, in order that no one might call any thing his own, but all things might be to them in common, and they might have one soul and one heart unto God. For there had been forgiven them the blood which they had shed, it had been forgiven them by the Lord pardoning, in order that now they might even learn to drink that which they had shed. Great in that place is the fruit: the earth hath given her fruit, both great fruit, and most excellent fruit. Ought by any means that earth alone to give her fruit? May there bless us God, our God, may there bless us God. Still may He bless us: for blessing in multiplication is wont most chiefly and properly to be perceived. Let us prove this in Genesis; see the works of God: God made light, and God made a division between light and darkness: the light He called day, and the darkness He called night. It is not said, He blessed the light. For the same

light returneth and changeth by days and nights. He calleth the sky the firmament between waters and waters: it is not said, He blessed the sky: He severed the sea from the dry land, and named both, the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters sea: neither here is it said, God blessed. We come to those things which were to have the seed of fruitfulness, and the things which sprang out of the waters. For these very things have the greatest fruitfulness in multiplying; and the Lord blessed them, saying, Grow, and be multiplied, and replenish the waters of the sea, and let winged creatures be multiplied over the earth. So also when He made subject all things to man, whom He made after His own image, it is written, And God blessed, saying, Grow, and be multiplied, and replenish the face of the earth. Therefore of blessing the proper power is for multiplication, and for replenishing the face of the earth. Hear also in this Psalm: May God bless us, even our God, may God bless us. And for what availeth that blessing? And let all the ends of the world fear Him. Therefore, my brethren, so abundantly in the name of Christ God hath blessed us, that He filleth the entire face of the earth with His sons, adopted into His kingdom, coheirs of His Only-Begotten. An only Son He begot, and One He would not have Him to be: an Only Son He begot, I say, and One He would not have Him to remain. He made for Him brethren; though not by begetting, yet by adopting, He made them co-heirs with Him. He made Him first a partaker of our mortality, in order that we might believe ourselves to be able to be partakers of His Divinity.

10. Let us observe our price. All things have been foretold, all things are being shewn forth, the Gospel goeth through the round world: every labour of mankind at this time beareth witness, all things are being fulfilled, that in the Scriptures have been foretold. Just as up to the present day all things have come to pass, so also the things which remain are to come to pass. Let us fear the judgment-day, the Lord is to come. He that came humble, will come exalted: He that came to be judged, will come to judge. Let us acknowledge Him humble, in order that we may not dread Him exalted: let us embrace Him humble, in order that we may long for Him exalted. For to men longing for Him He will come gracious. Those long for Him that have kept His faith and have done His commandments. For even if we will not, He will come. Let us will therefore that He come, Who will come, even if

we will not. How should we will that He come? By living well, by doing well. Let not things past please us; things present not hold us; let us not 'close the ear' as it were with tail, let us not press down the ear on the ground; lest by things past we be kept back from hearing, lest by things present we be entangled and prevented from meditating on things future; let us reach forth unto those things which are before, let us forget things past. And that for which now we toil, for which now we groan, for which now we sigh, of which now we speak, which in part, however small soever, we perceive, and to receive are not able, we shall receive, we shall thoroughly enjoy in the resurrection of the just. Our youth shall be renewed as an eagle's, if only our old man we break against the Rock of Christ. Whether those things be true, brethren, which are said of the serpent, or those which are said of the eagle, or whether it be rather a tale of men than truth, truth is nevertheless in the Scriptures, and not without reason the Scriptures have spoken of this: let us do whatever it signifieth, and not toil to discover how far that is true. Be thou such an one, as that thy youth may be able to be renewed as an eagle's. And know thou that it cannot be renewed, except thine old man on the Rock shall have been broken off: that is, except by the aid of the Rock, except by the aid of Christ, thou wilt not be able to be renewed. Do not thou because of the pleasantness of the past life be deaf to the word of God: do not by things present be so held and entangled, as to say, I have no leisure to read, I have no leisure to hear. This is to press down the ear upon the ground. Do thou therefore not be such an one: but be such an one as on the other side thou findest, that is, so that thou forget things past, unto things before reach thyself out, in order that thine old man on the Rock thou mayest break off. And if any comparisons shall have been made for thee, if thou hast found them in the Scriptures, believe: if thou shalt not have found them spoken of except by report, do not very much believe them. The thing itself perchance is so, perchance is not so. Do thou profit by it, let that comparison avail for thy salvation. Thou art unwilling to profit by this comparison, by some other profit, it mattereth not provided thou do it: and, being secure, wait for the Kingdom of God, lest thy prayer quarrel with thee. For, O Christian man, when thou sayest, Thy Kingdom come, how sayest thou, Thy kingdom come? Examine thy heart: see, behold, Thy kingdom come: He crieth out to thee, I come: dost thou not fear? Often we have told Your Love: both to preach the truth is nothing, if heart from

tongue dissent: and to hear the truth is nothing, if fruit follow not hearing. From this place exalted as it were we are speaking to you: but how much we are beneath your feet in fear, God knoweth, Who is gracious to the humble; for the voices of men praising do not give us so much pleasure as the devotion of men confessing, and the deeds of men now righteous. And how we have no pleasure but in your advances, but by those praises how much we are endangered, He knoweth, Whom we pray to deliver us from all dangers, and to deign to know and crown us together with you, saved from every trial, in His Kingdom.

PSALM 68

Exposition

1. Of this Psalm, the title seemeth not to need operose discussion: for simple and easy it appeareth. For thus it standeth: For the end, for David Himself a Psalm of a Song. But in many Psalms already we have reminded you what is at the end: for the end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every man believing: He is the end which maketh perfect, not that which consumeth or destroyeth. Nevertheless, if any one endeavoureth to inquire, what meaneth, a Psalm of a Song: why not either Psalm or Song, but both; or what is the difference between Psalm of Song, and Song of Psalm, because even thus of some Psalms the titles are inscribed: he will find perchance something which we leave for men more acute and more at leisure than ourselves. Certain before us have distinguished between Song and Psalm; so that because a Song with the mouth is pronounced, but a Psalm with the accompaniment of a visible instrument, that is with a Psalter, is sung, by a Song there seemeth to be signified the understanding of the mind, but by a Psalm the works of the body. For instance, in this very sixty-seventh Psalm which we have undertaken to treat of, that which hath been said, namely, Sing ye to God, Psalm ye to His name: certain have distinguished as followeth; to wit, Sing ye to God, seemeth to have been said, because those things which within herself the mind doeth, to God are known, by men are not seen; but because good works are to be seen by men to the end that they may glorify our Father Who is in Heaven, with reason hath been said, Psalm ye to His name, that is, to its fame far and wide, so that laudably His name may be pronounced. This distinction in some other place, as far as I recollect, I myself also have followed. But I remember that we have also read, Psalm ye to God: as signifying, that such things as visibly we work well, not only to men, but also to God, are pleasing. But not all things which to God are pleasing, can also be pleasing to men,

because they cannot see them. Whence a marvellous thing it is, if in the same manner as both are read, both Sing ye to God, and Psalm ye to God; so in some other place there can be read, Sing ye to His name. But if This also in the holy Scriptures is found to be spoken, the above distinction in vain hath been worked out. I am moved also by the consideration, that under a general name they are rather called Psalms than Songs; so that the Lord said, What things have been written in the Law and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me. And the book itself is called the book of Psalms, not of Songs: as it is written, He saith, in the book of the Psalms, whereas rather according to that distinction, it would seem that they ought to have been called Songs; for a Song even without a Psalm there may be, but a Psalm without a Song there cannot be. For there may be thoughts of the mind, whereof there are no corporal works: but there is no good work whereof there is in the mind no thought. And thus in both cases Songs are used, not in both cases Psalms: and yet, as I have said, generally they are called Psalms, not Songs; and the book of Psalms, not of Songs. And if the meanings of the words be understood and examined, where the title is only of a Psalm, and where only of a Song, and where not the Psalm of a Song, as in this, but the Song of a Psalm is inscribed; I know not whether this difference can be proved. In fine, as we commenced, leaving these things to those who are able and who have opportunity to make such distinctions, and to define them by a certain rule for the differences; let us, as far as we are enabled by the help of the Lord, consider and treat of the text of this Psalm.

2. Ver. 1. Let God rise up, and let His enemies be scattered. Already this hath come to pass, Christ hath risen up, Who is over all things, God blessed for ever, and His enemies have been dispersed through all nations, to wit, the Jews; in that very place, where they practised their enmities, being overthrown in war, and thence through all places dispersed: and now they hate, but fear, and in that very fear they do that which followeth, And let them that hate Him flee from His face. The flight indeed of the mind is fear. For in carnal flight, whither flee they from the face of Him, Who every where sheweth the efficacy of His presence? Whither shall I depart, saith he, from Thy Spirit, and from Thy face whither shall I flee? With mind, therefore, not with body, they flee; to wit, by being afraid, not by being hidden; and not from that face which they see not, but from that which they

are compelled to see. For the face of Him hath His presence in His Church been called. Whence to them at enmity with Him He said, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man coming in clouds. Even as He hath come in His Church, spreading Her abroad in the whole round world, wherein His enemies have been dispersed. But He hath come in such clouds as He speaketh of, in, "I will command My clouds, that they rain not upon it rain." Let them, therefore, that hate Him flee from the face of Him: let them be afraid at the presence of His holy believers, of whom He saith, In as much as to one of My least ones ye have done it, to Me ye have done it.

3. Ver. 2. As smoke faileth, let them fail. For they lifted up themselves from the fires of their hatred unto the vapouring of pride, and against Heaven setting their mouth, and shouting, Crucify, Crucify, Him taken captive they derided, Him hanging they mocked: and being soon conquered by that very Person against Whom they swelled victorious, they vanished away. As wax melteth from the face of fire, so let sinners perish from the face of God. Though perchance in this passage he hath referred to those men, whose hardheartedness in tears of penitence is dissolved: yet this also may be understood, that he threateneth future judgment; because though in this world like smoke, in lifting up themselves, that is, in priding themselves, they have melted away, there will come to them at the last final damnation, so that from His face they will perish for everlasting, when in His own glory He shall have appeared, like fire, for the punishment of the ungodly, and the light of the righteous.

4. Lastly, there followeth, (ver. 3.) And let just men be joyous, and exult in the sight of God, let them delight in gladness. For then shall they hear, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive ye the kingdom. Let them be joyous, therefore, that have toiled, and exult in the sight of God. For there will not be in this exultation, as though it were before men, any empty boasting; but (it will be) in the sight of Him who unerringly looketh into that which He hath granted. Let them delight in gladness: no longer exulting with trembling, as in this world, so long as human life is a trial upon earth.

5. Secondly, he turneth himself to those very persons to whom he hath given so great hope, and to them while here living he speaketh and exhorteth: (ver. 4.) Sing ye to God, psalm ye to His name. Already on this

subject in the exposition of the Title we have before spoken that which seemed meet. He singeth to God, that liveth to God: He psalmeth to His name, that worketh unto His Glory. In singing thus, in psalming thus, that is, by so living, by so working, a way make ye to Him, he saith, that hath ascended above the setting. A way make ye to Christ: so that through the beautiful feet of men telling good tidings, the hearts of men believing may have a way opened to Him. For the Same is He that hath ascended above the setting: either because the new life of one turned to Him receiveth Him not, except the old life shall have set by his renouncing this world, or because He ascended above the setting, when by rising again He conquered the downfall of the body. For The Lord is His name. Which if they had known, the Lord of glory they never would have crucified.

6. Exult ye in the sight of Him, O ye to whom hath been said, Sing ye to God, psalm ye to the name of Him, a way make ye to Him that hath ascended above the setting, also exult in the sight of Him: as if sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. For while ye make a way to Him, while ye prepare a way whereby He may come and possess the nations, ye are to suffer in the sight of men many sorrowful things. But not only faint not, but even exult, not in the sight of men, but in the sight of God. “In hope rejoicing, in tribulation enduring:” exult ye in the sight of Him. For they that in the sight of men trouble you, shall be troubled by the face of Him, (ver. 5.) the Father of orphans and Judge of widows. For desolate they suppose them to be, from whom oftentimes by the sword of the Word of God both parents from sons, and husbands from wives, are severed: but persons destitute and widowed have the consolation of the Father of orphans and Judge of widows: they have the consolation of Him that say to Him, For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken up me: and they that have hoped in the Lord, continuing in prayers by night and by day: by whose face those men shall be troubled when they shall have seen themselves prevail nothing, for that the whole world hath gone away after Him.

7. For out of those orphans and widows, that is, persons destitute of partnership in this world’s hope, the Lord for Himself doth build a Temple: whereof in continuation he saith, The Lord is in His holy place. For what is

His place he hath disclosed, when he saith, God that maketh to dwell men of one mood in a house: men of one mind, of one sentiment: this is the holy place of the Lord. For when he had said, The Lord is in His holy place: as though we were inquiring in what place, since He is every where wholly, and no place of corporal space containeth Him; forthwith he hath subjoined somewhat, that we should not seek Him apart from ourselves, but rather being of one mood dwelling in a house, we should deserve that He also Himself deign to dwell among us. This is the holy place of the Lord, the thing that most men seek to have, a place where in prayer they may be hearkened unto. Let themselves be therefore that which they seek, and what they speak of in their hearts, that is, in such chambers of theirs let them afflict themselves, dwelling of one mood in a house; as that by the Lord of the great house they may be dwelled in, and by themselves may be hearkened to. For there is a great house, wherein not only golden vessels are, and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen. And some indeed there are unto honour, others for dishonour: but if any shall have purged their own selves from the vessels of dishonour, they shall be of one mood in the house, and shall be the holy place of the Lord. For as in a great house of a man, the Lord thereof doth not abide in every place whatsoever, but in some place doubtless more private and honourable: so God dwelleth not in all men that are in His house, (for He dwelleth not in the vessels of dishonour,) but His holy place are they whom He maketh to dwell of one mood, or of one manner, in a house. For what are called *τρόποι* in Greek, by both modi and mores, (moods, and manners,) in Latin may be interpreted. Nor hath the Greek writer, Who maketh to dwell, but only, maketh to dwell. The Lord, then, is in His holy place. What is that place? God Himself maketh it for Himself. For God maketh to dwell men of one mood in a house: this is His holy place.

8. But to prove that by His Grace He buildeth to Himself this place, not for the sake of the merits preceding of those persons out of whom He buildeth it, see what followeth: (ver. 6.) Who leadeth forth men fettered, in strength. For He looseth the heavy bonds of sins, wherewith they were fettered so that they could not walk in the way of the commandments: but He leadeth them forth in strength, which before His Grace they had not. Likewise men provoking that dwell in the tombs: that is, every way dead, taken up with

dead works. For these men provoke Him to anger by withstanding justice: for those fettered men perchance would walk, and are not able, and are praying of God that they may be able, and are saying to Him, From my necessities lead me forth. By whom being heard, they give thanks, saying, Thou hast broken asunder my bonds. But these provoking men that dwell in the tombs, are of that kind, which in another passage the Scripture pointeth out, saying, From a dead man, as from one that is not, confession perisheth. Whence there is this saying, When a sinner shall have come into the depth of evil things, he despiseth. For it is one thing to long for, another thing to fight against righteousness: one thing from evil to desire to be delivered, another thing one's evil doings to defend rather than to confess: both kinds nevertheless the Grace of Christ leadeth forth in strength. With what strength, but that wherewith against sin even unto blood they are to strive? For out of each kind are made meet persons, whereof to construct His holy place; those being loosened, these being raised to life. For even of the woman, whom Satan had bound for eighteen years, by His command He loosed the bonds; and Lazarus' death by His voice He overcame. He that hath done these things in bodies, is able to do more marvellous things in characters, and to make men of one mood to dwell in a house: leading forth men fettered in strength, likewise men provoking that dwell in the tombs.

9. Ver. 7. O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people. His going forth is perceived, when He appeareth in His works. But He appeareth not to all men, but to them that know how to spy out His works. For I do not now speak of those works which are conspicuous to all men, Heaven and earth and sea and all things that in them are; but the works whereby He leadeth forth men fettered in strength, likewise men provoking that dwell in the tombs, and maketh them of one manner to dwell in a house. Thus He goeth forth before His people, that is, before those that do perceive this His Grace. Lastly, there followeth, When Thou wentest by in the desert, (ver. 8.) the earth was moved. A desert were the nations, which knew not God: a desert they were, where by God Himself no law had been given, where no Prophet had dwelled, and foretold the Lord to come. When, then, Thou wentest by in the desert, when Thou wast preached in the nations; the earth was moved, to the faith earthly men were stirred up. But whence was it moved? For the heavens dropped from the face of God. Perchance here

some one calleth to mind that time, when in the desert God was going over before His people, before the sons of Israel, by day in the pillar of cloud, by night in the brightness of fire; and determineth that thus it is that the heavens dropped from the face of God, for manna He rained upon His people: that the same thing also is that which followeth, Mount Sina from the face of the God of Israel, (ver. 9.) with voluntary rain severing God to Thine inheritance, namely, the God that on Mount Sina spake to Moses, when He gave the Law, so that the manna is the voluntary rain, which God severed for His inheritance, that is, for His people; because them alone He so fed, not the other nations also: so that what next he saith, and it was weakened, is understood of the inheritance being itself weakened; for they murmuring, fastidiously loathed the manna, longing for victuals of flesh, and those things on which they had been accustomed to live in Egypt. But in these words, if the exact meaning only of the letter, not a spiritual sense, be to be looked for, it ought to be shewn according to an exact corporal sense of them, who at that time, being fettered, and even dwelling in the tombs, were led forth in strength. Secondly, if that people, to wit that inheritance of God, who with loathing rejected the manna, was made weak, there ought not to follow, But Thou didst perfect it: but, But Thou didst smite it. For God being offended by those murmurings and loathings, a mighty plague followed. Lastly, all those men in the desert were stricken down, nor were any of them except two found worthy to go into the land of promise. Although even if in the sons of them that inheritance be said to have been perfected, we ought more readily to hold to a spiritual sense. For all those things in a figure did happen to them; until the day should break, and the shadows should be removed.

10. May then the Lord open to us that knock; and may the secret things of His mysteries, as far as Himself vouchsafeth, be disclosed. For in order that the earth might be moved to the Truth when into the desert of the Gentiles the Gospel was passing, the Heavens dropped from the face of God. These are the Heavens, whereof in another Psalm is sung, The Heavens are telling forth the glory of God. For of these a little after is there said: There are neither speeches nor discourses, wherein the voices of them are not heard: into every land the sound of them hath gone forth, and into the ends of the earth the words of them. However, to those heavens must not be ascribed so

great glory, as though from men that Grace came into the desert of the Gentiles, that the earth might be moved to the Truth. For the Heavens dropped not from themselves, but from the face of God, to wit, He dwelling in them, and making them of one manner to dwell in a house. For the same also are the mountains, whereof is said, I have lifted mine eyes to the mountains, whence shall come help to me. And nevertheless, lest on men he should seem to have set hope, immediately he hath added, My help is from the Lord, Who hath made Heaven and earth. For to Him in another place is said, Thou enlightening marvellously, from the everlasting mountains: though it be from the everlasting mountains; nevertheless it is Thou enlightening marvellously. So here also, the Heavens dropped; but from the face of God. For even these very persons have been saved through faith, and this not of themselves, but God's gift it is, not of works, lest perchance any man should be lifted up. For of Himself we are the workmanship, 'that maketh men of one mood to dwell in a house.'

11. But what is that which followeth, Mount Sina from the face of the God of Israel? Must there be understood dropped; so that what he hath called by the name of Heavens, the same he hath willed to be understood under the name of Mount Sina also; just as we said that those are called mountains, which were called Heavens? Nor in this sense ought it to move us that He saith mountain, not mountains, while in that place they were called Heavens, not Heaven: for in another Psalm also after it had been said, The Heavens are telling forth the glory of God: after the manner of Scripture repeating the same sense in different words, subsequently there is said, And the firmament telleth the works of His hands. First he said Heavens, not Heaven: and yet afterwards not firmaments, but firmament. For God called the firmament Heaven, as in Genesis hath been written. Thus then Heavens and Heaven, mountains and mountain, are not a different thing, but the very same thing: just as Churches many, and the One Church, are not a different thing, but the very same thing. Why then Mount Sina, which gendereth unto bondage? as saith the Apostle. Is perchance the Law itself to be understood in mount Sina, as that which the Heavens dropped from the face of God, in order that the earth might be moved? And is this the very moving of the earth, when men are troubled, because the Law they cannot fulfil? But if so it is, this is the voluntary rain, whereof in confirmation he saith, Voluntary

rain God severing to Thine inheritance: because He hath not done so to any nation, and His judgment He hath not manifested to them. God therefore set apart this voluntary rain to His inheritance because He gave the Law. And there was made weak, either the Law, or the inheritance. The Law may be understood to have been made weak, because it was not fulfilled; not that of itself it is weak, but because it maketh men weak, by threatening punishment, and not aiding through grace. For also the very word the Apostle hath used, where he saith, For that which was impossible of the Law, wherein it was made weak through the flesh: willing to intimate that through the Spirit it is fulfilled: nevertheless, itself he hath said is made weak, because by weak men it cannot be fulfilled. But the inheritance, that is, the people, without any doubt is understood to have been made weak by the giving to them of the Law. For the Law came in, that transgression might abound. But that which followeth, But Thou hast made it perfect, to the Law is thus referred, forasmuch as it is made perfect, that is, is fulfilled after that which the Lord saith in the Gospel, I have not come to annul the Law, but to fulfil. Whence also the same Apostle, who had said that the Law was made weak through the flesh, because flesh fulfilleth not that which through the Spirit is fulfilled, that is, through spiritual grace; saith also, That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This is then the sense of, But thou hast made it perfect; namely, that The fulness of the Law is love; and, The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, not through ourselves, but, through the Holy Spirit that hath been given to us; this is, But Thou hast made it perfect, if He be understood to have made perfect the Law; but if the inheritance, more easy is the understanding thereof. For if for this reason the inheritance of God is said to have been made weak, that is, the people of God to have been made weak by the giving of the Law, to wit, because the Law entered in, in order that transgression might abound: then also that which followeth, But Thou hast made it perfect, is understood by that which also in the Apostle followeth, but where transgression abounded, grace did more abound. For transgression being abundant, the weaknesses of them were multiplied, and afterwards they made haste: because they groaned and called upon Him; in order that by His aid there might be fulfilled that, which by His command was not fulfilled.

12. There is in these words yet another sense: which seemeth to me more to approve itself. For much more in accordance with the context, grace itself is understood to be the voluntary rain, because with no preceding merits of works it is given gratis. For if grace, no longer of works: otherwise grace no longer is grace. For unworthy I am, he saith, to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God: but by the grace of God I am what I am. This is the voluntary rain. For voluntarily He hath begotten us with the word of Truth. This is the voluntary rain. Thence elsewhere is said, With the buckler of Thy good will Thou hast crowned us. That rain, when God was going over in the desert, that is, was being preached in the nations, the Heavens dropped: not however from themselves, but from the face of God, since even they themselves by the grace of God are what they are. And therefore, Mount Sina, he himself also who laboured more than they all, yet not he himself, but the grace of God with him, in order that more abundantly he might drop upon the nations, that is, upon the desert, where Christ had not been preached, lest upon another's foundation he should build; he himself, I say, was an Israelite of the family of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin: and he himself therefore unto bondage had been gendered, being of the earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her sons, and so he persecuted the Church. For what he himself hath intimated: As then he that after the flesh had been begotten was persecuting him that after the Spirit had been begotten, even so now. But mercy he obtained, because ignorant he did it in unbelief. We wonder, then, how the Heavens dropped from the face of God: let us wonder more, how did Mount Sina, that is, he that before was persecuting, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, after the Law a Pharisee. But why should we wonder? For not from himself, but as followeth from the face of the God of Israel, of whom he saith himself, and upon the Israel of God: of whom the Lord saith, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. This voluntary rain then, with no merits of good works preceding, God set apart for His inheritance. And it was made weak. For he acknowledged himself not to be any thing of himself; that not to his own powers, but to the grace of God must be ascribed what he is. He acknowledged that which hath been said, In my infirmities I will glory. He acknowledged that which hath been said, Be not highminded, but fear. He acknowledged that which hath been said, But to humble men He giveth grace. And it was made weak, but Thou hast made it perfect: because virtue

in weakness is perfected. Some copies indeed, both Latin and Greek, have not Mount Sina; but, from the face of the God of Sina, from the face of the God of Israel. That is, The Heavens dropped from the face of God: and, as if enquiry were made of what God, from the face of the God, he saith, of Sina, from the face of the God of Israel, that is, from the face of the God that gave the Law to the people of Israel. Why then the Heavens dropped from the face of God, from the face of this God, but because thus was fulfilled that which had been foretold, Blessing He shall give that hath given the Law? The Law whereby to terrify a man that relieth on human powers; blessing, whereby He delivereth a man that hopeth in God. Thou then, O God, hast made perfect Thine inheritance; because it is made weak in itself, in order that it may be made perfect by Thee.

13. Ver. 10. Thine animals shall dwell therein. Thine, not their own; to Thee subject, not for themselves free; for Thee needy, not for themselves sufficient. Lastly, he continueth, Thou hast prepared in Thine own sweetness for the needy, O God. In Thine own sweetness, not in his meetness. For the needy he is, for he hath been made weak, in order that he may be made perfect: he hath acknowledged himself indigent, that he may be replenished. This is that sweetness, whereof in another place is said, The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her fruit: in order that a good work may be done not for fear, but for love; not for dread of punishment, but for love of righteousness. For this is true and sound freedom. But the Lord hath prepared this for one wanting, not for one abounding, whose reproach is that poverty: of which sort in another place is said, Reproach to these men that abound, and contempt to proud men. For those he hath called proud, whom he hath called them that abound.

14. Ver. 11. The Lord shall give the Word: to wit, food for His animals which shall dwell therein. But what shall these animals work to whom He shall give the Word? What but that which followeth? To them preaching the Gospel in much virtue. With what virtue, but with that strength wherein He leadeth forth men fettered? Perchance also here he speaketh of that virtue, wherewith in preaching the Gospel they wrought wondrous signs.

15. Who then shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue? (Ver. 12.) The King, he saith, of the virtues of the Beloved. The

Father therefore is King of the virtues of the Son. For the Beloved, when there is not specified any person that is beloved, by a substitution of name, of the Only Son is understood. Is not the Son Himself King of His virtues, to wit of the virtues serving Himself? Because with much virtue the King of Virtues shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel, of Whom it hath been said, The Lord of Virtues, He is the King of Glory? But his not having said King of Virtues, but King of the Virtues of the Beloved, is a most usual expression in the Scriptures, if any one observe: which thing chiefly appeareth in those cases where even the person's own name is already expressed, so that it cannot at all be doubted that it is the same person of whom something is said. Of which sort also is that which in the Pentateuch in many passages is found: And Moses did it, as the Lord commanded Moses. He said not that which is usual in our expressions, And Moses did, as the Lord commanded him; but, 'Moses did as the Lord commanded Moses,' as if one person were the Moses whom He commanded, and another person the Moses who did, whereas it is the very same. In the New Testament such expressions are most difficult to find. From thence nevertheless is that which the Apostle saith, Concerning His Son Who was made for Him of the seed of David after the flesh, Who was predestined to be the Son of God in virtue after the Spirit of sanctification by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord: as though one person were the Son of God who was made of the seed of David after the flesh, and another person Jesus Christ our Lord, whereas He is one and the same. But in the old Books this expression is frequent: and therefore when it is used somewhat obscurely, by evident instances of the like kind it must be understood; as in this Psalm, whereof we are treating, somewhat obscurely it hath been used. For if Jesus Christ were said to be King of the virtues of Jesus Christ, it would be as clear as this, Moses did as the Lord commanded Moses: but because there hath been said, King of the virtues of the Beloved, it is no slight matter that it should come to pass that the Same is King of the virtues, as is also the Beloved. The King, therefore, of the virtues of the Beloved, thus may be understood, as if it were to be said, the King of His virtues, because both King of Virtues is Christ, and the Beloved is the very same Christ. However, this sense hath not so great urgency, as that no other can be accepted: because the Father also may be understood as King of the virtues of His Beloved Son, to Whom the Beloved Himself saith, All Mine

are Thine, and Thine Mine. But if perchance it is asked, whether God the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ can be called King also, I know not whether any one would dare to withhold this name from Him in the passage where the Apostle saith, But to the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God. Because even if this be said of the Trinity itself, therein is also God the Father. But if we do not carnally understand, O God, Thy Judgment to the King give Thou, and Thy justice to the Son of the King: I know not whether any thing else hath been said than, 'to Thy Son.' King therefore is the Father also. Whence that verse of this Psalm, King of the virtues of the Beloved, in either way may be understood. When therefore he had said, The Lord shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue: because virtue itself by Him is ruled, and serveth Him by Whom it is given; the Lord Himself, he saith, Who shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue, is the King of the virtues of the Beloved.

16. In the next place there followeth, Of the Beloved, and of the beauty of the House to divide the spoils. The repetition belongeth to eulogy: though this repetition all the copies have not, and the more careful mark it with a star put before it, which marks are called asterisks, whereby they would have to be noted, that there are not in the Septuagint Version, but there are in the Hebrew, those words which are distinguished by such marks. But whether it be repeated, or whether it be received as spoken once, the word which hath been set down, namely, Beloved, I suppose that thus must be understood that which followeth, and of the beauty of a house to divide the spoils; as if there were said, Chosen even to divide the spoils of the beauty of a house, that is, Chosen even for dividing the spoils. For beautiful Christ hath made His House, that is, the Church, by dividing to Her spoils: in the same manner as the Body is beautiful in the distribution of the members. 'Spoils' moreover those are called that are stripped off from conquered foes. What this is the Gospel adviseth us in the passage where we read, No one goeth into the house of a strong man to spoil his vessels, unless first he shall have bound the strong man. Christ therefore hath bound the devil with spiritual bonds, by overcoming death, and by ascending from Hell above the Heavens: He hath bound him by the Sacrament of His Incarnation, because though finding nothing in Him deserving of death, yet he was permitted to kill: and from him so bound He took away his vessels as

though they were spoils. For he was working in the sons of disobedience, of whose unbelief he made use to work his own will. These vessels the Lord cleansing by the remission of sins, sanctifying these spoils wrested from the foe laid prostrate and bound, these He hath divided to the beauty of His House; making some apostles, some prophets, some pastors and doctors, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the Body of Christ. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and though all the members of the body are many, the body is one: so also is Christ. Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Powers? Have all the gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But all these things worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one his own gifts, as He willeth. And such is the beauty of the house, whereto the spoils are divided, that a lover thereof with this fairness being enkindled, crieth out, O Lord, I have loved the grace of Thy House.

17. Now in that which followeth, he turneth himself to address the members themselves, whereof the beauty of the House is composed, saying, (ver. 13.) If ye sleep in the midst of the lots, wings of a dove silvered, and between the shoulders thereof in the freshness of gold. First, we must here examine the order of the words, in what manner the sentence is ended; which certainly awaiteth, when there is said, If ye sleep: secondly, in that which he saith, namely, wings of dove silvered, whether in the singular number it must be understood as being, 'of this wing' thereof, or in the plural as, 'these wings.' But the singular number the Greek excludeth, where always in the plural we read it written. But still it is uncertain whether it be, these wings; or whether, 'O ye wings,' so as that he may seem to speak to the wings themselves. Whether therefore by the words which have preceded, that sentence be ended, so that the order is, The Lord shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots, O ye wings of a dove silvered: or by these which follow, so that the order is, If ye sleep in the midst of the lots, the wings of a dove silvered with snow shall be whitened in Selmon: that is, the wings themselves shall be whitened, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots: so that he may be understood to say this to them that are divided to the beauty of the House, as it were spoils, that is, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots, O ye that are divided to the beauty of the House, through the manifestation of the Spirit

unto profit, so that to one indeed is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge after the same Spirit, to another faith, to another kinds of healings in the same Spirit, &c. if then ye sleep in the midst of the lots, then the wings of a dove silvered with snow shall be whitened in Selmon. It may also be thus: If ye being the wings of a dove silvered, sleep in the midst of the lots, with snow they shall be whitened in Selmon, so as that those men be understood who through grace receive remission of sins. Whence also of the Church Herself, is said in the Song of Songs, Who is She that goeth up whitened? For this promise of God is held out through the Prophet, saying, If your sins shall have been like scarlet, like snow I will whiten them. It may also thus be understood, so that in that which hath been said, wings of a dove silvered, there be understood, ye shall be, so that this is the sense, O ye that like as it were spoils to the beauty of the house are divided, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots, wings of a dove silvered ye shall be: that is, into higher places ye shall be lifted up, adhering however to the bond of the Church. For I think no other dove silvered can be better perceived here, than that whereof hath been said, One is My dove. But silvered She is because with divine sayings she hath been instructed: for the sayings of the Lord in another place are called silver with fire refined, purged sevenfold. Some great good thing therefore it is, to sleep in the midst of the lots, which some would have to be the Two Testaments, so that to 'sleep in the midst of the lots' is to rest on the authority of those Testaments, that is, to acquiesce in the testimony of either Testament: so that whenever any thing out of them is produced and proved, all strife is ended in peaceful acquiescence. But if so it be, of what else do men preaching the Gospel with much virtue seem to be reminded, but that the Lord shall give them the Word that they may be able to preach, if only they sleep in the midst of the lots? For to them the Word of Truth is given, if only the authority of the two Testaments is not forsaken by them: so that they themselves are also the wings of a dove silvered, by the preaching of whom the glory of the Church is borne unto Heaven.

18. Between the shoulders, however. This is indeed a part of the body, it is a part about the region of the heart, at the hinder parts however, that is, at the back: which part of that dove silvered he saith is 'in the greenness of gold,' that is, in the vigour of wisdom, which vigour I think cannot be better

understood than by love. But why on the back, and not on the breast? Although I wonder in what sense this word is put in another Psalm, where there is said, Between His shoulders He shall overshadow thee, and under His wings thou shalt hope: forasmuch as under wings there cannot be overshadowed any thing but what shall be under the breast. And in Latin, indeed, between the shoulders, perchance in some degree of both parts may be understood, both before and behind, that we may take shoulders to be the parts which have the head betwixt them; and in Hebrew perchance the word is ambiguous, which may in this manner also be understood: but the word that is in the Greek, μετάφρενα, signifieth not any thing but at the back, which is between the shoulders. Is there for this reason there the greenness of gold, that is, wisdom and love, because in that place there are in a manner the roots of the wings? or because in that place is carried that light burden? For what are even the wings themselves, but the two commandments of love, whereon hangeth the whole Law and the Prophets? what is that same light burden, but that same love which in these two commandments is fulfilled? For whatever thing is difficult in a commandment, is a light thing to a lover. Nor on any other account is rightly understood the saying, My burden is light, but because He giveth the Holy Spirit, whereby love is shed abroad in our hearts, in order that in love we may do freely that which he that doeth in fear doeth slavishly; nor is he a lover of what is right, when he would prefer, if so be it were possible, that what is right should not be commanded.

19. It may also be required, when it hath not been said, if ye sleep in the lots, but in the midst of the lots; what this is, in the midst of the lots. Which expression indeed, if more exactly it were translated from the Greek, would signify, in the midst between the lots, which is in no one of the interpreters I have read: therefore I suppose, that what hath been said signifieth much the same, to wit the expression, in the midst of the lots. Hence therefore what seemeth to me I will explain. Ofttimes this word is wont to be used for uniting and pacifying one thing and another, that they may not mutually disagree: as when God is establishing His covenant between Himself and His people, this word the Scripture useth; for instead of that expression which is in Latin between Me and you, the Greek hath, in the midst of Me and you. So also of the sign of Circumcision, when God speaketh to

Abraham, He saith, There shall be a testament between Me and thee and all thy seed: which the Greek hath, in the midst of Me and thee, and the midst of thy seed. Also when He was speaking to Noe of the bow in the clouds to establish a sign, this word very often He repeateth: and that which the Latin copies have, between Me and you, or between Me and every living soul, and whatever suchlike expressions there are used, is found in the Greek to be, in the middle of Me and you, which is ἀνὰ μέσον. David also and Jonathan establish a sign between them, that they may not disagree with a difference of thought: and that which in Latin is expressed, between both, in the middle of both, the Greek hath expressed in the same word, which is ἀνὰ μέσον. But it was best that in this passage of the Psalms our translators said not, ‘among the lots,’ which expression is more suited to the Latin idiom; but, in the midst of the lots, as though ‘in the midst between the lots,’ which rather is the reading in the Greek, and which is wont to be said in the case of those things which ought to have a mutual consent. The Scripture therefore commandeth to sleep in the midst of the lots, them that either are the wings of a dove silvered, or by this it is granted to them to be so. Furthermore, if these lots signify the two Testaments, of what else are we admonished but that against the mutual agreement of the Testaments we should not fight, but in understanding them should acquiesce, and ourselves should be the sign and evidence of their agreement, while we perceive that the one saith nothing against the other, and with peaceful admiration, like a vision in sleep, we prove it? But why in the ‘lots’ the Testaments should be perceived, though this word is Greek, and the Testament is not so named, the reason is, because through a testament is given inheritance, which in Greek is called κληρονομία, and an heir κληρονόμος. Now κληρος in Greek is the term for lot, and lots according to the promise of God are called those parts of the inheritance, which were distributed to the people. Whence the tribe of Levi was commanded not to have lot among their brethren, because they were sustained by tithes from them. For, I think, they that have been ordained in the grades of the Ecclesiastical Ministry have been called both Clergy and Clerks, because Matthias by lot was chosen, who we read was the first that was ordained by the Apostles. Henceforth, because of inheritance which is given by testament, as though by that which is made that which maketh, by the name of ‘lots’ the Testaments themselves are signified.

20. Nevertheless, to me here another sense also occurreth, if I mistake not, to be preferred; understanding by cleri the inheritances themselves: so that, whereas the inheritance of the Old Testament, although in a shadow significant of the future, is earthly felicity; but the inheritance of the New Testament is everlasting immortality; to 'sleep in the midst of the lots' is not too earnestly now to seek the former, and still patiently to look for the latter. For they that serve God for the sake of these things, or rather for the sake of these things will not serve Him, while they are seeking felicity in this life and in this earth, have their sleep taken from them, and they sleep not. For with inflamed desires being phrensied, unto crimes and outrages they are hurried forward, and they rest not at all; longing to get, fearing to lose. But he that heareth me, saith Wisdom, shall dwell in hope, and he shall rest without fear from all malice. This is, as far as I see, to sleep in the midst of the lots, that is, in the midst between the inheritances; not yet in reality, but yet in hope of heavenly inheritance to dwell, and already to be untroubled with the desire of earthly felicity. But when there shall have come that which we hope for, no longer between two inheritances we shall rest; but in the new and true inheritance, whereof the old was a shadow, we shall reign. Wherefore even if we shall have understood that which hath been said, If ye sleep in the midst of the lots, as though it had been said, if ye die between the midst of the lots, as though the Scripture in its wonted manner had called this death of the flesh a sleep; it is a death most desirable, that in restraining the desires from earthly things, in the hope of the heavenly inheritance, a man, persevering even unto the end, should so close the last day of this life. For so, sleeping in the midst between the lots, shall they be the wings of the dove silvered, as that, in the time wherein they shall rise again, they shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and shall live alway hereafter with the Lord: or else surely so it is, because through those that do so live, as the more securely, so the more highly the Church is extolled, and on wings, so to speak, of exalted praise she is uplifted. For not without cause hath been said, Before death praise not any man. All the holy men of God therefore, from the beginning of mankind, even unto the time of the Apostles, (because even they knew how themselves to say, The day of a man I have not coveted, Thou knowest: and, One thing I have sought of the Lord, this I will require,) and after the time of the Apostles, from which time the difference of the two Testaments more

clearly hath been revealed, the Apostles themselves and the blessed martyrs, and the rest of just men, like rams, and the sons of rams, even unto this time have slept in the midst of the lots, the earthly kingdom's felicity already contemning, and for the kingdom of Heaven's Eternity hoping, and not yet holding. And because so well they have slept, on them, as it were on wings now flieth, and with praises is exalted, the Church: to wit, the Dove silvered, in order that by this fame of theirs, posterity having being invited to imitate them, while in like manner the rest also sleep, there may be added wings whereby even unto the end of the world sublimely she may be preached.

21. Ver. 14. While He That is above the heavens distinguisheth kings over Her, with snow they shall be made white in Selmon. While He above the heavens, He that ascended over all heavens that He might fulfil all things, while He distinguisheth kings over Her, that is, over that same Dove silvered. For the Apostle continueth and saith, and He hath Himself given some for Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers. For what other reason is there to distinguish kings over Her, save for the work of the Ministry, for the edification of the Body of Christ: when she is indeed Herself the Body of Christ? But they are called kings from ruling: and what more than the lusts of the flesh, that sin may not reign in their mortal body to obey the desires thereof, that they yield not their members instruments of iniquity unto sin, but yield themselves to God, as though from the dead living, and their members instruments of righteousness to God? For thus shall the kings be distinguished from foreigners, because they draw not the yoke with unbelievers: secondly, in a peaceful manner being distinguished from one another by their proper gifts. For not all are Apostles, or all Prophets, or all Teachers, or all have gifts of healings, or all with tongues do speak, or all interpret. But all these things worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing proper gifts to each one as He willeth. In giving which Spirit He that is above the Heavens distinguisheth kings over the Dove silvered. Of which Holy Spirit, when, sent to His Mother full of grace, the Angel was speaking, to her enquiring in what manner it could come to pass that she was announced as going to bear, seeing she knew not a man: The Holy Spirit, He saith, shall come over upon thee, and the Virtue of the Most Highest

shall overshadow thee. What is, 'shall overshadow thee,' but shall make a shadow? Whence also those kings, while, with the grace of the Spirit of the Lord Christ they are distinguished over the Dove silvered, with snow shall be made white in Selmon. For Selmon is interpreted shadow. For not by their merits or their own virtue they are distinguished. For who, he saith, distinguisheth thee? But what thing hast thou which thou hast not received? In order that therefore they may be distinguished from ungodly men, they receive remission of sins from Him who saith, If your sins shall have been like scarlet, as though snow I will make them white. Behold in what manner with snow they shall be made white unto Selmon, in the grace of the Spirit of Christ, whereby to them their proper gifts have been distributed: whereof hath been said that which I have quoted above, The Holy Spirit shall come over upon Thee, and the virtue of the Most Highest shall overshadow Thee, that is, shall make a shadow for Thee, wherefore that Holy Thing which shall be born of Thee, shall be called the Son of God. That shadow again is understood of a defence against the heat of carnal lusts: whence not in carnal concupiscence, but in spiritual belief, the Virgin conceived Christ. But the shadow consisteth of light and body: and further, The Word that was in the beginning, that true Light, in order that a noon-day shadow might be made for us; the Word, I say, was made Flesh, and dwelled in us. To God, to wit, man, as though to Light a body, was added, and them that believe on Him with the shadow of protection He hath covered. For He is not such a shadow as that whereof is said, All those things have passed away like a shadow: nor such a shadow as that whereof saith the Apostle, Let no man judge you in meat and drink, or in regard of a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths, which is a shadow of things future: but such as that whereof hath been written, under the shadow of Thy wings protect me. While then He, that is above the Heavens, distinguisheth kings over the Dove silvered, let not their own merits exalt them, let them not trust in their own virtue: for with snow they shall be made white unto Selmon, with grace they shall be made to shine bright in the protection of the Body of Christ.

22. But this mountain subsequently he calleth the mountain of God, a mountain fruitful, a mountain full of curds, or a mountain fat. But here what else would he call fat but fruitful? For there is also a mountain called by

that name, that is to say, Selmon. But what mountain ought we to understand by the mountain of God, a mountain fruitful, a mountain full of curds, but the same Lord Christ? Of whom also another Prophet saith, There shall be manifest in the last times the mountain of the Lord prepared on the top of the mountains? He is Himself the 'Mountain full of curds,' because of the babes to be fed with grace as though it were with milk; a mountain rich to strengthen and enrich them by the excellence of the gifts; for even the milk itself whence curd is made, in a wonderful manner signifieth grace; for it floweth out of the overflowing of the mother's bowels, and of a sweet compassion unto babes freely it is poured forth. But in the Greek the case is doubtful, whether it be the nominative or the accusative: for in that language mountain is of the neuter gender, not of the masculine: therefore some Latin translators have not translated it, unto the Mountain of God, but, the Mountain of God. But I think, unto Selmon the Mountain of God, is better, that is, unto the Mountain of God which is called Selmon: according to the interpretation which, as we best could, we have explained above.

23. Secondly, in the expression, Mountain of God, Mountain full of curds, Mountain fruitful, let no one dare from this to compare the Lord Jesus Christ with the rest of the Saints, who are themselves also called mountains of God: for we read, Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God: whence the Apostle saith, that we may be the righteousness of God in Him. Of which mountains also in another place is said, Thou enlightening marvellously from the everlasting mountains: because to them life everlasting hath been given, and through them the preeminent authority of the Holy Scriptures hath been established; but with Him enlightening by means of them, to Whom is said, Thou enlightening. For, I have lifted up mine eyes unto the Mountains, whence there shall come help to me: and yet my help is not from those same mountains of themselves; but, my help is from the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth. For one of those very mountains greatly excelling, when he had said, that he laboured more than they all; saith, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. That no one therefore might dare even to compare the Mountain beautiful in form before the sons of men, with mountains the sons of men; for there were not wanting men to call Him, some John Baptist, some Elias, some Jeremias, or

one of the Prophets; He turneth to them and saith, (ver. 16.) Why do ye imagine mountains full of curds, a mountain, he saith, wherein it hath pleased God to dwell therein? “Why do ye imagine?” For as they are a light, because to themselves also hath been said, Ye are the Light of the world, but some thing different hath been called the true Light which enlighteneth every man: so they are mountains; but far different is the Mountain prepared on the top of the mountains. These mountains therefore in bearing that Mountain are glorious: one of which mountains saith, “but from me far be it to glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom to me the world hath been crucified, and I to the world: so that he that glorieth, not in himself, but in the Lord may glory.” Why then do ye imagine mountains full of curds, that Mountain wherein it hath pleased God to dwell therein? Not because in other men He dwelleth not, but because in them through Him. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, not in a shadow, as in the temple made by king Solomon, but bodily, that is, solidly and truly. For God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Which whether we take to be spoken of the Father, because He saith Himself, But the Father in Me abiding Himself doeth His works: I in the Father and the Father in Me: or whether thus it be understood, God was in Christ, the Word was in Man: yet the Word was in the flesh in such a manner that the Word made flesh was even properly named as One, that is, man to the Word in the one Person of Christ was conjoined. Why then do ye imagine mountains full of curds, that mountain wherein it hath pleased God to dwell in Him? Far otherwise indeed than in those mountains, whereof ye imagine even this Mountain to be one. For not because through the grace of adoption they are sons of God, is therefore any one of them the Only-Begotten, to Whom He should say, Sit on My right hand, until I lay Thine enemies beneath Thy feet. For the Lord shall inhabit even unto the end: that is, those mountains not to be compared with this Mountain, the Lord Himself shall inhabit, Who is the Mountain prepared on the top of the mountains; in order that He may conduct them unto the end, that is, unto Himself, to be beheld as He is, as God. For the end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every one believing. God therefore it hath pleased to dwell in that mountain, Which hath been prepared on the top of the mountains: to Whom He saith, Thou art My beloved Son, in Whom I have been well pleased. But that same Mountain is the Lord, Who shall

inhabit other mountains unto the end, on the top of whom He hath been prepared. For there is One God, and One Mediator of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Mountain of mountains, as Saint of saints. Whence He saith, 'I in them and Thou in Me.' Why then do ye imagine mountains full of curds, the mountain wherein it hath pleased God to dwell in Him? For those mountains full of curds that Mountain the Lord shall inhabit even unto the end, that something they may be to whom He saith, for without Me nothing ye are able to do.

24. Thus cometh to pass that also which followeth; (ver. 17.) The Chariot of God is of ten thousands manifold: or of tens of thousands manifold: or, ten times thousand times manifold. For one Greek word, which hath there been used, μυριοπλάσιον, each Latin interpreter hath rendered as best he could, but in Latin it could not be adequately expressed: for a thousand with the Greeks is called χίλια, but μυριάδες are a number of tens of thousands: for one μυριάς are ten thousands. Thus a vast number of saints and believers, who by bearing God become in a manner the chariot of God, he hath signified under this name. By abiding in and guiding this, He conducteth it, as though it were His Chariot, unto the end, as if unto some appointed place. For, the beginning is Christ; secondly, they that are of Christ, at the appearing of Him; then the end. This is Holy Church: which is that which followeth, thousands of men rejoicing. For in hope they are joyful, until they be conducted unto the end, which now they look for through patience. For admirably, when he had said, Thousands of men rejoicing: immediately he added, The Lord is in them. That we may not wonder why they rejoice, The Lord is in them. For through many tribulations we must needs enter into the kingdom of God, but, The Lord is in them. Therefore even if they are as it were sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing, though not now in that same end, to which they have not yet come, yet in hope they are rejoicing, and in tribulation patient: for, The Lord is in them, in Sina in the holy place. In the interpretations of Hebrew names, we find Sina interpreted commandment: and some other interpretations it has, but I think this to be more agreeable to the present passage. For giving a reason why those thousands rejoice, whereof the Chariot of God doth consist, The Lord, he saith, is in them, in Sina in the holy place: that is, the Lord is in them, in the commandment; which commandment is holy, as saith the Apostle: Therefore the law indeed

is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good. But what would the commandment profit, unless the Lord were there, of Whom it is said, For God it is that worketh in you both to will and to work according to good will? For commandment without the Lord's aid is letter killing. For, the Law entered in, that there might abound transgression. But because the fulness of the Law is Love, therefore through Love the Law is fulfilled, not through fear. For the Love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Which hath been given to us. Therefore these thousands do rejoice. For they do the righteousness of the Law so far as they are aided by the Spirit of Grace: for the Lord is in them, in Sina in the holy place.

25. In the next place, turning his address to the Lord Himself, (ver. 18.) Thou hast gone up, he saith, on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men. Of this the Apostle thus maketh mention, thus expoundeth in speaking of the Lord Christ: But unto each one of us, he saith, is given grace after the measure of the giving of Christ: for which cause he saith, He hath gone up on high, He hath led captive captivity, He hath given gifts to men. But that He hath gone up, what is it, but that also He hath gone down into the lower parts of the earth? He that hath gone down is the Same also that hath gone up above all Heavens, that He might fulfil all things. To Christ therefore without doubt hath been said, Thou hast gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men. And let it not move us that the Apostle making mention of that same testimony saith not, Thou hast received gifts in men; but, He hath given gifts unto men. For he with Apostolic authority hath spoken thus according to the faith that the Son is God with the Father. For in respect of this He hath given gifts to men, sending to them the Holy Spirit, Which is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. But forasmuch as the self-same Christ is understood in His Body which is the Church, wherefore also His members are His saints and believers, whence to them is said, But ye are the Body of Christ, and the members, doubtless He hath Himself also received gifts in men. Now Christ hath gone up on high, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father: but unless He were here also on the earth, He would not thence have cried, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? When the Same saith Himself, Inasmuch as to one of My least ye have done it, to Me ye have done it: why

do we doubt that He receiveth in His members, the gifts which the members of Him receive?

26. But what is, Thou hast led captivity captive? Is it because He hath conquered death, which was holding captive those over whom it reigned? Or hath he called men themselves captivity, who were being held captive under the devil? Which thing's mystery even the title of that Psalm doth contain, to wit, when the house was being builded after the captivity: that is, the Church after the coming in of the Gentiles. Calling therefore those very men who were being held captive a captivity, as when 'the service' is spoken of there are understood those that serve also, that same captivity he saith by Christ hath been led captive. For why should not captivity be happy, if even for a good purpose men may be caught? Whence to Peter hath been said, From henceforth thou shalt catch men. Led captive therefore they are because caught, and caught because subjugated, being sent under that gentle yoke, being delivered from sin whereof they were servants, and being made servants of righteousness whereof they were children. Whence also He is Himself in them, That hath given gifts to men, and hath received gifts in men. And thus in that captivity, in that servitude, in that chariot, under that yoke, there are not thousands of men lamenting, but thousands of men rejoicing. For the Lord is in them, in Sina, in the holy place. With which sense agreeth another interpretation also, whereby Sina is interpreted 'measure.' For concerning these gifts of spiritual gladness the Apostle speaking, saith, that whereof I have made mention above, but to each one of us hath been given grace after the measure of the giving of Christ. And in the next place there followeth that which here also followeth: Wherefore he saith, He hath gone up on high, He hath led captivity captive, He hath given gifts to men: which here is, Thou hast received gifts in men. What is more unanimous than this and that truth? What more evident?

27. But what next doth he adjoin? (Ver. 18.) For they that believe not to dwell: or, as some copies have, For not believing to dwell: for what else are men not believing, but they that believe not? To whom this hath been said, is not easy to perceive. For as though a reason were being given of the above words, when it had been said, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men: there hath been added in continuation, for they

that believe not to dwell, that is, not believing that they should dwell. What is this? Of whom saith he this? Did that captivity, before it passed into a good captivity, shew whence it was an evil captivity? For through not believing they were possessed by the enemy, that worketh in the sons of unbelief: among whom ye were sometime, while ye were living among them. By the gifts therefore of His grace, He that hath received gifts in men, hath led captive that captivity. For they believed not that they should dwell. For faith hath thence delivered them, in order that now believing they may dwell in the House of God, even they too becoming the House of God, and the Chariot of God, consisting of thousands of men rejoicing.

28. Whence he that was singing of these things, in the Spirit foreseeing them, even he too being fulfilled with joy hath burst forth a hymn, saying, The Lord God is blessed, (ver. 19.) blessed is the Lord God from day unto day. Which some copies have, by day daily, because the Greeks have it thus, ἡμέραν καθ' ἡμέραν: which more exactly would be expressed by, by day daily. Which expression I think signifieth the same as that which hath been said, to wit, from day unto day. For daily this He doeth even unto the end, He leadeth captive captivity, receiving gifts in men.

29. And because He leadeth that chariot unto the end, He continueth and saith, A prosperous journey there shall make for us the God of our healths, (ver. 20.) our God, the God of making men safe. Highly is grace here commended. For who would be safe, unless He Himself should make whole? But that it might not occur to the mind, Why then do we die, if through His grace we have been made safe? immediately he added below, and the Lord's is the outgoing of death: as though he were saying, Why are thou indignant, O lot of humanity, that thou hast the outgoing of death? Even thy Lord's outgoing was no other than that of death. Rather therefore be comforted than be indignant: for even the Lord's is the outgoing of death. For by hope we have been saved: but if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. Patiently therefore even death itself let us suffer, by the example of Him, who though by no sin He was debtor to death, and was the Lord, from Whom no one could take away life, but Himself laid it down of Himself, yet had Himself the outgoing of death.

30. Ver. 21. Nevertheless, God shall break in pieces the heads of His enemies, the scalp of hair of men walking on in their transgressions: that is, too much exalting themselves, being too proud in their transgressions: wherein at least they ought to be humble, saying, O Lord, be Thou merciful to me a sinner. But He shall break in pieces their heads: for he that exalteth himself shall be humbled. And thus though even of the Lord be the outgoing of death: nevertheless the same Lord, because He was God, and died after the flesh of His own will, not of necessity, shall break in pieces the heads of His enemies: not only of those who mocked and crucified Him, and wagged their heads, and said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross; but also of all men lifting up themselves against His doctrine, and deriding His death as though it were of a man. For that very same One of Whom hath been said, Others He saved, Himself He cannot save, is the God of our healths, and is the God of saving men: but for an example of humility and of patience, and to efface the handwriting of our sins, He even willed that the outgoing of death should be His own, that we might not fear that death, but rather this from which He hath delivered us through that. Nevertheless, though mocked and dead, He shall break in pieces the heads of His enemies, of whom He saith, Raise Thou me up, and I shall render to them: whether it be good things for evil things, while to Himself He subdueth the heads of them believing, or whether just things for unjust things, while He punisheth the heads of them proud. For in either way are shattered and broken the heads of enemies, when from pride they are thrown down, whether by humility being amended, or whether unto the lowest depths of hell being hurled.

31. Ver. 22. The Lord hath said, Out of Basan I will be turned: or, as some copies have, Out of Basan I will turn. For He turneth that we may be safe, of Whom above hath been said, God of our healths, and God of saving men. For to Him elsewhere also is said, O God of virtues, turn Thou us, and shew Thy face, and safe we shall be. Also in another place, Turn us, O God of our healths. But he hath said, Out of Basan I will turn. Basan is interpreted confusion. What is then, I will turn out of confusion, but that there is confounded because of his sins, he that is praying of the mercy of God that they may be put away? Thence it is that the Publican dared not even to lift up his eyes to Heaven: so, on considering himself, was he confounded; but

he went down justified, because the Lord hath said, Out of Basan I will turn. Basan is also interpreted drought: and rightly the Lord is understood to turn out of drought, that is, out of scarcity. For they that think themselves to be in plenty, though they be famished; and full, though they be altogether empty; are not turned. For, blessed they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for the same shall be filled. Out of that drought the Lord doth turn them: for concerning a dry soul to Him is said, I have stretched out my hands to Thee, my soul is like earth without water to Thee. That also which other copies have, Out of Basan I will be turned, hath not an impertinent sense. For there is turned to us even He Himself Who saith, Turn ye to Me, and I will be turned to you: and He will not, if we be without confusion, where our sin is before us alway; and if we be without drought, whereby we long for the rain of Him that hath set apart a voluntary rain for His inheritance. For by drought it hath been made weak, but He being turned hath made it perfect Himself, to Whom is said, And being turned Thou hast made me alive. The Lord, then, hath said, Out of Basan I will turn, will turn unto the deep of the sea. If, I will turn, why, unto the deep of the sea? Unto Himself indeed the Lord turneth, when savingly He turneth, and He is not surely Himself the deep of the sea. Doth perchance the Latin expression deceive us, and hath there been put unto the deep, for a translation of what signifieth deeply? For He doth not turn Himself: but He turneth those that in the deep of this world lie sunk down with the weight of sins, in that place where one that is turned saith, From the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord. But if it is not, I will turn, but, I will be turned unto the deep of the sea; our Lord is understood to have said, how by His own mercy He was turned even unto the deep of the sea, to deliver even those that were sinners in most desperate case. Though in one Greek copy I have found, not, unto the deep, but, in the depths, that is, ἐν βυθοῖς: which strengtheneth the former sense, because even there God turneth to Himself men crying from the depths. And even if He be understood Himself there to be turned, to deliver such sort also, it is not beside the purpose: and so then He turneth, or else to deliver them is so turned, that His foot is stained in blood. Which to the Lord Himself the Prophet speaketh: (ver. 23.) That Thy foot may be stained in blood: that is, in order that they themselves who are turned to Thee, or to deliver whom Thou art turned, though in the deep of the sea by the burden of iniquity they may have been sunk, may make so great

proficiency by Thy Grace, (for where there hath abounded sin, there hath superabounded grace, that they may become Thy foot among Thy members, to preach Thy Gospel, and for Thy name's sake drawing out a long martyrdom, even unto blood they may contend. For thus, as I judge, more meetly is perceived His foot stained in blood.

32. Lastly, he addeth, The tongue of Thy dogs out of enemies by Himself, calling those very same that had been about to strive for the faith of the Gospel, even dogs, as though barking for their Lord. Not those dogs, whereof saith the Apostle, Beware of dogs: but those that eat of the crumbs which fall from the table of their masters. For having confessed this, the woman of Canaan merited to hear, O woman, great is thy faith, be it done to thee as thou wilt. Dogs commendable, not abominable; observing fidelity towards their master, and before his house barking against enemies. Not only of dogs he hath said, but of Thy dogs: nor are their teeth praised, but their tongue is: for it was not indeed to no purpose, not without a great mystery, that Gedeon was bidden to lead those alone, who should lap the water of the river like dogs; and of such sort not more than three hundred among so great a multitude were found. In which number is the sign of the Cross because of the letter T, which in the Greek numeral characters signifieth three hundred. Of such dogs in another Psalm also is said, They shall be turned at even, and hunger they shall suffer as dogs. For even some dogs have been reprov'd by the Prophet Isaiah, not because they were dogs, but because they knew not how to bark, and loved to sleep. In which place indeed he hath shewn, that if they had watched and barked for their Lord, they would have been praiseworthy dogs: just as they are praised, of whom is said, The tongue of Thy dogs. And these nevertheless the Prophet hath foretold out of enemies are to be, by means of that turning, whereof alone he was speaking. Whence also saith that Psalm, They shall be turned at even, and hunger they shall suffer as dogs. In the next place, as though to men inquiring whence they should have this so great good, as that they should become dogs of Him, Whose enemies they had been: it is replied, from Himself. For thus we read, The tongue of Thy dogs out of enemies from Himself. By His own love indeed, by His own mercy, by His own grace. For when would they have that power of themselves? For when

enemies we were, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son: to this end even the Lord's portion hath been the outgoing of death.

33. Ver. 24. There have been seen Thy steps, O God. The steps are those wherewith Thou hast come through the world, as though in that chariot Thou wast going to traverse the round world; which chariot of clouds He intimateth to be His holy and faithful ones in the Gospel, where He saith, From this time ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. Leaving out that coming wherein He shall be Judge of quick and dead, From this time, He saith, ye shall see the Son of Man coming in clouds. These Thy steps have been seen, that is, have been manifested, by the revealing the grace of the New Testament. Whence hath been said, How beautiful are the feet of them that proclaim peace, that proclaim good things! For this grace and those steps were lying hid in the Old Testament: but when there came the fulness of time, and it pleased God to reveal His Son, that He might be proclaimed among the Gentiles, there were seen Thy steps, O God: the steps of my God, of the King Who is in the holy place. In what holy place, save in His Temple? For the Temple of God is holy, he saith, which ye are.

34. But in order that those steps might be seen, (ver. 25.) there went before princes conjoined with men psalming, in the midst of damsels players on timbrels. The princes are the Apostles: for they went before, that the peoples might come in multitudes. They went before proclaiming the New Testament: conjoined with men psalming, by whose good works that were even visible, as it were with instruments of praise, God was glorified. But those same princes are in the midst of damsels players on timbrels, to wit, in an honourable ministry: for thus in the midst are ministers set over new Churches; for this is damsels: with flesh subdued praising God; for this is players on timbrels, because timbrels are made of skin dried and stretched.

35. Therefore, that no one should take these words in a carnal sense, and by these words should conceive in his mind certain choral bands of wantonness, he continueth and saith, (ver. 26.) In the Churches bless ye the Lord: as though he were saying, wherefore, when ye hear of damsels, players on timbrels, do ye think of wanton pleasures? In the Churches bless ye the Lord. For the Churches are pointed out to you by this mystic intimation: the Churches are the damsels, with new grace decked: the

Churches are the players on the timbrels, with chastened flesh being spiritually tuneful. In the Churches, then, bless ye the Lord God from the wells of Israel. For from thence He first chose those whom He made wells. For from thence were chosen the Apostles; and they first heard, “He that shall have drunk of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but there shall be made in him a well of water springing unto life everlasting.”

36. Ver. 27. There is Benjamin the younger in a trance. There is Paul the last of the Apostles, who saith, For even I am an Israelite, out of the seed of Abraham, out of the tribe of Benjamin. But evidently in a trance, all men being amazed at a miracle so great as that of his calling. For a trance is the mind’s going out: which thing sometimes chanceth through fear; but sometimes through some revelation, the mind suffering separation from the corporal senses, in order that that which is to be represented may be represented to the spirit. Whence even thus may be understood that which here hath been written, namely, in a trance; for when to that persecutor there had been said from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me: there being taken from him the light of the eyes of flesh, he made answer to the Lord, Whom in spirit he saw, but they that were with him heard the voice of him replying, though seeing no one to whom he was speaking. Here also the trance may be understood to be that one of his, whereof he himself speaking, saith, that he knew a man caught up even unto the third Heaven; but whether in the body, or whether out of the body, he knew not: but that he being caught up into Paradise, heard ineffable words, which it was not lawful for a man to speak.

Princes of Juda the leaders of them, princes of Zabulon, princes of Nephthalim. Since he is indicating the Apostles as princes, wherein is even Benjamin the younger in a trance, in which words that Paul is indicated no one doubteth; or when under the name of princes there are indicated in the Churches all men excelling and most worthy of imitation: what mean these names of the tribes of Israel? For if only of Juda mention were made, because the kings had been out of the same tribe as also the Lord Christ after the flesh; then by this tribe we should suppose that there were figured the princes also of the New Testament: but when he addeth, princes of Zabulon, princes of Nephthalim, some one perchance would say, that out of

these tribes the Apostles were, but out of others they were not. Which interpretation though I see not how it may be proved, yet because I find not how it may be refuted, and since in this passage the princes of Churches, and the leaders of those, who in the Churches do bless God, I see to be commended; not without reason even of this sense I approve: but the light which shineth forth out of the translation of the very names doth more please me. For the names are Hebrew: whereof Juda is said to be interpreted confession, Zabulon habitation of strength, Nephthalim my enlargement. All which words do intimate to us the most proper princes of the Church, worthy of their leadership, worthy of imitation, worthy of honours. For the Martyrs in the Churches hold the highest place, and by the crown of holy worth they do excel. But however in martyrdom the first thing is confession, and for this is next put on strength to endure whatsoever shall have chanced; then after all things have been endured, straits being ended, breadth followeth in reward. It may also thus be understood; that whereas the Apostle chiefly commendeth these three things, faith, hope, love; confession is in faith, strength in hope, breadth in love. For of faith the substance is, that with the heart men believe unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession be made unto salvation. But in sufferings of tribulations the thing itself is sorrowful, but the hope is strong. For, if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. But breadth the shedding abroad of love in the heart doth give. For love perfected casteth out fear: which fear hath torment, because of the straits of the soul. The princes then of Juda are the leaders of them: that in the Churches do bless the Lord. The princes of Zabulon, the princes of Nephthalim: princes of confession, of strength, of breadth; princes of faith, of hope, of love.

37. Ver. 28. Command, O God, Thy Virtue. For one is our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we in Him, of Whom we read that He is the Virtue of God and the Wisdom of God. But how doth God command His Christ, save while He commendeth Him? For God commendeth His love in us, in that while yet we were sinners, for us Christ died. "How hath He not also with Him given to us all things?" Command, O God, Thy Virtue: confirm, O God, that which Thou hast wrought in us. Command by teaching, confirm by aiding.

38. Ver. 29. From Thy Temple in Jerusalem, to Thee kings shall offer presents. From Thy Temple in Jerusalem, which is our free mother, because the same also is Thy holy Temple: from that Temple then, to Thee kings shall offer presents. Whatever kings be understood, whether kings of the earth, or whether those whom “He that is above the heavens distinguisheth over the dove silvered;” to Thee kings shall offer presents. And what presents are so acceptable as the sacrifices of praise? But there is a noise against this praise, from men bearing the name of Christian, and having diverse opinions. Be there done that which followeth, (ver. 30.) Rebuke Thou the beasts of the cane. For both beasts they are, since by not understanding they do hurt: and beasts of the cane they are, since the sense of the Scriptures they wrest according to their own misapprehension. For in the cane the Scriptures are as reasonably perceived, as language in tongue, according to the mode of expression whereby the Hebrew or the Greek or the Latin tongue is spoken of, or the like; that is to say, by the efficient cause the thing which is being effected is implied. Now it is usual in the Latin language for writing to be called style, because with the stilus it is done: so then cane also, because with a cane it is done. The Apostle Peter saith, that men unlearned and unstable do wrest the Scriptures to their own proper destruction: these are the beasts of the cane, whereof here is said, Rebuke Thou the beasts of the cane.

39. Concerning these also is that which followeth, The congregation of bulls amid the cows of the peoples, in order that there may be excluded they that have been tried with silver. Calling them bulls because of the pride of a stiff and untamed neck: for he is referring to heretics. But by the cows of the peoples, I think souls easily led astray must be understood, because easily they follow these bulls. For they lead not astray entire peoples, among whom are men grave and stable; whence hath been written, In a people grave I will praise Thee: but only the cows which they may have found among those peoples. For of these are they that steal into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led with divers lusts, alway learning, and at the knowledge of the truth never arriving. But that which the same Apostle saith, There must also be heresies, in order that those that are approved may be made manifest among you: doth also follow here, in order that there may be excluded they that have been tried with

silver, that is, they that have been proved with the sayings of God. For, The sayings of the Lord are chaste sayings, silver tried with the fire of earth. For, may be excluded, hath been said, meaning, may appear, may stand forth: as he saith, may be made manifest. Whence also, in the art of the silversmith, they are called exclusores, who out of the shapelessness of the lump are skilled to mould the form of a vessel. For many meanings of the holy Scriptures are concealed, and are known only to a few of singular intelligence, and are never vindicated so suitably and acceptably as when our diligence to make answer to heretics constraineth us. For then even they that neglect the pursuits of learning, shaking off their slumber, are stirred up to a diligent hearing, in order that their opponents may be refuted. In a word, how many senses of holy Scriptures concerning Christ as God have been vindicated against Photinus, how many concerning Christ as man against Manichæus, how many concerning the Trinity against Sabellius, how many concerning the Unity of the Trinity against Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians? How many concerning the Catholic Church in the whole world spread abroad, and concerning the intermixture of evil men even unto the end of the world, how they are no hindrance to good men in the partaking of the Sacraments thereof, against Donatists, and Luciferians, and others, whoever they be, that with like error dissent from the truth: how many against the rest of heretics, whom to enumerate or mention were too long a task, and for the present work unnecessary? Nevertheless, of these senses the tried vindicators either entirely would have lain concealed, or would not have been so eminent, as the contradictions of proud men have made them to be, of whom, as it were bulls, that is, not subject to the peaceful and gentle yoke of discipline, the Apostle maketh mention, in the place where he hath said that such an one must be chosen for the Episcopate as is able to exhort in sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly; these are bulls with uplifted neck, impatient of plough and yoke: vain-talkers and leaders astray of minds; which minds this Psalm hath intimated under the name of cows. To this useful purpose then Divine Providence alloweth bulls to be gathered together among the cows of the people, namely, in order that there may be excluded, that is, in order that there may stand forth, they that have been tried with silver. For to this end heresies are suffered to be, in order that approved men may be made manifest. Although thus also it may be understood, the congregation of

bulls is among the cows of the peoples, in order that from those cows may be excluded they that have been tried with silver. For this purpose the heretical teachers have, from the ears of the souls whom they endeavour to lead astray, to exclude them, that is, separate them, that have been tried with silver, that is, them that are meet to teach the sayings of the Lord. But whether this be the sense of that word, or whether it be that; there followeth, scatter Thou the nations which would have war. For not amendment but strife they pursue. This thing then he doth prophesy, that they should rather be scattered themselves, that will not be amended, that aim to scatter the flock of Christ. But nations he hath called them, not because of generations of kindreds, but because of divers kinds of sects, wherein a chain of succession doth confirm the error.

40. Ver. 31. There shall come ambassadors out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall prevent the hands of Him. Under the name of Egypt or of Ethiopia, he hath signified the faith of all nations, from a part the whole: calling the preachers of reconciliation ambassadors. For Christ, he saith, we have an embassy, God as it were exhorting through us: we beseech you for Christ to be reconciled to God. Not then of the Israelites alone, whence the Apostles were chosen, but also from the rest of the nations that there should be preachers of Christian peace, in this manner hath been mystically prophesied. But by that which he saith, shall prevent the hands of Him, he saith this, shall prevent the vengeance of Him: to wit, by turning to Him, in order that their sins may be forgiven, lest by continuing sinners they be punished. Which thing also in another Psalm is said, Let us come before the face of Him in confession. As by hands he signifieth vengeance, so by face, revelation and presence, which will be in the Judgment. Because then, by Egypt and Ethiopia he hath signified the nations of the whole world; immediately he hath subjoined, to God (are) the kingdoms of the earth. Not to Sabellius, not to Arius, not to Donatus, not to the rest of the bulls stiff-necked, but, to God (are) the kingdoms of the earth.

41. But the greater number of Latin copies, and especially the Greek, have the verses so punctuated, that there is not one verse in these words, to God the kingdoms of the earth, but, to God, is at the end of the former verse, and so there is said, Ethiopia shall come before the hands of her to God, and

then there followeth in another verse, (ver. 32.) Kingdoms of the earth, sing ye to God, psalm ye to the Lord. By which punctuation, doubtless to be preferred by the agreement of many copies, and those deserving of credit, there seemeth to me to be implied faith which precedeth works: because without the merits of good works through faith the ungodly is justified, just as the Apostle saith, To one believing in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: in order that afterwards faith itself through love may begin to work. For those alone are to be called good works, which are done through love of God. But these faith must needs go before, so that from thence these may begin, not from these this: for no one worketh through love of God, except he first believe in God. This is faith whereof is said, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which through love worketh. This is faith, whereof to the Church Herself is said in the Song of Songs, Thou shalt come and shalt pass hence from the beginning of faith. For She hath come like the chariot of God in thousands of men rejoicing, having a prosperous course, and She hath passed over from this world to the Father: in order that there may come to pass in Her that which the Bridegroom Himself saith, Who hath passed hence from this world to the Father, I will that where I am, these also may be with Me: but from the beginning of faith. Because then in order that good works may follow, faith doth precede; and there are not any good works, save those which follow faith preceding: nothing else seemeth to have been meant in, Ethiopia shall come before the hands of her to God, but, Ethiopia shall believe in God. For thus she shall come before the hands of her, that is, the works of her. Of whom, except of Ethiopia herself? For this in the Greek is not ambiguous: for the word of her there in the feminine gender most clearly hath been put down. And thus nothing else hath been said than Ethiopia shall come before her hands to God, that is, by believing in God she shall come before her works. For, I judge, saith the Apostle, that a man is justified through faith without the works of the Law. Is He God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? So then Ethiopia, which seemeth to be the utmost limit of the Gentiles, is justified through faith, without the works of the Law. For, in order to be justified, she doth not glory of the works of the Law, nor setteth her merits before faith, but by faith she cometh before her own works. The greater number of copies indeed have not hands, but hand: which hath the same force, seeing that

instead of works it is put. But I should have preferred that the Latin interpreters had thus translated it: Ethiopia shall come before her own hands, or, her hand, to God: for this would be more plain than what now hath been said, of her: and with no injury to truth this might have been done, because in the Greek language that pronoun may be understood to signify not only of her, but also her own, singular or plural: her own, I mean, singular, if hand; but her own, plural, if hands. For the expression in Greek, χεῖρα αὐτῆς, which most copies have, both of hand of her and her own hand may be understood: but that which is uncommon in the Greek copies, χεῖράς αὐτῆς, by both hands of her and her own hands, in Latin may be expressed.

42. Henceforward, as if through prophecy all things had been discoursed of which now we see fulfilled, he exhorteth to the praise of Christ, and next He foretelleth His future Advent. Kingdoms of earth, sing ye to God, psalm ye to the Lord: psalm ye to God, (ver. 33.) Who hath ascended above the Heaven of Heavens to the East. Or, as some copies have it, Who hath ascended above the Heaven of Heaven to the East. In these words he perceiveth not Christ, who believeth not His Resurrection and Ascension. But hath not to the East, which he hath added, expressed the very spot; since in the quarters of the East is where He rose again, and whence He ascended? Therefore above the Heaven of Heaven He sitteth at the right hand of the Father. This is what the Apostle saith, the Same is He that hath ascended above all Heavens. For what of Heavens doth remain after the Heaven of Heaven? Which also we may call the Heavens of Heavens, just as He hath called the firmament Heaven: which Heaven, however, even as Heavens we read of, in the place where there is written, and let the waters which are above the Heavens praise the name of the Lord. And forasmuch as from thence He is to come, to judge quick and dead, observe what followeth: behold, He shall give His voice, the voice of power. He that like a lamb before the shearer of Him was without voice, behold shall give His voice, and not the voice of weakness, as though to be judged; but the voice of power, as though going to judge. For God shall not be hidden, as before, and in the judgment of men not opening His mouth; but God shall come manifest, our God, and He shall not be silent. Why do ye despair, ye

unbelieving men? Why do ye mock? What saith the evil servant? My Lord delayeth to come. Behold, He shall give His voice, the voice of power.

43. Ver. 34. Give ye glory to God, above Israel is the magnificence of Him. Of whom saith the Apostle, Upon the Israel of God. For not all that are out of Israel, are Israelites: for there is also an Israel after the flesh. Whence he saith, See ye Israel after the flesh. For not they that are sons of the flesh, are sons of God, but sons of promise are counted for a seed. Therefore at that time when without any intermixture of evil men His people shall be, like a heap purged by the fan, like Israel in whom guile is not, then most preeminent above Israel shall be the magnificence of Him: and the virtue of Him in the clouds. For not alone He shall come to judgment, but with the elders of His people: to whom He hath promised that they shall sit upon thrones to judge, who even shall judge angels. These be the clouds.

44. Lastly, lest of any thing else the clouds be understood, he hath in continuation added, (ver. 35.) Wonderful is God in His saints, the God of Israel. For at that time even most truly and most fully there shall be fulfilled the name Israel itself, which is one 'seeing God:' for we shall see Him as He is. He Himself shall give virtue and strength to His people, blessed be God: to His people now frail and weak. For we have this treasure in earthen vessels. But then by a most glorious changing even of our bodies, He Himself shall give virtue and strength to His people. For this body is sown in weakness, shall rise in virtue. He Himself then shall give the virtue which in His own flesh He hath sent before, whereof the Apostle saith, the power of His Resurrection. But strength whereby shall be destroyed the enemy death. Now then of this long and difficultly understood Psalm we have at length by His own aid made an end. Blessed be God. Amen.

PSALM 69

Exposition

Sermon I. on the first part of the above Psalm.

1. We have been born into this world, and added to the people of God, at that period wherein already the herb from a grain of mustard seed hath spread out its branches; wherein already the leaven, which at first was contemptible, hath leavened three measures, that is, the whole round world repeopled by the three sons of Noe: for from East and West and North and South shall come they that shall sit down with the Patriarchs, while those shall have been driven without, that have been born of their flesh and have not imitated their faith. Unto this glory then of Christ's Church our eyes we have opened; and that barren one, for whom joy was proclaimed and foretold, because she was to have more sons than she that had the husband, her we have found to be such an one as hath forgotten the reproaches and infamy of her widowhood: and so we may perhaps wonder when we chance to read in any prophecy the words of Christ's humiliation, or our own. And it may be, that we are less affected by them; because we have not come at that time when these things were read with zest, in that tribulation abounded. But again if we think of the abundance of tribulations, and observe the way wherein we are walking, (if indeed we do walk in it,) how narrow it is, and how through straits and tribulations it leadeth unto rest everlasting, and how that very thing which in human affairs is called felicity, is more to be feared than misery; since indeed misery oftentimes doth bring out of tribulation a good fruit, but felicity doth corrupt the soul with a perverse security, and giveth place for the Devil the Tempter—when, I say, we shall have judged prudently and rightly, as the salted victim did, that human life upon earth is trial, and that no one is at all secure, nor ought to be secure, until he be come to that country, whence no one that is a friend goeth forth, into which no one that is an enemy is admitted, even now in the

very glory of the Church we acknowledge the voices of our tribulation: and being members of Christ, subject to our Head in the bond of love, and mutually supporting one another, we will say from the Psalms, that which here we have found the Martyrs said, who were before us; that tribulation is common to all men from the beginning even unto the end. Nevertheless, this Psalm which we have undertaken to treat of, and whereof we have purposed to speak to your Love in the name of the Lord, let us acknowledge to be in the grain of mustard seed: for a little space from the height of the herb and the spreading of the branches, and from that glory, where the birds of Heaven rest, let us withdraw the thoughts; and let us hear how this greatness which delighteth us in the herb hath risen from a small thing. For Christ here is speaking: (but to men already knowing it we are speaking:) Christ not only Head, but also Body. By the very words we know it. For that Christ here is speaking is not permitted us to doubt at all. For here are the express words, which in His passion were fulfilled: They have given for My food gall, and in My thirst they have given Me vinegar to drink: for these words even to the letter were fulfilled, and exactly as they were foretold so they were completed. For when Christ Himself had said, I thirst, hanging on the Cross, and at this word to Him vinegar on a sponge had been given, which receiving He said, It is finished, and then with bowed head He gave up the Ghost, shewing all those things which had been foretold in Him then to have been finished, we may not here understand any thing else. The Apostles also, speaking of Christ, gave testimonies out of that Psalm. But who should go astray from their opinions? or what lamb should not follow the rams? Therefore Christ here speaketh: and we must rather point out where His members speak, in order that we may shew that here He is speaking whole, than doubt that Christ speaketh.

2. The Title of the Psalm is: Unto the end, in behalf of those that shall be changed, to David himself. Now of the change for the better hear thou; for change either is for the worse or for the better. Adam and Eve for the worse; they that out of Adam and Eve to Christ have adhered, have been changed for the better. For, as through one man death, so also through one Man resurrection of the dead: and, as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. From that which God had formed, Adam was changed, but unto the worse estate of his iniquity: from that which iniquity hath wrought

the faithful are changed, but for the better through the grace of God. That we should be changed for the worse, was our own iniquity: that we should be changed for the better, not our own righteousness, but the grace of God provideth. That we have been changed then for the worse, to ourselves let us ascribe: that for the better we are changed, let us praise God. For those, then, that shall be changed, this Psalm is. But whence hath this change been made but by the Passion of Christ? The very word Pascha in Latin is interpreted passage. For Pascha is not a Greek word but a Hebrew. It soundeth indeed in the Greek language like Passion, because *πάσχειν* signifieth to suffer: but if the Hebrew expression be examined, it pointeth to something else. Pascha doth intimate passage. Of which even John the Evangelist hath admonished us, who (just before the Passion when the Lord was coming to the supper wherein He set forth the Sacrament of His Body and Blood) thus speaketh: But when there had come the hour, wherein Jesus was to pass from this world to the Father. He hath expressed then the passage of the Pascha. But unless He passed Himself hence to the Father, Who came for our sake, how should we have been able to pass hence, who have not come down for the sake of taking up any thing, but have fallen? But He Himself fell not; He but came down, in order that He might raise up him that had fallen. The passage therefore both of Him and of us is hence to the Father, from this world to the kingdom of Heaven, from life mortal to life everlasting, from life earthly to life heavenly, from life corruptible to life incorruptible, from intimacy with tribulations to perpetual security. Accordingly, In behalf of them that shall be changed, the Psalm's title is. The cause therefore of our change, that is, the very Passion of the Lord and our own voice in tribulations in the text of the Psalm let us observe, let us join in knowing, join in groaning, and in hearing, in joint-knowing, joint-groaning, let us be changed, in order that there may be fulfilled in us the Title of the Psalm, In behalf of them that shall be changed.

3. Ver. 1. Save me, O God, for the waters have entered in even unto my soul. That grain is despised now, that seemeth to give forth humble words. In the garden it is buried, though the world will admire the greatness of the herb, of which herb the seed was despised by the Jews. For in very deed observe ye the seed of the mustard, minute, dull coloured, altogether despicable, in order that therein may be fulfilled that which hath been said,

We have seen Him, and He had neither form nor comeliness. But He saith, that waters have come in even unto His soul; because those multitudes, which under the name of waters He hath pointed out, were able so far to prevail as to kill Christ. They prevailed unto contemning, unto holding, unto binding, unto reviling, unto buffeting, unto spitting. How much further? Even unto death. Therefore, The waters have entered in even unto my soul: for this life He called "His soul," unto which they were able in their cruelty to reach. But could they have done this, unless by Himself they had been permitted? Whence then doth He so cry out, as though He were suffering something against His will, except, because the Head doth prefigure the Members? For He suffered because He willed: but the Martyrs even though they willed not; for to Peter thus He foretold his passion: When thou shalt be old, He saith, another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wilt not. For though we desire to cleave to Christ, yet we are unwilling to die: and therefore willingly or rather patiently we suffer, because no other passage is given us, through which we may cleave to Christ. For if we could in any other way arrive at Christ, that is, at life everlasting, who would be willing to die? For while explaining our nature, that is, a sort of association of soul and body, and in these two parts a kind of intimacy of glueing and fastening together, the Apostle saith, that we have a House not made with hands, everlasting in the Heavens: that is, immortality prepared for us, wherewith we are to be clothed at the end, when we shall have risen from the dead; and he saith, Wherein we are not willing to be stripped, but to be clothed upon, that the mortal may be swallowed up of life. If it might so be, we should so will, he saith, to become immortal, as that now that same immortality might come, and now as we are it should change us, in order that this our mortal body by life should be swallowed up, and the body should not be laid aside through death, so as at the end again to have to be recovered. Although then from evil to good things we pass, nevertheless the very passage is somewhat bitter, and hath the gall which the Jews gave to the Lord in the Passion, hath something sharp to be endured, whereby they are shewn that gave Him vinegar to drink. Prefiguring then and transforming into Himself our own selves, He saith this, Save me, O God, for the waters have entered in even unto my soul. They that persecuted were able even to kill, but they shall have no more to do. For the Lord Himself hath sent an exhortation before, saying, Fear not them that kill body and

have no more to do; but fear Him that hath power to kill both body and soul in the hell of fire. With the greater fear lesser things we condemn, and with the greater desire of eternity we disdain all things temporal. For here both sweet are temporal pleasures, and bitter are temporal tribulations: but who would not drink the cup of tribulation temporal, fearing the fire of hell; and who would not condemn the sweetness of the world, longing for the sweetness of life eternal? From hence that we may be delivered let us cry: lest perchance amidst oppressions we consent to iniquity, and truly irreparably we be swallowed up: Save me, O God, for the waters have entered in even unto my soul.

4. Ver. 2. Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. What called He clay? Is it those very persons that have persecuted? For out of clay man hath been made. But these men by falling from righteousness have become the clay of the deep, and whosoever shall not have consented to them persecuting and desiring to draw him to iniquity, out of his clay doth make gold. For the clay of the same shall merit to be converted into a heavenly form, and to be made associate of those of whom saith the Title of the Psalm, in behalf of them that shall be changed. But at the time when these were the clay of the deep. I stuck in them: that is, they held Me, prevailed against Me, killed Me. Fixed then I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. What is this, there is no substance? Can it be that clay itself is not a substance? What is then, fixed I am? Can it be that Christ hath thus stuck? Or hath He stuck, and was not, as hath been said in the book of Job, the earth delivered into the hands of the ungodly man? Was He fixed in body, because it could be held, and suffered even crucifixion? For unless with nails He had been fixed, crucified He had not been. Whence then there is no substance? Is that clay not a substance? But we shall understand, if it be possible, what is, and there is no substance, if first we shall have understood what is a substance. For there is substance spoken of even of riches, as we say, he hath substance, and, he hath lost substance. But shall we suppose this here to have been spoken of in, and there is no substance, that is, there are no riches, as if now any thing were being done concerning riches, or any question were being raised about riches? Is it perchance that this very clay is poverty, and there shall be no riches, except when we shall have been made partakers of eternity? For then there are true

riches, when there shall be nothing wanting to us. This sense may also be taken, according as we understand this word, so that what was said was, Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance, that is, unto poverty I have come. For here He saith, poor and sorrowful I am. The Apostle also saith, that for your sakes He became poor though He was rich, that by His poverty ye might be enriched. Therefore the Lord desiring to set forth to us His poverty, perchance hath said, there is no substance. For to extreme poverty He came, when the form of a servant He put on. The riches of Him are what? Who, when in form of God He was, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. These are great and incomparable riches. Whence then that poverty? Because He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made after the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, being made obedient even unto death, so that He said, The waters have entered in even unto my soul. Add to this, death: what more wilt thou add? The infamy of death. Therefore there followeth, even the death of the Cross. Great poverty! But hence there will be great riches: for as His poverty was fulfilled, so there will be fulfilled also our riches from His poverty. How great riches hath He, that from His own poverty He should make us rich? What sort of persons will He make us by His riches, whom He hath made rich by His poverty?

5. Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. Substance is understood in another way, as that thing which we are, whatsoever we are. But it is somewhat difficult to understand this, although the things be of common use: but because the word is uncommon, it needeth some little insisting on, and exposition: to which however if ye are attentive, perchance we shall not find it too hard for us. Suppose a man spoken of, a beast spoken of, earth spoken of, Heaven spoken of, sun spoken of, moon, stone, sea, air; all these things are substances, by the very fact that they are, the natures themselves are called substances. God is a sort of substance: for that which is no substance, is nothing at all. To be a substance then is to be something. Whence also in the Catholic Faith against the poisons of certain heretics thus we are builded up, so that we say, Father and Son and Holy Spirit are of one substance. What is, of one substance? For example, if gold is the Father, gold is also the Son, gold also the Holy Spirit. Whatever the Father is because He is God, the same is the Son, the same the Holy Spirit.

But when He is the Father, this is not what He is. For Father He is called not in reference to Himself, but in reference to the Son: but in reference to Himself God He is called. Therefore in that He is God, by the same He is a substance. And because of the same substance the Son is, without doubt the Son also is God. But yet in that He is Father, because it is not the name of the substance, but is referred to the Son; we do not say that the Son is Father in the same manner as we say the Son is God. Thou askest what the Father is; we answer, God. Thou askest what is the Father and the Son: we answer, God. If questioned of the Father alone, answer thou God: if questioned of both, not Gods, but God, answer thou. We do not reply as in the case of men, when thou inquirest what is father Abraham, we answer a man; the substance of him serveth for answer: thou inquirest what is his son Isaac, we answer, a man; of the same substance are Abraham and Isaac: thou inquirest what is Abraham and Isaac, we answer not man, but men. Not so in things divine. For so great in this case is the fellowship of substance, that of equality it alloweth, plurality alloweth not. If then it shall have been said to thee, when thou tellest me that the Son is the same as the Father, in fact the Son also is the Father; answer thou, according to the substance I have told thee that the Son is the same as the Father, not according to that term which is used in reference to something else. For in reference to Himself He is called God, in reference to the Father is called Son. And again, the Father in reference to Himself is called God, in reference to the Son He is called Father. The Father as He is called in reference to the Son, is not the Son: the Son as He is called in reference to the Father, is not the Father: what the Father is called in reference to Himself and the Son in reference to Himself, the same is Father and Son, that is, God. What is then, there is no substance? After this interpretation of substance, how shall we be able to understand this passage of the Psalm, Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance? God made man, He made substance; and O that he had continued in that which God made him! If man had continued in that which God made him, in him would not have been 'fixed' He whom God begot. But moreover because through iniquity man fell from the substance wherein he was made, (for iniquity itself is no substance; for iniquity is not a nature which God formed, but a perverseness which man made;) the Son of God came to the clay of the deep, and was fixed; and that was no substance wherein He was

fixed, because in the iniquity of them He was fixed. Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. "All things by Him were made, and without Him there was made nothing." All natures by Him were made, iniquity by Him was not made, because iniquity was not made. Those substances by Him were made, which praise Him. The whole creation praising God is commemorated by the three children in the furnace, and from things earthly to things heavenly, or from things heavenly to things earthly reacheth the hymn of them praising God. Not that all these things have sense to praise; but because all things being well meditated upon, do beget praise, and the heart by considering creation is fulfilled to overflowing with a hymn to the Creator. All things do praise God, but only the things which God hath made. Do ye observe in that hymn that covetousness praiseth God? There even the serpent praiseth God, covetousness praiseth not. For all creeping things are there named in the praise of God: there are named all creeping things; but there are not there named any vices. For vices out of ourselves and out of our own will we have: and vices are not a substance. In these was fixed the Lord, when He suffered persecution: in the vice of the Jews, not in the substance of men which by Him was made. Fixed I am, He saith, in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. Fixed I am, and I have not found that which I have made.

6. Ver. 2. I have come into the depth of the sea, and the tempest hath made Me to sink down. Thanks to the mercy of Him Who came into the depth of the sea, and vouchsafed to be swallowed by the sea whale, but was vomited forth the third day. He came into the depth of the sea, in which depth we were thrust down, in which depth we had suffered shipwreck: He came thither Himself, and the tempest made Him to sink down: for there He suffered waves, those very men; tempests, the voices of men saying, Crucify, Crucify. Though Pilate said, I find not any cause in this Man why He should be killed: there prevailed the voices of them, saying, Crucify, Crucify. The tempest increased, until He was made to sink down That had come into the depth of the sea. And the Lord suffered in the hands of the Jews that which He suffered not when upon the waters He was walking: the which not only He had not suffered Himself, but had not allowed even Peter

to suffer it. I have come into the depth of the sea, and the tempest hath made Me to sink down.

7. Ver. 3. I have laboured, crying, hoarse have become my jaws. Where was this? When was this? Let us question the Gospel. For the Passion of our Lord in this Psalm we perceive. And, indeed, that He suffered we know; that there came in waters even unto His Soul, because peoples prevailed even unto His death, we read, we believe; in the tempest that He was sunk down, because tumult prevailed to His killing, we acknowledge: but that He laboured in crying, and that His jaws were made hoarse, not only we read not, but even on the contrary we read, that He answered not to them a word, in order that there might be fulfilled that which in another Psalm hath been said, I have become as it were a man not hearing, and having not in his mouth reproofs. And that which in Isaiah hath been prophesied, like a sheep to be sacrificed He was led, and like a lamb before one shearing Him, so He opened not His mouth. If He became like a man not hearing, and having not in His mouth reproofs, how did He labour crying, and how were His jaws made hoarse? Is it that He was even then silent, because He was hoarse with having cried so much in vain? And this indeed we know to have been His voice on the Cross out of a certain Psalm: O God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? But how great was that voice, or of how long duration, that in it His jaws should have become hoarse? Long while He cried, Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees: long while He cried, Woe unto the world because of offences. And truly hoarse in a manner He cried, and therefore was not understood, when the Jews said, What is this that He saith? Hard is this saying, who is able to hear it? We know not what He saith. He said all these words: but hoarse were His jaws to them that understood not His words. I have laboured crying, hoarse have become My jaws.

8. Mine eyes have failed from hoping in My God. Far be it that this should be taken of the person of the Head: far be it that His eyes should have failed from hoping in His God: in Whom rather there was God reconciling the world to Himself, and Who was the Word made flesh and dwelled in us, so that not only God was in Him, but also He was Himself God. Not so then: the eyes of Himself, our Head, failed not from hoping in His God: but the eyes of Him have failed in His Body, that is, in His members. This voice is

of the members, this voice is of the Body, not of the Head. How then do we find it in His Body and members? What else shall I say? Of what else shall I make mention? When He suffered, when He died, all His disciples despaired of His being Christ. By a robber the Apostles were excelled, who believed at the time when they failed. See the members of Him despairing: observe those two men whom after the Resurrection He found in the way conversing together, whereof one was Cleopas, when their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. For how should they with eyes know Him concerning Whom in mind they had come to waver? Something had been formed in their eyes like to their own mind. For they were conversing with one another, and when they were accosted by Him as to what they were saying, they answered, Dost Thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem, and knowest not the things which have come to pass, after what manner Jesus of Nazareth, mighty in words and in deeds, hath been slain by the elders and chief priests? And we were hoping that He was Himself to redeem Israel. They had hoped and were not hoping. Their eyes failed from hoping in their God. Them therefore into Himself He transformed, in saying, Mine eyes have failed from hoping in My God. This hope He restored, when He offered the scars to be handled, which when Thomas had touched, he returned to the hope which he had lost, and cried out, My Lord and my God. Thine eyes have failed from hoping in thy God, thou hast handled the scars, and hast found thy God: hast handled the form of a servant, and hast confessed thy Lord. To whom however the Lord Himself saith, Because thou hast seen thou hast believed. And foretelling us with the voice of His mercy, He saith, "Blessed they that see not and believe." Mine eyes have failed from hoping in My God.

9. Ver. 4. Thus there have been multiplied above the hairs of My head they that hate Me gratis. How multiplied? So as that they might add to themselves even one out of the twelve. There have been multiplied above the hairs of My head they that hate Me for nought. With the hairs of His head He hath compared His enemies. With reason they were shorn when in the place of Calvary He was crucified. Let the members accept this voice, let them learn to be hated gratis. For now, O Christian, if it must needs be that the world hate thee, why dost thou not make it hate thee gratis, in order that in the Body of thy Lord and in this Psalm sent before concerning Him,

thou mayest acknowledge thy own voice? How shall it come to pass that the world hate thee gratis? If thou no wise hurtest any one, and art still hated: for this is gratis, without cause. It is little for thee without cause to be hated, even more than this, cause them to render thee evil things for good things. Mine enemies have strengthened themselves, that persecute Me unjustly. As He hath said, They have been multiplied above the hairs of My head; the same afterwards, Mine enemies have strengthened themselves; and as at first, They that hate Me gratis; the same afterwards, They that persecute Me unjustly. Unjustly is the same as gratis. This is the very voice of Martyrs, not in the punishment, but in the cause. Neither to suffer persecution, nor to be held, nor to be scourged, nor to be imprisoned, nor to be proscribed, nor to be killed, is any thing praiseworthy: but while having a good cause, to suffer these things, this is praiseworthy. For praise is in the goodness of the cause, not in the sharpness of the punishment. For howsoever great have been the sufferings of the Martyrs, do they equal the sufferings of all robbers, of all sacrilegious, of all crime-stained men? But what, doth the world hate even these? It doth hate them evidently. For they go beyond the world's mediocrity in excess of naughtiness, and in a manner from the very society of worldly men they are estranged, molesting even earthly peace, and they suffer many evil things, but not gratis. Lastly, hear the voice of that robber hanging with the Lord on the Cross, when on the other side one of the two robbers was reviling the Lord Who was being crucified, and was saying, If Son of God Thou art, deliver Thyself: the other put him to silence, and said, Dost thou not fear God, even for that thou art set in the same condemnation? And we indeed rightly for our deeds. Behold, not gratis: but by confession he shed out of himself corruption, and was made meet for the food of the Lord. He drave out his iniquity, he accused it, and he was freed from it. Behold there two robbers, there also the Lord: they both are crucified, and He is crucified: and them the world hated, but not gratis: and Him it hated, but gratis. The things which I robbed not then I was paying. This is gratis. I robbed not, and I was paying: I sinned not, and I was being punished. He alone was Himself of such sort, He truly robbed nothing. Not only He robbed nothing, but even that which He had not of robbery, of this He emptied Himself, in order that to us He might come. For, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: and yet He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. He robbed not at all. But who

robbed? Adam. Who robbed at first? He that led astray Adam. How did the Devil rob? I will set my seat at the North, and I will be like the Most High. He assumed to himself that which he had not received: behold robbery. The devil usurped to himself what he had not received; he lost what he had received; and out of the very cup of his pride he gave him to drink whom he was wishing to deceive. Taste ye, he saith, and ye shall be as Gods. They willed to rob divinity, and they lost felicity. He therefore robbed, and accordingly paid. But I, he saith, the things which I robbed not was then paying. The Lord Himself, drawing near to His Passion, in the Gospel thus speaketh: Behold there cometh the Prince of this world, that is the devil, and in Me shall find nothing; that is, wherefore he should kill Me he shall find not: but that all may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go. And He went to the Passion to pay that which He robbed not. For what is, in Me he shall find nothing? No guilt. Hath the devil lost any thing from his house? Let him examine the robbers, nothing with Me he shall find. Nevertheless, He saith that He had robbed nothing, to sin adverting, that He had taken nothing which was not His; for this belongeth to robbery, this to iniquity: for from the devil himself He had wrested those whom the same had robbed. No man, He saith, entereth into the house of a strong man, and spoileth his vessels, except first he shall have bound the strong man. He hath bound the strong man, and hath spoiled his vessels: truly He hath not robbed; but He answereth thee, those vessels from thy great house had been lost; I have not stolen a thing, but have recovered a thing stolen.

10. Ver. 5. O God, Thou hast known mine improvidence. Again out of the mouth of the Body. For what improvidence is there in Christ? Is He not Himself the Virtue of God, and the Wisdom of God? Doth He call this His improvidence, whereof the Apostle speaketh, the foolishness of God is wiser than men? Mine improvidence, that very thing which in Me they derided that seem to themselves to be wise, Thou hast known why it was done: Thou hast known mine improvidence. For what was so much like improvidence, as, when He had it in His power with one word to lay low the persecutors, to suffer Himself to be held, scourged, spit upon, buffeted, with thorns to be crowned, to the tree to be nailed? It is like improvidence, it seemeth a foolish thing; but this foolish thing excelleth all wise men. Foolish indeed it is: but even when grain falleth into the earth, if no one

knoweth the custom of husbandmen, it seemeth foolish: with great labour it is reaped, is carried to the barn, is threshed, is winnowed; after so great perils of weather and of storms, and after the labours of rustics and the carefulness of masters, the corn is put in the store clean; there cometh winter, that which hath been cleansed is brought forth and cast abroad: improvidence it appeareth; but hope maketh it not to be improvidence. He then spared not Himself: because even the Father spared Him not, but delivered Him up for us all. And of the Same, Who loved me, saith the Apostle, and delivered up Himself for me: for except a grain shall have fallen into the land so that it die, fruit, He saith, it will not yield. This is the improvidence; but Thou hast known it. But “they if they had known the Lord of glory, they had never crucified.” O God, Thou hast known mine improvidence, and my transgressions from Thee are not concealed. It is plain, clear, open, that this must be perceived to be out of the mouth of the Body. Transgressions none had Christ: He was the bearer of transgressions, but not the committer. And my transgressions from Thee are not concealed: that is, I have confessed to Thee all my transgressions, and before my mouth Thou hast seen them in my thought, hast seen the wounds which Thou wast to heal. But where? Even in the Body, in the members: in those believers out of whom there was now cleaving to Him that member, who was confessing his sins. And my transgressions, he saith, from Thee are not concealed.

11. Ver. 6. Let them not blush in Me, that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Again, the voice of the Head, Let them not blush in Me: let it not be said to them, Where is He on Whom ye were relying? Let it not be said to them, Where is He that was saying to you, Believe ye in God, and in Me believe? Let them not blush in Me, that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Let them not be confounded concerning Me, that seek Thee, O God of Israel. This also may be understood of the Body, but only if thou consider the Body of Him not one man: for in truth one man is not the Body of Him, but a small member, but the Body is made up of members. Therefore the full Body of Him is the whole Church. With reason then saith the Church, Let them not blush in Me, that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Let me not so be afflicted by insurgent persecutors, let me not so be worn down by envious enemies, by snarling heretics, that from Me have

gone forth, because they were not of Me: for if they had been of Me, with Me perchance they had remained. Let me not be so weighed down by their scandals, as that they shall blush in Me that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Let them not be confounded because of Me, that seek Thee, O God of Israel.

12. Ver. 7. For because of Thee I have sustained upbraiding, shamelessness hath covered my face. No great thing is that which is spoken of in I have sustained: but that which is spoken of in for Thy sake I have sustained, is. For if thou sustainest because thou hast sinned; for thine own sake thou sustainest, not for the sake of God. For to you what glory is there, saith Peter if sinning ye are punished, and ye bear it? But if thou sustainest because thou hast kept the commandment of God, truly for the sake of God thou sustainest; and thy reward remaineth for everlasting, because for the sake of God thou hast sustained revilings. For to this end He first sustained, in order that we might learn to sustain. And if He, Who had not that which was laid to His charge; how much more we, who even if we have not the sin which the enemy layeth to our charge, yet have another sin which is deservedly to be chastised in us? Some one or other calleth thee thief, and thou art no thief: thou hearest the reproach; thou art not however no thief in such sort as that thou art not any thing which to God is displeasing. Again, if He who had robbed nothing at all, who most truly had said, Behold there cometh the prince of this world, and in Me he shall find nothing, was called sinner, was called unrighteous, was called Beelzebub, was called mad; dost thou, O servant, disdain to hear according to thy deserts, that which the Lord heard for no deserts of His? He came to give thee an example. As if He had done this for nought, so thou dost not profit. For why did He hear it, but in order that thou, when thou shouldest hear, shouldest not faint? Behold, thou hearest and faintest: in vain then He hath heard: for not for His own sake, but for thy sake He hath heard. For for Thy sake I have sustained upbraiding, shamelessness hath covered my face. Shamelessness is what? Not to be confused. Lastly, it seemeth to be as it were a fault, when we say, the man is shameless. Great is the shamelessness of the man, that he doth not blush. Therefore shamelessness is a kind of folly. A Christian ought to have this shamelessness, when he cometh among men to whom Christ is an offence. If he shall have blushed because of Christ, he will be blotted out

from the book of the living. Thou must needs therefore have shamelessness when Thou art reviled because of Christ; when they say, Worshipper of the Crucified, adorer of Him that died ill, venerator of Him that was slain! here if thou shalt blush thou art a dead man. For see the sentence of Him that deceiveth no one. He that shall have been ashamed of Me before men, I also will be ashamed of him before the Angels of God. Watch therefore thyself whether there be in thee shamelessness; be thou boldfaced, when thou hearest a reproach concerning Christ; yea be boldfaced. Why fearest thou for thy forehead which thou hast armed with the sign of the Cross? For this is, For Thy sake I have sustained upbraiding, shamelessness hath covered my face. For Thy sake I have sustained upbraiding: and because I have not blushed because of Thee, when I was being reviled for Thy sake, shamelessness hath covered my face.

13. Ver. 8. An alien I have become to My brethren, and a stranger to the sons of My mother. To the sons of the Synagogue He became a stranger. For in His own country it was said, Do we not know Him to be the Son of Mary and of Joseph? And whence in another passage, But this Man we know not whence He is? Therefore, I have become a stranger to the sons of My mother. They knew not whence I am, of whom was My flesh: they knew Me not to have been born out of the thigh of Abraham; wherein My flesh was concealed, when under that same thigh the servant putting his hand swore by the God of Heaven. A stranger I have become to the sons of My mother. Why so? Why did they not acknowledge? Why did they call Him an alien? Why did they dare to say, we know not whence He is? Because the zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up: that is, because I have persecuted in them their own iniquities, because I have not patiently borne those whom I have rebuked, because I have sought Thy glory in Thy House, because I have scourged them that in the Temple dealt unseemly: in which place also there is quoted, the zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up. Hence an alien, hence a stranger; hence, we know not whence He is. They would have acknowledged whence I am, if they had acknowledged that which Thou hast commanded. For if I had found them keeping Thy commandments, the zeal of Thine House would not have eaten Me up. And the reproaches of men reproaching Thee have fallen upon Me. Of this testimony Paul the Apostle hath also made use, (there hath been read but

now the very lesson, and saith, Whatsoever things aforetime have been written, have been written that we might be instructed, that through comfort of the Scriptures we may have hope. He hath said then that of Christ was that voice, the reproaches of men reproaching Thee have fallen upon Me. Why Thee? Is the Father reproached, and not Christ Himself? Why have the reproaches of men reproaching Thee fallen upon Me? Because, he that hath known Me, hath known the Father also: because no one hath reviled Christ without reviling God: because no one honoureth the Father, except he that honoureth the Son also. The revilings of men reviling Thee have fallen upon Me, because they found Me.

14. Ver. 10. And I have covered in fasting My Soul, and it became to Me for a reviling. The fasting of Christ already in another Psalm we have spiritually set forth to Your Love. His fasting was, when there fell away all they that had believed in Him; because also it was His hunger, that men should believe in Him: because also it was His thirst, when He said to the woman, I thirst, give Me to drink: yea for her faith He was thirsting. And from the Cross when He was saying, I thirst, He was seeking the faith of them for whom He had said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. But what did those men give to drink to Him thirsty? Vinegar. Vinegar is also called 'old.' With reason of the old man they gave to drink, because they willed not to be new. Why willed they not to become new? Because to the title of this Psalm whereon is written, For them that shall be changed, they belonged not. Therefore, I have covered in fasting My soul. Lastly, He put from Him even the gall which they offered: He chose rather to fast than to accept bitterness. For they enter not into His Body that are embittered, whereof in another place a Psalm saith, They that are embittered shall not be exalted in themselves. Therefore, I have covered in fasting My soul: and it became to Me for a reviling. This very thing became to Me for a reviling, that I consented not to them, that is, from them I fasted. For he that consenteth not to men seducing to evil, fasteth from them; and through this fasting earneth reviling, so that he is upbraided because he consenteth not to the evil thing.

15. Ver. 11. And I have set sackcloth my garment. Already before we have said something of the sackcloth, from whence there is this, But I, when they

were troubling Me, was covering myself with sackcloth, and was humbling My Soul in fasting. I have set sackcloth for My garment: that is, have set against them My flesh, on which to spend their rage, I have concealed My divinity. Sackcloth, because mortal the flesh was: in order that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh. And I have set sackcloth my garment: and I have been made to them for a parable, that is, for a derision. It is called a parable, whenever a comparison is made concerning some one, when he is evil spoken of. 'So may this man perish,' for example, 'as that man did,' is a parable: that is, a comparison and likeness in cursing. I have been made to them, then, for a parable.

16. Ver. 12. Against Me were reviling they that were sitting in the gate. In the gate is nothing else but in public. And against Me they were chanting, they that were drinking wine. Do ye think, brethren, that this hath befallen Christ alone? Daily to Him in His members it happeneth: whenever perchance it is necessary for the servant of God to forbid excess of wine and luxuries in any village or town, where there hath not been heard the Word of God, it is not enough that they sing, nay more even against him they begin to sing, by whom they are forbidden to sing. Compare ye now His fasting and their wine. And against Me were chanting they that were drinking wine: the wine of error, the wine of ungodliness, the wine of pride.

17. Ver. 13. But I with My prayer with Thee, O Lord. But I was with Thee. But how? With Thee by praying. For when thou art evil spoken of, and knowest not what thou mayest do; when at thee are hurled reproaches, and thou findest not any way of rebuking him by whom they are hurled; nothing remaineth for thee but to pray. But remember even for that very man to pray. But I with my prayer with Thee, O Lord. It is the time of Thy good pleasure, O God. For behold the grain is being buried, there shall spring up fruit. It is the time of Thy good pleasure, O God. Of this time even the Prophets have spoken, whereof the Apostle maketh mention; "Behold now the time acceptable, behold now the day of salvation." It is the time of Thy good pleasure, O God. In the multitude of Thy mercy. This is the time of good pleasure, in the multitude of Thy mercy. For if there were not a multitude of Thy mercy, what should we do for the multitude of our iniquity? In the multitude of Thy mercy; Hearken to me in the truth of Thy

Salvation. Because He hath said, of Thy mercy, he hath added truth also: for mercy and truth are all the ways of the Lord. Why mercy? In forgiving sins. Why truth? In fulfilling the promises. Harken to Me in the truth of Thy Salvation.

18. Ver. 14. Save Thou Me from the mire, that I may not stick. From that whereof above he had spoken, Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. Furthermore, since ye have duly received the exposition of that expression, in this place there is nothing further for you to hear particularly. From hence he saith that he must be delivered, wherein before he said that he was fixed: Save Thou Me from the mire, that I may not stick. And he explaineth this himself; Let Me be rescued from them that hate Me. They were themselves therefore the clay wherein he had stuck. But the following perchance suggesteth itself. A little before he had said, Fixed I am; now he saith, Save Thou Me from the mire, that I may not stick: whereas after the meaning of what was said before he ought to have said, Save Thou Me from the mire where I had stuck, by rescuing Me, not by causing that I stick not. Therefore He had stuck in flesh, but had not stuck in spirit. He saith this, because of the infirmity of His members. Whenever perchance thou art seized by one that urgeth thee to iniquity, thy body indeed is taken, in regard to the body thou art fixed in the clay of the deep: but so long as thou consentest not, thou hast not stuck; but if thou consentest, thou hast stuck. Let then thy prayer be in that place, in order that as thy body is now held, so thy soul may not be held, so thou mayest be free in bonds. Let Me be rescued from them that hate Me: and from the deep of waters.

19. Ver. 15. Let not the tempest of waters drown Me. But already he had been drowned. I have come into the depth of the sea, thou hast said, and the tempest hath drowned Me, thou hast said. It hath drowned after the flesh, let it not drown after the Spirit. They to whom was said, If they shall have persecuted you in one city, flee ye into another; had this said to them, that neither in flesh they should stick, nor in spirit. For we must not desire to stick even in flesh; but as far as we are able we ought to avoid it. But if we shall have stuck, and shall have fallen into the hands of sinners: then in body we have stuck, we are fixed in the clay of the deep, it remaineth to

entreat for the soul that we stick not, that is, that we consent not, that the tempest of water drown us not, so that we go into the deep of the clay. Neither let the deep swallow Me, nor the pit close her mouth upon Me. What is this, brethren? What hath he prayed against? Great is the pit of the depth of human iniquity: every one, if he shall have fallen into it, will fall into the deep. But yet if a man being there placed confesseth his sins to his God, the pit will not shut her mouth upon him: as is written in another Psalm, From the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord; Lord, hearken unto my voice. But if there is done in him that which another passage of Scripture saith, When a sinner shall have come into the depth of evil things, he will despise, upon him the pit hath shut her mouth. Why hath she shut her mouth? Because she hath shut his mouth. He hath lost confession, really dead he is, and there is fulfilled in him that which elsewhere is spoken of, From a dead man, as from one that is not, there perisheth confession. This state is very greatly to be dreaded, brethren. If thou shalt have seen a man do iniquity, he is sunk in a pit: but when thou shalt have told him his own iniquity, and he shall have said, Truly I have sinned, I confess it, upon him the pit hath not shut her mouth: but when thou shalt have heard him say, But what harm have I done? he hath become the advocate of his sin: upon him the pit hath shut her mouth, he hath no way whereby he may be rescued. Confession lost, there will be no place for mercy. Thou hast become thy sin's advocate, how shall God be the deliverer from it? Therefore in order that He may be a deliverer, do thou be an accuser.

sermon ii

On the latter part of Psalm 69.

The latter part of the Psalm whereof yesterday we spake to your Love, had remained to be explained by us to-day. And I see that there is time to pay the debt, if however the length thereof shall not have left us debtors even to-day. Accordingly this I say beforehand, and beg you not to expect a long discourse for those things which are evident. For so we can tarry for the need at those things which are more obscure, and perchance fulfil what we owe: so as that on other days we may owe other things, and pay other things. Let us see then what words follow. After he said, (ver. 16.) Neither let the pit close upon me her mouth: which yesterday we have

recommended to your Love, in order that with all earnestness of mind and fidelity of godliness we should take heed that this curse come not upon us. For then there doth close her mouth upon a man the pit, that is, depth of iniquity, when not only he lieth sunk in sins, but also loseth the opening of confession. But when a man saith, I am a sinner: even the depth of the pit is being illumined with some light. There followeth then amid His sufferings crying out our Lord Jesus Christ, Head and Body, as we have set forth: so that in some places ye acknowledge the words of the Head; but the things which have been so spoken as that they cannot be appropriate to the Head, to the Body ye refer. For thus Christ doth speak, as it were One: because also He is truly One, whereof hath been said, There shall be two in one flesh. For if in one flesh, why dost thou wonder that He is also in one voice? There followeth then,

Ver. 17. Harken unto me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy. He hath given this as a reason why He ought to be hearkened unto, because sweet is the mercy of God. Was not this rather a consequence, so that He should have said, Harken unto me, O Lord, in order that sweet to me may be Thy mercy? Why then, Harken unto me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy? The sweetness of the mercy of the Lord because of His trouble He set forth in a manner with other words, when He said, Harken to me, O Lord, for I am being troubled. For in truth, he that saith, Harken to me, O Lord, for I am being troubled, giveth the reason why he prayeth to be hearkened unto: but to a man set in trouble the mercy of God must needs be sweet. Concerning this sweetness of the mercy of God see ye what in another place the Scripture saith: Like rain in drought, so beautiful is the mercy of God in trouble. That which there he saith to be beautiful, the same he saith here to be sweet. Not even bread would be sweet, unless hunger had preceded. Therefore even when the Lord permitteth or causeth us to be in any trouble, even then He is merciful: for He doth not withdraw nourishment, but stirreth up longing. Accordingly what saith he now, Harken to me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy? Now do not Thou defer hearkening, in so great trouble I am, that sweet to me is Thy mercy. For to this end Thou didst defer to succour, in order that to me that wherewith Thou didst succour might be sweet: but now no longer is there cause why Thou must defer; my trouble hath arrived at the appointed measure of distress, let Thy mercy

come to do the work of goodness. Hearken unto me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy. After the multitude of Thy pities have regard unto me: not after the multitude of my sins.

2. Ver. 17. Turn not away Thy face from Thy child. And this is a commending of humility; from Thy child, that is, from Thy little one: because now I have been rid of pride through the discipline of tribulation, turn not away Thy face from Thy child. This is that beautiful mercy of God, whereof he spake above. For in the following verse he explaineth that whereof he spake: For I am troubled, speedily hearken Thou unto me. What is speedily? Now there is no cause why Thou must defer it: I am troubled, my affliction hath gone before; let Thy mercy follow.

3. Ver. 18. Give heed to my soul, and redeem her, doth need no exposition: let us see therefore what followeth. Because of mine enemies deliver me. This petition is evidently wonderful, neither briefly to be touched upon, nor hastily to be skipped over; truly wonderful: because of mine enemies deliver me. What is, because of mine enemies deliver me? That they may be confounded, that they may be tortured by my deliverance. What then, if there were not any persons to be tortured by my deliverance, ought I not to be succoured? And is deliverance then only welcome to thee, when it shall have been another's condemnation? See, there are not any enemies, to be confounded or tortured because of thy deliverance: wilt thou so continue, wilt thou not be delivered? Or is it therefore that it may so operate upon thy enemies, that they may themselves be able to be converted by thy deliverance? But even this is marvellous, if it gave any reason for the petition. For is the servant of God delivered by the Lord his God, in order that others may profit thereby? What, if there were wanting men who should profit, must that servant of God not be delivered? Whithersoever then I turn me, whether to the punishment or to the deliverance of enemies, I see no reason for this petition, Because of mine enemies deliver me: unless we understand it of something else, which when I shall have spoken by the help of the Lord, He shall judge in you, that dwelleth in you. There is a kind of secret deliverance of holy men: this for their own sakes is made. There is one public and evident: this is made because of their enemies, either for their punishment, or for their deliverance. For truly God delivered

not the brothers in the book of Maccabees from the fires of the persecutor, against whom Antiochus being wroth, made use of even their mother, by whose persuasions he hoped they would be turned to the love of life, and in loving to live unto men, to God would die. But that mother, being no longer like Eve, but like our mother the Church, saw with joy them dying whom with pain she had borne so she might know them alive; and to this exhorted them, to choose rather to die for the sake of the paternal laws of the Lord their God, than to live in defiance of them. What are we here to suppose, brethren, but that they were delivered? But secret was their deliverance: in a word, Antiochus himself, by whom they were slain, thought he had done something which his cruelty dictated, or rather invited. But again the Three Children openly were delivered from the furnace of fire; because their body also was rescued, their safety was public. The former were in secret crowned, the latter openly delivered: all however saved. But what fruit was there of the deliverance of the three Children? Why was their crown delayed? Nabuchodonosor himself was converted to their God, and preached Him, for that He rescued His servants, Whom he had despised, when he had cast them into the furnace. There is then a secret deliverance, there is an open deliverance. Secret deliverance doth belong to the soul, open deliverance to the body as well. For in secret the soul is delivered, openly the body. Again, if so it be, in this Psalm the voice of the Lord let us acknowledge: to the secret deliverance doth belong that whereof he spake above, Give heed to my soul, and redeem her. There remaineth the body's deliverance: for on His arising and ascending into the Heavens, and sending the Holy Ghost from above, there were converted to His faith they that at His death did rage, and out of enemies they were made friends through His grace, not through their righteousness. Therefore he hath continued, because of mine enemies deliver me. Give heed to my soul, but this in secret: but because of mine enemies deliver even my body. For mine enemies it will profit nothing if soul alone Thou shalt have delivered; that they have done something, that they have accomplished something, they will believe. What profit is there in my blood, while I go down into corruption? Therefore give heed to my soul, and redeem her, which Thou alone knowest: secondly also, because of mine enemies deliver me, that my flesh may not see corruption.

4. Ver. 19. Thou knowest my reproach, and my confusion, and my shame. What is reproach? What is confusion? What shame? Reproach is that which the enemy casteth in the teeth. Confusion is that which gnaweth the conscience. Shame is that which causeth even a noble brow to blush, because of the upbraiding with a pretended crime. There is no crime; or even if there is a crime, it doth not belong to him, against whom it is alleged: but yet the infirmity of the human mind oftentimes is made ashamed even when a pretended crime is alleged; not because it is alleged, but because it is believed. All these things are in the Body of the Lord. For confusion in Him could not be, in Whom guilt was not found. There was alleged as a crime against Christians, the very fact that they were Christians. That indeed was glory: the brave gladly received it, and so received it as that they blushed not at all for the Lord's name. For fearlessness had covered the face of them, having the effrontery of Paul, saying, for I blush not because of the Gospel: for the virtue of God it is for salvation to every one believing. O Paul, art not thou a venerator of the Crucified? Little it is, he saith, for me not to blush for it: nay, therein alone I glory, wherefore the enemy thinketh me to blush. But from me far be it to glory, save in the Cross of Jesus Christ, through Whom to me the world is crucified, and I to the world. At such a brow as this then reproach alone could be hurled. For neither could there be confusion in a conscience already made whole, nor shame in a brow so free. But when it was being alleged against certain that they had slain Christ, deservedly they were pricked through with evil conscience, and to their health confounded and converted, so that they could say, Thou hast known my confusion. Thou therefore, O Lord, hast known not only my reproach but also my confusion, in certain shame also: who, though in me they believe, publicly blush to confess me before ungodly men, human tongue having more influence with them than promise divine. Behold ye therefore them: even such are commended to God, not that so He may leave them, but that by aiding them He may make them perfect. For a certain man believing and wavering hath said, "I believe, O Lord, help Thou mine unbelief." (Ver. 20.) In Thy sight are all they that trouble Me. Why I have reproach, Thou knowest; why confusion, Thou knowest; why shame, Thou knowest: therefore deliver Thou me because of mine enemies, because Thou knowest these things of me, they know not; and thus, because they are themselves in Thy sight, not

knowing these things, they will not be able to be either confounded or corrected, unless openly Thou shalt have delivered me because of mine enemies.

5. Reproach my heart hath expected, and misery. What is, hath expected? Hath foreseen these things as going to be, hath foretold them as going to be. For He came not for any other purpose. If He had been unwilling to die, neither would He have willed to be born: for the sake of resurrection He did both. For there were two particular things known to us among mankind, but one thing unknown. For we knew that men were born and died: that they rose again and lived for everlasting we knew not. That He might shew to us that which we knew not, He took upon Him the two things which we knew. To this end therefore He came. Reproach my heart hath expected and misery. But the misery of whom? For He expected misery, but rather of the crucifiers, rather of the persecutors, that in them should be misery, in Him mercy. For pitying the misery of them even while hanging on the Cross, He saith, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Reproach my heart hath expected, and misery: and I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not. What then did it profit, that I expected? That is, what did it profit that I foretold? What did it profit that I said to this end I had come? I came to fulfil that which I said, I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not; and men comforting, and I found not: that is, there was none. For that which in the former verse He said, I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, the same is in the following verse, and men comforting. But that which in the former verse is, and there was not; the same in the following verse is, and I found not. Therefore another sentence is not added, but the former is repeated. Which sentence if we reconsider, a question may arise. For were His disciples no wise made sorrowful when He was led to the Passion, when on the tree hanged, when dead? So much were they made sorrowful, that Mary Magdalene, who first saw Him, rejoicing told them as they were mourning what she had seen. The Gospel speaketh of these things: it is not our presumption, not our suspicion: it is evident that the disciples grieved, it is evident that they mourned. Strange women were weeping, when to the Passion He was being led, unto whom turning He saith, Weep ye, but for yourselves, do not for Me. How then did He wait for

one that together might be made sorrowful, and there was not? We observe, and we find men sorrowful, and mourning, and wailing: whence to us wonderful seemeth this sentence, I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not: and men comforting, and I found not. Let us diligently attend, and we shall see that He waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not. For they were being made sorrowful carnally because of life mortal, which had to be changed by death, and to be restored by resurrection: hence was the sorrowfulness. For it should have been on account of those that being blind slew the Physician, who like persons delirious, fevered to their destruction, inflicted injury upon Him by Whom soundness had been brought to them. He was willing to heal, they to rage: hence sorrowfulness to the Physician. Inquire whether He found a companion in this sorrowfulness. For He saith not, I waited for one that should be made sorrowful: but, that together should be made sorrowful, that is, by the same thing as I was should be made sorrowful, and I found not. Peter certainly loved very much, and without hesitation threw himself to walk on the waves, and at the voice of the Lord he was delivered: and though following Him when led to the Passion, with the boldness of love, yet being troubled, thrice he denied Him. Whence, except because an evil thing it seemed to him to die? For he was shunning that which he thought an evil thing. This then even in the Lord he was lamenting, which he was himself shunning. On this account even before he had said, Far be it from Thee, O Lord, merciful be Thou to Thyself: there shall not come to pass this thing: at which time he merited to hear, Satan; after that he had heard, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona. Therefore in that sorrowfulness which the Lord felt because of those for whom He prayed, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: no companion He found. And I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not. There was not at all. And men comforting, and I found not. Who are men comforting? Men profiting. For they comfort us, they are the comfort of all preachers of the Truth.

6. Ver. 22. And they gave for My food gall, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. This was done indeed to the letter. And the Gospel declareth this to us. But we must understand, brethren, that the very fact that I found not comforters, that the very fact that I found not one that

together should be made sorrowful, this was My gall, this to Me was bitter, this was vinegar: bitter because of grief, vinegar because of their old man. For we read, that to Him indeed gall was offered, as the Gospel speaketh; but for drink, not for food. Nevertheless, we must so take and consider that when fulfilled, which here had been before predicted, They gave for My food gall: and in that very action, not only in this saying, we ought to seek for a mystery, at secret things to knock, to enter the rent vail of the Temple, to see there a Sacrament, both in what there hath been said and in what there hath been done. They gave, He saith, for My food gall: not the thing itself which they gave was food, for it was drink: but for food they gave it. Because already the Lord had taken food, and into it there had been thrown gall. But He had taken Himself pleasant food, when He ate the Passover with His disciples: therein He shewed the Sacrament of His Body. Unto this food so pleasant, so sweet, of the Unity of Christ, of which the Apostle maketh mention, saying, For one bread, One Body, being many we are; unto this pleasant food who is there that addeth gall, except the gainsayers of the Gospel, like those persecutors of Christ? For less the Jews sinned in crucifying Him walking on earth, than they that despise Him sitting in Heaven. That which then the Jews did, in giving above the food which He had already taken that bitter draught to drink, the same they do that by evil living bring scandal upon the Church: the same do embittered heretics, But let them not be exalted in their own selves. They give gall after so delectable meat. But what doth the Lord? He admitteth them not to His Body. In this mystery, when they presented gall, the Lord Himself tasted, and would not drink. If we did not suffer them, neither at all should we taste: but because it is necessary to suffer them, we must needs taste. But because in the members of Christ such sort cannot be, they can be tasted, received into the Body they cannot be. And they gave for My food gall, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. I was thirsting, and vinegar I received: that is, for the faith of them I longed, and I found oldness.

7. Ver. 23. Let the table of them be made in their own presence for a trap. Like the trap which for Me they set, in giving Me such a draught, let such a trap be for them. Why then, in their own presence? Let the table of them be made for a trap, would have been sufficient. They are such as know their iniquity, and in it most obstinately do persevere: in their own presence there

is made a trap for them. These are they that, being too destructive, go down into Hell alive. Lastly, of persecutors what hath been said? Except that the Lord were in us, perchance alive they had swallowed us up. What is alive? Consenting to them, and knowing that we ought not to consent to them. Therefore in their own presence there is made a trap, and they are not amended. Even though in their own presence there is a trap, let them not fall into it. Behold they know the trap, and thrust out foot, and bow their necks to be caught. How much better were it to turn away from the trap, to acknowledge sin, to condemn error, to be rid of bitterness, to pass over into the Body of Christ, to seek the Lord's glory! But so much prevaieth presumption of mind, that even in their own presence the trap is, and they fall into it. Let the eyes of them be darkened, that they see not, followeth here: that whereas without benefit they have seen, it may chance to them even not to see. Let the table of them, therefore, be made in their own presence for a trap. In their own presence be made for a trap, is not from one wishing, but from one prophesying: not in order that it may come to pass, but because it will come to pass. This we have often remarked, and ye ought to remember it: lest that which the prescient mind saith in the Spirit of God, it should seem with ill will to imprecate. May it come to pass therefore; nor can it otherwise come to pass than that these things to such men must happen. And since we see that through the Spirit of God such things are spoken of as to happen to evil men; to this end let us perceive these things in them, in order that we may ourselves avoid such things. For this is good for us to perceive, and by our enemies to profit. Let it then be done to them, (ver. 23.) both for a requital and for a stumbling-block. And is this by any means unjust? It is just. Why? For it is for a requital. For not any thing would happen to them, which was not owed. For a requital it is done, and for a stumbling-block: for they are themselves a stumbling-block to themselves.

8. Let the eyes of them be darkened, that they see not, and the back of them alway bow Thou down. This is a consequence. For they, whose eyes have been darkened that they see not, it followeth, must have their back bowed down. How so? Because when they have ceased to take knowledge of things above, they must needs think of things below. He that well heareth, "lift up the heart," a bowed back hath not. For with stature erect he looketh

for the hope laid up for him in Heaven; most especially if he send before him his treasure, whither his heart followeth. But, on the other hand, they they perceive not the hope of future life; already being blinded, they think of things below: and this is to have a bowed back: from which disorder the Lord delivered that woman. For Satan had bound her eighteen years, and her that was bowed down He raised up: and because on the Sabbath He did it, the Jews were scandalized; suitably were they scandalized at her being raised up, themselves being bowed. And the back of them alway bow Thou down.

9. Ver. 25. Pour forth upon them Thine anger, and let the indignation of Thine anger overtake them, are plain words: but nevertheless, in overtake them we perceive them as it were fleeing. But whither are they to flee? Into Heaven? Thou art there. Into Hell? Thou art present. Their wings they will not take to fly straight: Let the indignation of Thine anger overtake them, let it not permit them to escape.

10. Ver. 26. Let the habitation of them become forsaken. This is now evident. For in the same manner as He hath mentioned not only a secret deliverance of His, saying, Give heed to My soul, and redeem her; but also one open after the body, adding, because of mine enemies deliver me: so also to these men He foretellet how there are to be certain secret misfortunes, whereof a little before He was speaking. For is any man equal to perceive the unhappiness of a man whose heart is already blinded? Let there be taken from him the eyes of the body, all men call him miserable: let him lose the eyes of the mind, while yet he aboundeth with all plenteousness of possessions, they call him happy; but only they that in like manner have lost the eyes of the mind. Then what now is done openly, that it may appear to all how vengeance hath been taken upon them? For the blindness of the Jews was secret vengeance: but the open was what? Let their habitation become forsaken, and in their tabernacles let there be not any one to inhabit. There hath come to pass this thing in the very city Jerusalem, wherein they thought themselves mighty in crying against the Son of God, Crucify, Crucify; and in prevailing because they were able to kill Him that raised dead men. How mighty to themselves, how great, they seemed! There followed afterwards the vengeance of the Lord, stormed was

the city, utterly conquered the Jews, slain were I know not how many thousands of men. No one of the Jews is permitted to come thither now: where they were able to cry against the Lord, there by the Lord they are not permitted to dwell. They have lost the place of their fury: and O that even now they would know the place of their rest! What profit to them was Caiaphas in saying, If we shall have let go this man thus, there will come the Romans, and take away from us both place and kingdom? Behold, both they did not let Him go alive, and He liveth: and there have come the Romans, and have taken from them both place and kingdom. But now we heard, when the Gospel was being read, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered together thy sons, as a hen her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not? Behold, there is left to you your house forsaken. The same here also is said: Let the habitation of them become forsaken, and in the tabernacles of them let there not be any one to inhabit. "Let there be not any one to inhabit," but out of the number of those men. For all those places are both full of men, and are void of Jews.

11. Why so? (ver. 27.) For Him Whom Thou hast smitten they have themselves persecuted, and upon the pain of my wounds they have added. How then have they sinned if they have persecuted one by God smitten? What sin is ascribed to their mind? Malice. For the thing was done in Christ which was to be. To suffer indeed He had come, and He punished him through whom He suffered. For Judas the traitor was punished, and Christ was crucified: but us He redeemed by His blood, and He punished him in the matter of his price. For he threw down the price of silver, for which by him the Lord had been sold; and he knew not the price, wherewith he had himself by the Lord been redeemed. This thing was done in the case of Judas. But when we see that there is a sort of measure of requital in all men, and that not any one can be suffered to rage more than he hath received power to do: how have they added, or what is that smiting of the Lord? Without doubt He is speaking in the person of him from whom He had received a body, from whom He had taken upon Him flesh, that is in the person of mankind, of Adam himself who was smitten with the first death because of his sin. Mortal therefore here are men born, as born with their punishment: to this punishment they add, whosoever do persecute men. For now here man would not have had to die, unless God had smitten him. Why

then dost thou, O man, rage more than this? Is it little for a man that sometime he is to die? Each one of us therefore beareth his punishment: to this punishment they would add that persecute us. This punishment is the smiting of the Lord. For the Lord smote man with the sentence; What day ye shall have touched it, He saith, with death ye shall die. Out of this death He had taken upon Him flesh, and our old man hath been crucified together with Him. By the voice of that man He hath said these words, Him whom Thou hast smitten they have themselves persecuted, and upon the pain of My wounds they have added. Upon what pain of wounds? Upon the pain of sins they have themselves added. For sins He hath called His wounds. But do not look to the Head, consider the Body; according to the voice whereof hath been said by the Same in that Psalm, wherein He shewed there was His voice, because in the first verse thereof He cried from the Cross, God, My God, look upon Me, why hast Thou forsaken Me? There in continuation He saith, Afar from My safety are the words of Mine offences. These are the very wounds inflicted by robbers in the road upon him whom he mounted upon his beast: whom a priest and a Levite passing by had found and contemned, by whom He could not have been made whole; but a Samaritan passing by pitied him, drew near, and upon his own beast he mounted him. Samaritan in Latin is interpreted keeper: but who is the keeper, save our Lord Jesus Christ? Who, since He hath risen from the dead, now no longer to die, 'neither sleepeth nor shall slumber, that keepeth Israel.' And upon the pain of My wounds they have added.

12. Ver. 27. Lay Thou iniquity upon their iniquity. What is this? Who would not be afraid? To God is said, Lay Thou iniquity upon their iniquity. Whence shall God lay iniquity? For hath He iniquity to lay? For we know that to be true which hath been spoken through Paul the Apostle, What then shall we say? Is there anywise iniquity with God? Far be it. Whence then, Lay Thou iniquity upon iniquity? How must we understand this? May the Lord be with us, that we may speak, and because of your weariness may be able to speak briefly. Their iniquity was that they killed a just Man: there was added another, that they crucified the Son of God. Their raging was as though against a man: but if they had known, the Lord of Glory they had never crucified. They with their own iniquity willed to kill as it were a man: there was laid iniquity upon their own iniquity, so that the Son of God they

should crucify. Who laid this iniquity upon them? He that said, Perchance they will reverence My Son, Him I will send. For they were wont to kill servants sent to them, to demand rent and profit. He sent the Son Himself, in order that Him also they might kill. He laid iniquity upon their own iniquity. And these things did God do in wrath, or rather in just requital? For, May it be done to them, He saith, for a requital and for a stumbling-block. They had deserved to be so blinded as not to know the Son of God. And this God did, laying iniquity upon their iniquity; not in wounding, but in not making whole. For in like manner as thou increasest a fever, increasest a disorder, not by adding disorder, but by not relieving: so because they were of such sort as that they merited not to be healed, in their very naughtiness in a manner they advanced; as it is said, But evil men and wicked doers advance for the worse: and iniquity is laid upon their own iniquity. And let them not enter in Thy righteousness. This is a plain thing.

13. Ver. 28. Let them be blotted out from the book of the living. For had they been sometime written therein? Brethren, we must not so take it, as that God writeth any one in the book of life, and blotteth him out. If a man said, What I have written I have written, concerning the title where it had been written, King of the Jews: doth God write any one, and blot him out? He foreknoweth, He hath predestined all before the foundation of the world that are to reign with His Son in life everlasting. These He hath written down, these same the Book of Life doth contain. Lastly, in the Apocalypse, what saith the Spirit of God, when the same Scripture was speaking of the oppressions that should be from Antichrist? There shall give consent to him all they that have not been written in the book of life. So then without doubt they will not consent that have been written. How then are these men blotted out from that book wherein they were never written? This hath been said according to their own hope, because they thought of themselves that they were written. What is, let them be blotted out from the book of life? Even to themselves let it be evident, that they were not there. By this method of speaking hath been said in another Psalm, There shall fall from Thy side a thousand, and tens of thousands from on Thy right hand: that is, many men shall be offended, even out of that number who thought that they would sit with Thee, even out of that number who thought that they would stand at Thy right hand, being severed from the left-hand goats: not that

when any one hath there stood, he shall afterwards fall, or when any one with Him hath sat, he shall be cast away; but that many men were to fall into scandal, who already thought themselves to be there, that is, many that thought that they would sit with Thee, many that hoped that they would stand at the right hand, will themselves fall. So then here also they that hoped as though by the merit of their own righteousness themselves to have been written in the book of God, they to whom is said, Search the Scriptures, wherein ye think yourselves to have life eternal: when their condemnation shall have been brought even to their own knowledge, shall be effaced from the book of the living, they shall know themselves not to be there. For the verse which followeth, explaineth what hath been said: And with just men let them not be written. I have said then, Let them be effaced, according to their hope: but according to Thy justice I say what? Let them not be written.

14. Ver. 29. Poor and sorrowful I am. Why this? Is it that we may acknowledge that through bitterness of soul this poor One doth speak evil? For He hath spoken of many things to happen to them. And as if we were saying to Him, “Why such things?—Nay, not so much!” He answereth, Poor and sorrowful I am. They have brought Me to want, unto this sorrow they have set Me down, therefore I say these words. It is not, however, the indignation of one cursing, but the prediction of one prophesying. For He was intending to recommend to us certain things which hereafter He saith of His poverty and His sorrow, in order that we may learn to be poor and sorrowful. For, Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. And, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. This therefore He doth Himself before now shew to us: and so, poor and sorrowful I am. The whole Body of Him saith this. The Body of Christ in this earth is poor and sorrowful. But let Christians be rich. Truly if Christians they are, they are poor; in comparison with the riches celestial for which they hope, all their gold they count for sand. Poor and sorrowful I am.

15. And the health of Thy countenance, O God, hath taken Me up. Is this poor One anywise forsaken? When dost thou deign to bring near to thy table a poor man in rags? But again, this poor One the health of the

countenance of God hath taken up: in His countenance He hath hidden His need. For of Him hath been said, Thou shalt hide them in the hiding place of Thy countenance. But in that countenance what riches there are would ye know? Riches here give thee this advantage, that thou mayest dine on what thou wilt, whenever thou wilt: but those riches, that thou mayest never hunger. Poor and sorrowful I am: and the health of Thy countenance, O God, hath taken Me up. For what purpose? In order that no longer I may be poor, no longer sorrowful? (Ver. 30.) I will praise the name of the Lord with a song, I will magnify Him in praise. Now it hath been said, this poor One praiseth the name of the Lord with a song, he magnifieth Him in praise. When would He have ventured to sing, unless He had been refreshed from hunger? I will praise the name of the Lord with a song, I will magnify Him with praise. O vast riches! What jewels of God's praise hath he brought out of his inward treasures! I will magnify Him in praise. These are my riches! The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. Then miserable he hath remained? Far be it. See the riches: "As it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done, be the name of the Lord blessed." I will praise the name of the Lord with a song, I will magnify Him in praise.

16. Ver. 31. And it shall please God: that I shall praise Him, shall please: above a new calf, bearing horns and hoofs. More grateful to Him shall be the sacrifice of praise than the sacrifice of a calf. The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way wherein I will shew to him the salvation of God: Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise, and render to the Most High thy vows. Therefore I will praise God, and it shall please Him better than a new calf bearing horns and hoofs. So then His praise going forth from my mouth shall please God more than a great victim led up to His altar. Must any thing be said concerning the horns and hoofs of this calf? He that is well furnished and is rich in the praise of God, ought to have both horns wherewith he may toss the adversary, and hoofs wherewith he may cast up the earth. For ye know that calves do this when growing up and increasing unto such fierceness as bulls have. For it is new, because of the new life. Some heretic then perchance is gainsaying, let him be tossed with the horns: another gainsayeth not, but yet meanly mindeth an earthly object, let him be cast up with the hoofs. Therefore above this calf my praising shall please Thee, such as hereafter will be, after poverty and

sorrow, in the eternal society of Angels, where neither adversary there shall be in battle to be tossed, nor sluggard from earth to be stirred up.

17. Ver. 32. Let the needy see and rejoice. Let them believe, and in hope be glad. Let them be more needy, in order that they may deserve to be filled: lest while they belch out pride's satiety, there be denied them the bread whereon they may healthily live. Seek the Lord, ye needy, hunger ye and thirst; for He is Himself the living bread that came down from Heaven. Seek ye the Lord, and your soul shall live. Ye seek bread, that your flesh may live: the Lord seek ye, that your soul may live.

18. Ver. 33. For the Lord hath hearkened to the poor. He hath hearkened to the poor, and He would not have hearkened to the poor, unless they were poor. Wilt thou be hearkened to? Poor be thou: let sorrow cry out from thee and not fastidiousness. For the Lord hath hearkened to poor men, and His fettered ones He hath not despised. Being offended at His servants, He hath put them in fetters: but them crying from the fetters He hath not despised. What are these fetters? Mortality, the corruptibleness of the flesh are the fetters wherewith we have been bound. And would ye know the weight of these fetters? Of them is said, The body which is corrupted weigheth down the soul. Whenever men in the world will to be rich, for these fetters they are seeking rags. But let the rags of the fetters suffice: seek so much as is necessary for keeping off want, but when thou seekest superfluities, thou longest to load thy fetters. In such a prison then let the fetters abide even alone. Sufficient for the day be the evil thereof. Concerning this evil we cry to God, for the Lord hath hearkened to the poor, and His fettered ones He hath not despised.

19. Ver. 34. Let there praise Him heavens and earth, sea and all things creeping in them. The true riches of this poor man are these, to consider the creation, and to praise the Creator. Let there praise Him heavens and earth, sea and all things creeping therein. And doth this creation alone praise God, when by considering of it God is praised?

20. Hear thou another thing also: (ver. 35.) for God shall save Sion. He restoreth His Church, the faithful Gentiles He doth incorporate with His Only-Begotten; He beguileth not them that believe in Him of the reward of

His promise. For God shall save Sion; and there shall be builded the cities of Juda. These same are the Churches. Let no one say, when shall it come to pass that there be builded the cities of Juda? O that thou wouldest acknowledge the Edifice, and be a living stone, that thou mightest enter into Her. Even now the cities of Juda are being built. For Juda is interpreted confession. By confession of humility there are being builded the cities of Juda: in order that there may remain without the proud, who blush to confess. For God shall save Sion. What Sion? Hear in the following words: (ver. 36.) and the seed of His servants shall possess Her, and they that love His name shall dwell therein.

21. The Psalm is ended, but for a little space let us not leave these two verses: for they admonish us of something, lest by despairing, into that edifice we enter not. The seed, he saith, of His servants shall possess her. Now then, the seed of His servants are who? Perchance thou sayest, the Jews were born of Abraham; but for us that are not born of Abraham, how shall we have that city? But those Jews are not the seed of Abraham, to whom was said, If sons of Abraham ye are, the deeds of Abraham do ye. The seed, then, of His servants, the imitators of the faith of His servants, shall possess her. In a word, the last verse explaineth the former. For in order that thou, being troubled, mightest not suppose this to be spoken concerning Jews, And the seed of His servants shall possess her, while thou sayest, we are the seed of Gentiles, who have worshipped idols, and have served devils: what then for us is to be hoped for in this city? in order that thou mayest rely and hope, immediately he hath added, And they that love His name shall dwell therein. For these are the seed of His servants, they that love His name. For because His servants have loved His name; let whosoever love not His name not call themselves the seed of His servants; and let them that love His name, not deny themselves to be the seed of His servants.

PSALM 70

Exposition

Sermon preached at the Celebration of the Martyrs.

1. Thanks to the Corn of wheat, because He willed to die and to be multiplied: thanks to the only Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who disdained not to undergo our death, in order that He might make us worthy of His life. Behold Him that was single until He went hence; as He said in another Psalm, Single I am until I go hence; for He was a single corn of wheat in such sort as that He had in Himself a great fruitfulness of increase; in how many corns imitating the Passion of Him do we exult, when we celebrate the nativities of the Martyrs! Many therefore members of Him, under one Head our Saviour Himself, being bound together in the bond of love and peace, (as ye judge it fit that ye know, for ye have often heard,) are one man: and of the same, as of one man, the voice is oftentimes heard, in the Psalms, and thus one crieth as though it were all, because all in one are one. Let us hear then how the Martyrs laboured, and were in peril themselves amid mighty tempests of hatred in this world, not so much for the body, which sometime they were to put off, but for the very Faith; lest they, fainting and perchance yielding to the sharp pains of persecutions, or to the love of this life, should lose that which God had promised: who not only by word but also by example had taken away all fear: by word, saying, Fear not them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill; by example, doing that which in word He commanded, so that He would shun neither the hands of them scourging, nor the buffets of them smiting, nor the spittle of them spitting, nor the crown of thorns of them putting it on Him, nor the Cross of them slaying: none of these things He would shun, Who had no need of them, but for the sake of those to whom this was needful, making of Himself medicine for the sick: and unless He

were alway present, Who saith, Behold I am with you even unto the end of the world, surely they had fainted.

2. There is then in this Psalm the voice of men troubled, and so indeed of Martyrs amid sufferings in peril, but relying on their own Head. Let us hear them, and speak with them out of sympathy of heart, though it be not with similarity of suffering. For they are already crowned, we are still in peril: not that such sort of persecutions do vex us as have vexed them, but worse perchance in the midst of all kinds of so great scandals. For our own times do more abound in that woe, which the Lord cried: Woe to the world because of scandals. And, Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of man shall wax cold. For not even that holy Lot at Sodom suffered corporal persecution from any one, or had it been told him that he should not dwell there: the persecution of him were the evil doings of the Sodomites. Now then that Christ sitteth in Heaven, now that He is glorified, now that necks of kings are made subject to His yoke, and their brows placed beneath His sign, now that not any one remaineth to dare openly to trample upon Christians, still, however, we groan amid instruments and singers, still those enemies of the Martyrs, because with words and steel they have no power, with their own wantonness do persecute them. And O that we were sorrowing for Heathens alone: it would be some sort of comfort, to wait for those that not yet have been signed with the Cross of Christ; when they should be signed, and when, by His authority attached, they should cease to be mad. We see besides men wearing on their brow the sign of Him, at the same time on that same brow wearing the shamelessness of wantonness, and on the days and celebrations of the Martyrs not exulting but insulting. And amid these things we groan, and this is our persecution, if there is in us the love which saith, Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I burn not? Not any servant of God, then, is without persecution: and that is a true saying which the Apostle saith, But even all men that will to live godly in Christ, shall suffer persecution. See whence, see how, that devil is two-formed. A lion he is in assault, a snake in lying in wait. If as a lion he menace, he is an enemy; if as a snake he lie in wait, he is an enemy. When are we secure? Behold, though all men be made Christians, will the Devil too be a Christian? To tempt therefore he ceaseth not, to lie in wait he ceaseth not. Bridled he is and bound in the hearts of ungodly men, that he

may not rage against the Church, and do as much as he would. The teeth of ungodly men gnash at the majesty of the Church and the peace of Christians, and because they have nothing that they can do by raging; by dancing, by blaspheming, by wanton living, they vex not the bodies of Christians, but rend the souls of Christians. Let us cry then all with one voice these words,

Ver. 1. O God, to my aid make speed. For need we have for an everlasting aid in this world. But when have we not? Now however being in tribulation, let us especially say, O God, to my aid make speed.

3. Let them be confounded and fear that seek my soul. Christ is speaking: whether Head speak or whether Body speak; He is speaking that hath said, Why persecutest thou Me? He is speaking that hath said, Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of Mine, to Me ye have done it. The voice then of this Man is known to be of the whole man, of Head and of Body: that need not often be mentioned, because it is known. Be they confounded, he saith, and fear that seek my soul. In another Psalm He saith, I was looking unto the right and saw, and there was not one that would know Me: flight hath perished from Me, and there is not one to seek out My soul. There of persecutors He saith, that there was not one to seek out His soul: but here, let them be confounded and fear that seek My soul. He was grieving that He was not sought for imitation: was lamenting that He was sought for oppression. Thou seekest the soul of a just man when thou art thinking how to imitate him: thou art seeking the soul of a just man when thou art thinking how to kill him. Because in two ways is sought the soul of a just man, each is expressed in a different Psalm. In the one case He is lamenting that there is not one to seek His soul in order to imitate His passions: but here be they confounded and fear that seek My soul. They seek His soul not in order that they may have two. For they did not so seek His soul as a robber seeketh the coat of a traveller: he killeth to the end that he may strip, that he may have. But he that persecuteth in order to kill doth drive forth the soul, doth not clothe himself. They seek my soul, they will to kill me, what then dost thou desire for them? Let them be confounded and fear. And where is that which thou hast heard from thy Lord, Love ye your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute

you? Behold thou sufferest persecution, and cursest them from whom thou sufferest: how dost thou imitate the Passions of thy Lord that have gone before, hanging on the cross and saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. To persons saying such things the Martyr replieth and saith, thou hast set before me the Lord, saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: understand thou my voice also, in order that it may be thine too: for what have I said concerning mine enemies? Let them be confounded and fear. Already such vengeance hath been taken on the enemies of the Martyrs. That Saul that persecuted Stephen, he was confounded and feared. He was breathing out slaughters, he was seeking some to drag and slay: a voice having been heard from above Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me, he was confounded and laid low, and he was raised up to obedience, that had been inflamed unto persecuting. This then the Martyrs desire for their enemies, Let them be confounded and fear. For so long as they are not confounded and fear, they must needs defend their actions: glorious they think themselves, because they hold, because they bind, because they scourge, because they kill, because they dance, because they insult, and because of all these doings they be sometime confounded and fear. For if they be confounded, they will also be converted: because converted they cannot be, unless they shall have been confounded and shall have feared. Let us then wish these things to our enemies, let us wish them without fear. Behold I have said, and let me have said it with you, may all that still dance and sing and insult the Martyrs be confounded and fear: at last within these walls confounded may they beat their breasts!

4. Ver. 2. Let them be turned away backward and blush that think evil things to me. At first there was the assault of them persecuting, now there hath remained the malice of them thinking. In fact, there are in the Church distinct seasons of persecutions following one another. There was made an assault on the Church when kings were persecuting: and because kings had been foretold as to persecute and as to believe, when one had been fulfilled the other was to follow. There came to pass also that which was consequent; kings believed, peace was given to the Church, the Church began to be set in the highest place of dignity, even on this earth, even in this life: but there is not wanting the roar of persecutors, they have turned their assaults into thoughts. In these thoughts, as in a bottomless pit, the devil hath been

bound, he roareth and breaketh not forth. For it hath been said concerning these times of the Church, The sinner shall see, and shall be angry. And shall do what? That which he did at first? Drag, bind, smite? He doeth not this. What then? With his teeth he shall gnash, and shall pine away. And with these men the Martyr is, as it were, angry, and yet for these men the Martyr prayeth. For in like manner as he hath wished well to those men concerning whom he hath said, (ver. 2.) Let them be confounded and fear that seek my soul: so also now, Let them be turned backward, and blush, that think evil things to me. Wherefore? In order that they may not go before, but follow. For he that censureth the Christian religion, and on his own system willeth to live, willeth as it were to go before Christ, as though He indeed had erred and had been weak and infirm, because He either willed to suffer or could suffer in the hands of the Jews; but that he is a clever man for guarding against all these things; in shunning death, even in basely lying to escape death, and slaying his soul that he may live in body, he thinketh himself a man of singular and prudent measures. He goeth before in censuring Christ, in a manner he outstrippeth Christ: let him believe in Christ, and follow Christ. For that which had been desired but now for persecutors thinking evil things, the same the Lord Himself said to Peter. Now in a certain place Peter willed to go before the Lord. For the Saviour was speaking of His Passion, which if He had not undergone, we should not have been saved: and Peter that a little before had confessed the Son of God, and in that confession had been called the Rock, whereon the Church was to be builded, a little afterwards as the Lord is speaking of His future Passion, he saith, Far be it, O Lord, merciful be Thou to Thyself, there shall not be done this thing. A little before, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to Thee, but My Father which is in Heaven: now in a moment, Go back behind Me, Satan. What is, Go back behind Me? Follow Me. Thou wilt to go before Me, thou wilt to give Me counsel, it is better that thou follow My counsel: this is, 'go back,' go back behind Me. He is silencing one outstripping, in order that he may go backward; and He is calling him Satan, because he willeth to go before the Lord. A little before, blessed, now, Satan. Whence a little before, blessed? Because, to thee, He saith, flesh and blood hath not revealed it, but My Father Which is in Heaven. Whence now, Satan? Because thou savourest not, He saith, the things which are of God, but the things which

are of men. Let us then that would duly celebrate the nativities of the Martyrs, long for the imitation of the Martyrs; let us not wish to go before the Martyrs, and think ourselves to be of better understanding than they, because we shun sufferings in behalf of righteousness and faith which they shunned not. Therefore be they that think evil things, and in wantonness feed their hearts, turned backward and blush. Let them hear from the Apostle afterwards saying, But what fruit had ye sometime in those things at which ye now blush?

5. What followeth? (Ver. 3.) Let them be turned away forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well. Two are the kinds of persecutors, revilers and flatterers. The tongue of the flatterer doth more persecute than the hand of the slayer: for this also the Scripture hath called a furnace. Truly when the Scripture was speaking of persecution, it said, Like gold in a furnace it hath proved them, (speaking of Martyrs being slain,) and as the holocaust's victim it hath received them. Hear how even the tongue of flatterers is of such sort: The proving, he saith, of silver and of gold is fire; but a man is proved by the tongue of men praising him. That is fire, this also is fire: out of both thou oughtest to go forth safe. The censurer hath broken thee, thou hast been broken in the furnace like an earthen vessel. The Word hath moulded thee, and there hath come the trial of tribulation: that which hath been formed, must needs be seasoned; if it hath been well moulded, there hath come the fire to strengthen. Whence He said in the Passion, Dried up like a potsherd hath been My virtue. For Passion and the furnace of tribulation had made Him stronger. Again, if thou be praised by men flattering and paying deference to thee, being like one buying oil, and not taking it with thee, like the five foolish virgins; the furnace of thy breaking will be the mouth of men praising thee. But if without these things we cannot be; we must needs both enter into these things, and go forth from thence: enter into the reviling of evil and wicked men, enter also into some men's paying deference to us as flatterers, but we must go forth from thence. Let us ask it of Him concerning Whom hath been said, The Lord keep thy going in and thy going out: in order that going in whole, so thou mayest go out whole. For the Apostle also saith, Faithful is God, that will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able. Behold thou hast a 'going in,' He hath not said, Be not tried. For he that is not tried is not proved, and

he that is not proved, profiteth not. What then hath he wished? Faithful is God, That will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able. Thou hast heard the going in, hear also the going out. But He shall make with the trial a going out also, so that ye may be able to endure it. Therefore, let them be also turned away forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well. For why do they praise me? Let them praise God. For who am I that I should be praised in myself? Or what have I done? What have I which I have not received? "If thou hast received," he saith, "why dost thou boast as if thou hast not received?" Let them be turned away, then, forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well. With such oil the head of heretics is made fat when they say, It is I, it is I: and it is said to them, It is Thou, my Lord! They have received the, Well, well; they have followed the, Well, well: have become blind leaders of blind followers. In the plainest words to Donatus are said these words which have been sung, "Well, well! good leader! excellent leader!" And he hath not said to them, Be they turned away forthwith and blush, that say to me, Well, well: and he hath not wished to correct them so that they should say to Christ, Good leader, excellent leader! But the Apostle, dreading the 'well' of men, in order that he might be truly praised in Christ, would not have himself to be praised instead of Christ; and when certain said, I am of Paul, he replied in the liberty of the Lord, Hath Paul been crucified for you, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? Therefore let the Martyrs in the persecutions even of men flattering, say, Let them be turned away forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well.

6. And what cometh to pass when they are all turned back and blush, whether it be they that seek my soul, or they that think evil things to me, or they that with perverse and feigned benevolence with tongue would soften the stroke which they inflict, when they shall have been themselves turned away and confounded; there shall come to pass what? Let them exult and be joyous in Thee: not in me, not in this man or in that man; but in whom they have been made light that were darkness. (Ver. 4.) Let them exult and be joyous in Thee, all that seek Thee. One thing it is to seek God, another thing to seek man. Let them be joyous that seek Thee. They shall not be joyous then that seek themselves, whom Thou hast first sought before they sought Thee. Not yet did that sheep seek the Shepherd, it had strayed from the flock, and He went down to it; He sought it, and carried it back upon His

shoulders. Will He despise thee, O sheep, seeking Him, Who hath first sought thee despising Him and not seeking Him? Now then begin thou to seek Him that first hath sought thee, and hath carried thee back on His shoulders. Do thou that which He speaketh of, They that are My sheep hear My voice, and follow Me. If then thou seekest Him that first hath sought thee, and hast become a sheep of His, and thou hearest the voice of thy Shepherd, and followest Him; see what He sheweth to thee of Himself, what of His Body, in order that as to Himself thou mayest not err, as to the Church thou mayest not err, that no one may say to thee, that is Christ which is not Christ, or that is the Church which is not the Church. For many men have said that Christ had no flesh, and that Christ hath not risen in His Body: do not thou follow the voices of them. Hear thou the voice of Himself the Shepherd, that was clothed with flesh, in order that He might seek lost flesh. He hath risen again, and He saith, Handle ye and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have. He sheweth Himself to thee, the voice of Him follow thou. He sheweth also the Church, that no one may deceive thee by the name of Church. It behoved, He saith, Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day, and that there should be preached repentance and remission of sins through all nations, beginning with Jerusalem. Thou hast the voice of Thy Shepherd, do not thou follow the voice of strangers: and a thief thou shalt not fear, if thou shalt have followed the voice of the Shepherd. But how shalt thou follow? If thou shalt neither have said to any man, as if it were by his own merit, Well, well: nor shalt have heard the same with joy, so that thy head be not made fat with the oil of a sinner. Let all them exult and be joyous in Thee, that seek Thee; and let them say—let them say what, that exult? Be the Lord always magnified! Let all them say this, that exult and seek Thee. What? Be the Lord always magnified; yea, they that love Thy salvation. Not only, Be the Lord magnified; but also, always. Behold, thou wast straying, and wast turned away from Him; He hath called thee, Be the Lord magnified. Behold, He hath inspired thee with confession of sins, thou hast confessed, He hath given pardon, be the Lord magnified. Now thou hast begun to live justly: now I think it to be as it were a just thing, that thou also be magnified. For when He called thee straying, the Lord was to be magnified; when to thee confessing He forgave sins, the Lord was to be magnified: but now hearing the words of Him; thou hast begun to advance, thou hast been justified, thou

hast arrived at a sort of excellence of virtue; it is a seemly thing that thou also sometime be magnified. Let them say, Be the Lord alway magnified. A sinner thou art, be He magnified in order that He may call; thou confessest, be He magnified in order that He may forgive: now thou livest justly, be He magnified in order that He may direct: thou perseverest even unto the end, be He magnified in order that He may glorify. Be the Lord, then, alway magnified. Let just men say this, let them say this that seek Him. Whosoever saith not this, doth not seek Him. Behold, Be the Lord magnified. Let them exult and be joyous, all that seek Him, and let them say, Be the Lord alway magnified, yea they that love His saving health. For from Him they have salvation, not from themselves. The saving health of the Lord our God, is the Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ: whosoever loveth the Saviour, confesseth himself to have been made whole; whosoever confesseth himself to have been made whole, confesseth himself to have been sick. Let them say then, Be the Lord alway magnified; yea, they that love Thy saving health, not their own saving health, as if they could save themselves of themselves: not as it were the saving health of a man, as though by him they could be saved. Do not, he saith, confide in princes, and in the sons of men, in whom there is no safety. Why so? Of the Lord is safety, and upon Thy people is Thy blessing. Therefore, Be the Lord alway magnified: who are saying this? They that love Thy saving health.

7. Behold, Be the Lord magnified: wilt thou never, wilt thou no where? In Him was something, in me nothing: but if in Him is whatsoever I am, be He, not I. But thou then what? (Ver. 5) But I am needy and poor. He is rich, He abounding, He needing nothing. Behold my light, behold whence I am illumined; for I cry, Thou shalt illumine my candle, O Lord; my God, Thou shalt illumine my darkness. The Lord doth loose men fettered, the Lord raiseth up men crushed, the Lord maketh wise the blind men, the Lord keepeth the proselytes. What then of thee? But I am needy and poor. I am like an orphan, my soul is like a widow destitute and desolate: help I seek, alway mine infirmity I confess. But I am needy and poor. There have been forgiven me my sins, now I have begun to follow the commandments of God: still, however, I am needy and poor. Why still needy and poor? Because I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind. Why needy and poor? Because, blessed are they that hunger and

thirst after righteousness. Still I hunger, still I thirst: my fulness hath been put off, not taken away. But I am needy and poor; O God, aid Thou me. Most suitably also Lazarus is said to be interpreted, one aided: that needy and poor man, that was transported into the bosom of Abraham; and beareth the type of the Church, which ought alway to confess that she hath need of aid. This is true, this is godly. I have said to the Lord, My God Thou art. Why? For my goods Thou needest not. He needeth not us, we need Him: therefore He is truly Lord. For thou art not the very true Lord of thy servant: both are men, both needing God. But if thou supposest thy servant to need thee, in order that thou mayest give him bread; thou also needest thy servant, in order that he may aid thy labours. Each one of you doth need the other. Therefore neither of you is truly lord, and neither of you truly servant. Hear thou the true Lord, of Whom thou art the true servant: I have said to the Lord, My God Thou art. Why art Thou Lord? Because my goods Thou needest not? But what of thee? But I am needy and poor. Behold the needy and poor: may God feed, may God alleviate, may God aid: O God, he saith, aid Thou me.

8. My helper and deliverer art Thou; O Lord, delay not. Thou art the helper and deliverer: I need succour, help Thou; entangled I am, deliver Thou. For no one will deliver from entanglings except Thee. There stand round about us the nooses of divers cares, on this side and on that we are torn as it were with thorns and brambles, we walk a narrow way, perchance we have stuck fast in the brambles: let us say to God, Thou art my deliverer. He that shewed us the narrow way, hath taught us to follow it. May this voice continue in us, brethren. However we shall have lived here, however we shall have profited here, let no one say, It is sufficient for me, I am a just man. He that shall have so said, hath stopped on the way, he knoweth not how to attain to the end. Where he hath said, It is sufficient, there hath he stuck fast. Observe the Apostle, to whom there was no sufficiency; see in what manner he willeth himself to be aided, until he may attain. Brethren, he saith, I count not myself to have apprehended: lest they should think themselves to have apprehended, to whom again he saith, He that thinketh himself to know any thing, not yet knoweth as he ought to know. What saith he then? Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. Above he had said, Not that now I have received, or now have been made perfect: and in

this place he continueth, Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. If not yet he hath received, needy and poor he is: if not yet he is perfect, needy and poor he is. Well, he saith, O God, aid Thou me. But he is perceiving something, even something more exalted he is perceiving. See, however, what he saith; But to him that is able to do above all things more abundantly than we ask and perceive. See then, because he hath not yet attained, he hath not yet apprehended. What then saith he? Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but one thing I do, the things which are behind forgetting, unto the things which are before reaching forth, with earnestness I follow unto the prize of the high calling. He then runneth on, thou hast stuck fast. He speaketh of himself as not yet perfected, and dost thou already boast of perfection? Be they confounded that say to themselves, Well, well. Be thou also confounded among them, because thou sayest to thyself, Well, well. For he that praiseth himself, saith to himself, Well well: he that by others is praised and consenteth, doth not carry oil with him: the lights go out, He will shut the door.

9. This truth then this Psalm hath briefly taught us, dearly beloved, that, by being reminded of the festival of Martyrs, we may perceive how the Martyrs here have suffered corporal tribulation; and we in whatsoever peace we be, must needs suffer spiritual tribulation: and the Church and the 'heap' must needs groan amid offences, and tares, and chaff, until the harvest come, until the fan, until there come the last winnowing, so that the chaff be severed from the grain, until it be stored in the garner. Until which come to pass, let us cry, But I am needy and poor; O God, aid Thou me: my helper art Thou, O Lord, delay not. What is, delay not? Because many men say, it is a long time till Christ comes. What then: because we say, delay not, will He come before He hath determined to come? What meaneth this prayer, delay not? May not Thy coming seem to me to be too long delayed. For to thee it seemeth a long time, to God it seemeth not long, to Whom a thousand years are one day, or the three hours of a watch. But if thou shalt not have had endurance, late for thee it will be: and when to thee it shall be late, thou wilt be diverted from Him, and wilt be like unto those that were wearied in the desert, and hastened to ask of God the pleasant things which He was reserving for them in the Land; and when there were not given on their journey the pleasant things, whereby perchance they would have been

corrupted, they murmured against God, and went back in heart unto Egypt: to that place whence in body they had been severed, in heart they went back. Do not thou, then, so, do not so: fear the word of the Lord, saying, Remember Lot's wife. She too being on the way, but now delivered from the Sodomites, looked back; in the place where she looked back, there she remained: she became a statue of salt, in order to season thee. For to thee she hath been given for an example, in order that thou mayest have sense, mayest not stop infatuated on the way. Observe her stopping and pass on: observe her looking back, and do thou be reaching forth unto the things before, as Paul was. What is it, not to look back. Of the things behind forgetful. he saith. Therefore thou followest, being called to the heavenly reward, whereof hereafter thou wilt glory. For the same Apostle saith, There remaineth for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the just Judge, shall render to me.

PSALM 71

Exposition

Sermon I. On the first part of the above Psalm.

1. In all the holy Scriptures the grace of God that delivereth us commendeth itself to us, in order that it may have us commended. This is sung of in this Psalm, whereof we have undertaken to speak with your Love. The Lord will be with me, in order that I may so apprehend it in heart, as is right; and may so draw it forth, as is expedient for you. For much do move me the love and fear of God: the fear of God, because He is just; love, because He is merciful. For who could say to Him, What hast Thou done? if He should condemn a just man. How great then is His mercy, in justifying an unjust man! On this subject we have heard the Apostle also read before to us, commending especially that same grace: because of the commendation whereof he had the Jews for enemies, as it were relying on the letter of the law, and as it were loving and boasting of their justice; of which same persons he saith, I bear witness to them, that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. And as though it were said to him, but what is it to have a zeal for God not according to knowledge? he hath added immediately, For being ignorant of the justice of God, and willing to establish their own, to the justice of God they are not made subject. Boasting, he saith, as though of works, they shut out from them grace; and as though relying on their unreal soundness, they reject the medicine. For against such men even the Lord had said, I have not come to call just men, but sinners to repentance: the whole need not a Physician, but the sick. This then is the sum of great knowledge, for a man to know that he is by himself nothing, and that whatever he is, he is from God, and is for God. For what hast thou, he saith, which thou hast not received? But if thou hast even received, why dost thou boast as if thou hast not received? This grace the Apostle commendeth: by this he got to have the Jews for enemies, boasting

of the letter of the law and of their own justice. This then commending in the lesson which hath been read, he saith thus: For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But therefore mercy, he saith, I obtained, because ignorant I did it in unbelief. Then a little afterwards, Faithful the saying is, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first. Were there before him not any sinners? What then, was he the first then? Yea, going before all men not in time, but in evil disposition. But therefore, he saith, mercy I obtained, in order that in me Christ Jesus might shew all long-suffering, for the imitation of those that shall believe in Him unto life eternal: that is, every sinner and unjust man, already despairing of himself, already having the mind of a gladiator, so as to do whatsoever he willeth, because he must needs be condemned, may yet observe the Apostle Paul, to whom so great cruelty and so very evil a disposition was forgiven by God; and by not despairing of himself may he be turned unto God. This grace God doth commend to us in this Psalm also: let us examine it, and let us see whether it be so, or whether perchance I regard it amiss. For I judge that it hath this drift, and giveth this sound nearly in all its syllables; that is to say, it commendeth to us this truth, that the grace of God is gratuitous, which delivereth us undeserving, not for our sake, but for its own sake: so that even if I did not say this, nor had made this preface, any one of moderate intelligence attentively hearing the words of this same Psalm, would have tasted of this; and perchance by the very words, if he had any other purpose in mind, he would have been changed, and would have become that which here it soundeth. What is this? That our whole hope should be in God, and we should rely in no respect upon ourselves as though upon our own strength; lest by making that our own which is from Him, we let go even that which we have received.

2. The title then of this Psalm is, as usual, a title intimating on the threshold what is being done in the house: To David himself for the sons of Jonadab, and for those that were first led captive. Jonadab was a certain man, (he is commended to us in the prophecy of Jeremiah, who had enjoined his sons not to drink wine, and not to dwell in houses, but in tents. But the commandment of the father the sons kept and observed, and by this earned a blessing from the Lord. Now the Lord had not commanded this, but their

own father. But they so received it as though it were a commandment from the Lord their God; for even though the Lord had not commanded that they should drink no wine and should dwell in tents; yet the Lord had commanded, that sons should obey their father. In this case alone a son ought not to obey his father, if his father should have commanded any thing contrary to the Lord his God. For indeed the father ought not to be angry, when God is preferred before him. But when a father doth command that which is not contrary to God; he must be heard as God is: because to obey one's father God hath enjoined. God then blessed the sons of Jonadab because of their obedience, and thrust them in the teeth of His disobedient people, reproaching them, because while the sons of Jonadab were obedient to their father, they obeyed not their God. But while Jeremias was treating of these topics, he had this object in regard to the people of Israel, that they should prepare themselves to be led for captivity into Babylon, and should not hope for any other thing, but that they were to be captives. The title then of this Psalm seemeth from thence to have taken its hue, so that when he had said, Of the sons of Jonadab; he added, and of them that were first led captive: not that the sons of Jonadab were led captive, but because to them that were to be led captive there were opposed the sons of Jonadab, because they were obedient to their father: in order that they might understand that they had been made captive, because they were not obedient to God. It is added also that Jonadab is interpreted, the Lord's spontaneous one. What is this, the Lord's spontaneous one? Serving God freely with the will. What is, the Lord's spontaneous one? In me are, O God, Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. What is, the Lord's spontaneous one? Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. For if the Apostolic teaching admonisheth a slave, to serve a human master, not as though of necessity, but of good will, and by freely serving make himself in heart free; how much more must God be served with whole and full and free will, who seeth thy very will? For if thy servant serve thee not with the heart, his hands, his face, his presence thou art able to see, his heart thou canst not: and nevertheless the Apostle saith to them, not unto eye serving. And what is, not unto eye? What then, will my master see how I serve him, that thou sayest to me, not unto eye serving? He hath added, but as if servants of Christ. The human lord seeth not, but the Lord Christ seeth. From the heart, he saith, with good will. Such was Jonadab, that is, by this the name of him is interpreted. Who are then they

that first were led captive? The sons of Israel were led captive, first, and second, and third: but for the sake of these that were first led captive the Psalm, or concerning these the Psalm, doth not give this sound: that is, the Psalm itself when sifted, when searched, when questioned, in all the verses thereof speaketh to thee of something else, not of those men whoever they were who, when certain enemies had made an invasion, were led captive into Babylon out of Jerusalem. But the Psalm saith what, save that which ye have heard from the Apostle? He commendeth to us the grace of God; He commendeth it to us, because by ourselves we are nothing: He commendeth it to us, because whatever we are, by His mercy we are; but whatever of ourselves we are, evil we are. Why then captive? and why under the name of captivity is commended the very grace of the Deliverer? The Apostle openeth it, the Apostle himself saith, I delight in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. There thou hast the being led captive. What then doth this Psalm commend? That which in that place the Apostle pursueth; Unhappy man I; who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Why then first? For it hath been said why captive. As far as I judge, this thing also shineth forth clearly. It was because in the comparison of the sons of Jonadab all disobedience was reproved. But through disobedience we were made captive, because Adam himself by not obeying sinned. It was said also by the same Apostle, which also is a true saying, that all in Adam die, in whom all have sinned. With reason also the first were led captive: because the first man is of earth earthy, the second man is from Heaven heavenly: as is the earthy, such are also the earthy; as is the heavenly, such are also the heavenly. As we have borne the image of the earthy, let us bear also the image of Him that is from Heaven. The first man made us captive, the second man hath delivered us from captivity. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But in Adam they die through the flesh's nativity, in Christ they are delivered through the heart's faith. It was not in thy power not to be born of Adam: it is in thy power to believe in Christ. Howsoever much then thou shalt have willed to belong to the first man, unto captivity thou wilt belong. And what is, shalt have willed to belong? or what is, shalt belong? Already

thou belongest: cry out, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Let us hear then this man crying out this.

3. Ver. 1. O God, in Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting. Already I have been confounded, but not for everlasting. For how is he not confounded, to whom is said, What fruit had ye in these things wherein ye now blush? What then shall be done, that we may not be confounded for everlasting? Draw near unto Him, and be ye enlightened, and your faces shall not blush. Confounded ye are in Adam, withdraw from Adam, draw near unto Christ, and then ye shall not be confounded. In Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting. If in myself I am now confounded, in Thee I shall not be confounded for everlasting.

4. Ver. 2. In Thine own righteousness deliver me, and save me. Not in mine own, but in Thine own: for if in mine own, I shall be one of those whereof he saith, Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and their own righteousness willing to establish, to the righteousness of God they were not made subject. Therefore, in Thine own righteousness, not in mine. For mine is what? Iniquity hath gone before. And when I shall be righteous, Thine own righteousness it will be: for by righteousness given to me by Thee I shall be righteous; and it shall be so mine, as that it be Thine, that is, given to me by Thee. For I believe on Him that justifieth an ungodly man, so that my faith is counted for righteousness. Even so then the righteousness shall be mine, not however as though mine own, not as though by mine own self given to myself: as they thought who through the letter made their boast, and rejected grace. For it is said in another place, Judge me, O Lord, after my righteousness. Surely he is not boasting in his own righteousness. But return to the Apostle: For what hast thou which thou hast not received? and so speak of thy righteousness that thou mayest remember that thou hast received it, and not envy them that receive it. For even that Pharisee, as though from God he had received, was saying, Thanks to Thee that I am not like the rest of men. Thanks to Thee: well. That I am not like the rest of men. Why? Doth it delight thee to be good because another is evil? Lastly, what hath he added? Unjust, robbers, adulterers, as even this Publican. This is no longer to exult, but to insult. But that captive dared to raise not even his eyes to Heaven, but he smote his breast, saying, O Lord, be Thou

merciful to me a sinner. It is a small thing then that thou acknowledge the good thing which is in thee to be from God, unless also on that account thou exalt not thyself above him that hath not yet, who perchance when he shall have received, will outstrip thee. For when Saul was a stoner of Stephen, how many were the Christians of whom he was persecutor! Nevertheless, when he was converted, all that had gone before he surpassed. Therefore say thou to God that which thou hearest in the Psalm, In Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting: in Thine own righteousness, not in mine, deliver me, and save me. Incline unto me Thine ear. This also is a confession of humility. He that saith, Incline unto me, is confessing that he is lying like a sick man laid at the feet of the Physician standing. Lastly, observe that it is a sick man that is speaking: Incline unto me Thine ear, and save me.

5. Ver. 2. Be Thou unto me for a protecting God. Let not the darts of the enemy reach unto me: for I am not able to protect myself. And a small thing is protecting: he hath added, and for a walled place, that Thou mayest save me. For a walled place be Thou to me, be Thou my walled place. To what purpose is it that thou Adam didst flee from Him, and didst hide thee amid the trees of Paradise? To what purpose is it that thou fearedst at His face, at which thou didst use to rejoice? Thou wentest away, and didst perish: thou hast been made captive, and behold thou art visited, and behold thou art not let go; and behold the ninety and nine sheep are left on the mountains, and there is sought the lost sheep: and behold there is said concerning the sheep that is found, Dead he was, and he hath come to life: had perished, and he hath been found. Behold, God Himself hath become the place of thy fleeing unto, who at first was the fearful object of thy fleeing from. For a walled place, he saith, be Thou to me, that Thou mayest save me. I shall not be safe except in Thee: except Thou shalt have been my rest, my sickness shall not be able to be made whole. Lift me from the earth; upon Thee I will lie, in order that I may rise unto a walled place. What can be better walled? When unto that place thou shalt have fled for refuge, tell me what adversaries thou wilt dread? Who will lie in wait, and come at thee? A certain man is said from the summit of a mountain to have cried out, when an Emperor was passing by, I speak not of thee: the other is said to have looked back and to have said, Nor I of thee. He had despised an Emperor with glittering arms,

with mighty army. From whence? From a strong place. If he was secure on a high spot of earth, how secure art thou on Him by Whom heaven and earth were made? Be Thou then to me for a protecting God, and for a walled place, that Thou mayest save me. I, if for myself I shall have chosen another place, shall not be able to be safe. Choose thou indeed, O man, if thou shalt have found one, a place better walled. There is not then a place whither to flee from Him, except we flee to Him. If thou wilt escape Him angry, flee to Him appeased. For my firmament and my refuge Thou art. My firmament is what? Through Thee I am firm, and by Thee I am firm. For my firmament and my refuge Thou art: in order that I may be made firm by Thee, in whatever respects I shall have been made infirm in myself, I will flee for refuge unto Thee. For firm the grace of Christ maketh thee, and immoveable against all temptations of the enemy. But there is there too human frailness, there is there still the first captivity, there is there too the law in the members fighting against the law of the mind, and willing to lead captive in the law of sin: still the body which is corrupt presseth down the soul. Howsoever firm thou be by the grace of God, so long as thou still bearest an earthly vessel, wherein the treasure of God is, something must be dreaded even from that same vessel of clay. Therefore my firmament Thou art, in order that I may be firm in this world against all temptations. But if many they are, and they trouble me: my refuge Thou art. For I will confess mine infirmity, to the end that I may be timid like a 'hare,' because I am full of thorns like a 'hedgehog.' And as in another Psalm is said, The rock is a refuge for the hedgehogs and the hares: but the Rock was Christ.

6. Ver. 3. O God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner. Generally, sinners, among whom is toiling he that is now to be delivered from captivity: he that now crieth, Unhappy man I, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Within is a foe, that law in the members; there are without also enemies: unto what criest thou? Unto Him, to Whom hath been cried, From my secret sins cleanse me, O Lord, and from strange sins spare Thy servant. Therefore when there is said, Save me, it is meant from thy inward sickness, that is, from thine iniquity, from that whereby thou hast been led captive, from that whereby thou belongest to the first man, in order that thou mayest cry amid the first captives. But having been saved from thine iniquity, take heed that now also

thou be saved from the iniquities of strangers, amid whom thou must needs live until this life be ended. And how long? Behold it is ending for thee: is it by any means ending for the Church, save at the end of the world? But that one man, the oneness of Christ, crieth in these voices. It must needs be then that many of the faithful, going forth from this body, are already in that rest, which God giveth to the spirits of the faithful: but here there are still members of Christ, in those that are living in this life, in those that hereafter shall be born. Therefore even unto the end of the world there will be here that man, who crieth out to be delivered from his sins, and from the law of the members fighting against the law of the mind. Secondly, amid the sins of other men amid whom he must needs live even unto the end. But these sinners are of two kinds: there are some that have received Law, there are others that have not received: all the heathen have not received Law, all Jews and Christians have received Law. Therefore the general term is sinner; either a transgressor of the Law, if he hath received Law; or only unjust without Law, if he hath not received the Law. Of both kinds speaketh the Apostle, and saith, They that without Law have sinned, without Law shall perish, and they that in the Law have sinned, by the Law shall be judged. But thou that amid both kinds dost groan, say to God that which thou hearest in the Psalm, My God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner. Of what sinner? From the hand of him that transgresseth the Law, and of the unjust man. He that transgresseth the Law is indeed also unjust; for not unjust he is not, that transgresseth the Law: but every one that transgresseth the Law is unjust, not every unjust man doth transgress the Law. For, Where there is not a Law, saith the Apostle, neither is there transgression. They then that have not received Law, may be called unjust, transgressors they cannot be called. Both are judged after their deservings. But I that from captivity will to be delivered through Thy grace, cry to Thee, Deliver me from the hand of the sinner. What is, from the hand of him? From the power of him, that while he is raging, he lead me not unto consenting with him; that while he lieth in wait, he persuade not to iniquity. From the hand of the sinner and of the unjust man. Make answer to him, why thou desirest thyself to be delivered from the hand of him that transgresseth the Law, and of the unjust man. Do not thou consent; but if he rageth, be thou patient, endure. But who doth endure, if He forsake that is the walled place? Why then do I say, Deliver me from the hand of him that transgresseth the Law,

and of the unjust man? Because it is not in me to be patient, but in Thee that givest patience.

7. Lastly, there followeth the reason why I say this: (ver. 4.) for Thou art my patience. Now if He is patience rightly, He is that also which followeth, O Lord, my hope from my youth. My patience, because my hope: or rather my hope, because my patience. Tribulation, saith the Apostle, worketh patience, patience probation, but probation hope, but hope confoundeth not. With reason in Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting. O Lord, my hope from my youth. From thy youth is God thy hope? Is He not also from thy boyhood, and from thine infancy? Certainly, saith he. For see what followeth, that thou mayest not think that I have said this, my hope from my youth, as if God no ways profited mine infancy or my boyhood; hear what followeth: (ver. 5.) In Thee I have been strengthened from the womb. Hear yet: From the belly of my mother Thou art my Protector. Why then, from my youth, except it was the period from which I began to hope in Thee? For before in Thee I was not hoping, though Thou wast my Protector, that didst lead me safe unto the time, when I learned to hope in Thee. But from my youth I began in Thee to hope, from the time when Thou didst arm me against the Devil, so that in the girding of Thy host being armed with Thy faith, love, hope, and the rest of Thy gifts, I waged conflict against Thine invisible enemies, and heard from the Apostle, There is not for us a wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and rulers of the world of this darkness, against spiritual things of naughtiness. There a young man it is that doth fight against these things: but though he be a young man, he falleth, unless He be the hope of Him to Whom he crieth, O Lord, my hope from my youth.

8. In Thee is my singing alway. Is it only from the time when I began to hope in Thee until now? Nay, but alway. What is, alway? Not only in the time of faith, but also in the time of sight. For now, So long as we are in the body we are absent from the Lord: for by faith we walk, not by sight: there will be a time when we shall see that which being not seen we believe: but when that hath been seen which we believe, we shall rejoice: but when that hath been seen which they believed not, ungodly men shall be confounded. Then will come the substance whereof there is now the hope. But, Hope

which is seen is not hope. But if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. Now then thou groanest, now unto a place of refuge thou runnest, in order that thou mayest be saved; now being in infirmity thou entrest the Physician: what, when thou shalt have received perfect soundness also, what when thou shalt have been made equal to the Angels of God, wilt thou then perchance forget that grace, whereby thou hast been delivered? Far be it. In Thee shall be my singing alway.

9. Ver. 6. As it were a monster I have become unto many. Here in time of hope, in time of groaning, in time of humiliation, in time of sorrow, in time of infirmity, in time of the voice from the fetters—here then what? As it were a monster I have become unto many. Why, As it were a monster? Why do they insult me that think me a monster? Because I believe that which I see not. For they being happy in those things which they see, exult in drink, in wantonness, in chamberings, in covetousness, in riches, in robberies, in secular dignities, in the whitening of a mud wall, in these things they exult: but I walk in a different way, contemning those things which are present, and fearing even the prosperous things of the world, and secure in no other thing but the promises of God. And they, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. What sayest thou? Repeat it: let us eat, he saith, and drink. Come now, what hast thou said afterwards? for to-morrow we die. Thou hast terrified, not led me astray. Certainly by the very thing which thou hast said afterwards, thou hast stricken me with fear to consent with thee. For to-morrow we die, thou hast said: and there hath preceded, Let us eat and drink. For when thou hadst said, Let us eat and drink; thou didst add, for to-morrow we die. Hear the other side from me, “Yea let us fast and pray, for to-morrow we die. I keeping this way, strait and narrow, as it were a monster have become unto many: but Thou art a strong helper. Be Thou with me, O Lord Jesus, to say to me, faint not in the narrow way, I first have gone along it, I am the way itself, I lead, in Myself I lead, unto Myself I lead home. Therefore though a monster I have become unto many; nevertheless I will not fear, for Thou art a strong Helper.

10. Ver. 7. Let my mouth be fulfilled with praise, that with hymn I may tell of Thy glory, all the day long Thy magnificence. What is all the day long? Without intermission. In prosperity, because Thou dost comfort; in

adversity, because Thou dost correct: before I was in being, because Thou didst make; when I was in being, because Thou didst give health: when I had sinned, because Thou didst forgive; when I was converted, because Thou didst help; when I had persevered, because Thou didst crown. So indeed let my mouth be fulfilled with praise, that with hymn I may tell of Thy glory, all the day long Thy magnificence.

11. Ver. 8. Cast me not away in the time of old age. My hope from my youth, cast me not away in time of old age. What is this time of old age? When my strength shall fail, forsake Thou not me. Here God maketh this answer to thee, yea indeed let thy strength fail, in order that in thee mine may abide: in order that thou mayest say with the Apostle, When I am made weak, then I am mighty. Fear not, that thou be cast away in that weakness, in that old age. But why? Was not thy Lord made weak on the Cross? Did not most mighty men and fat bulls before Him, as though a man of no strength, made captive and oppressed, shake the head and say, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross? Has he deserted because He was made weak, Who preferred not to come down from the Cross, lest He should seem not to have displayed power, but to have yielded to them reviling? What did He hanging teach thee, That would not come down, but patience amid men reviling, but that thou shouldest be strong in thy God? Perchance too in His person was said, As it were a monster I have become unto many, and Thou art a strong Helper. In His person according to His weakness, not according to His power; according to that whereby He had transformed us into Himself, not according to that wherein He had Himself come down. For He became a monster unto many. And perchance the same was the old age of Him; because on account of its oldness it is not improperly called old age, and the Apostle saith, Our old man hath been crucified together with Him. If there was there our old man, old age was there; because old, old age. Nevertheless, because a true saying is, Renewed as an eagle's shall be Thy youth; He rose Himself the third day, promised a resurrection at the end of the world. Already there hath gone before the Head, the members are to follow. Why dost thou fear lest He should forsake thee, lest He cast thee away for the time of old age, when thy strength shall have failed? Yea at that time in thee will be the strength of Him, when thy strength shall have failed.

12. Ver. 9. Why do I say this? For mine enemies have spoken against me, and they that were keeping watch for My soul, have taken counsel together, saying, God hath forsaken Him, persecute Him, and seize Him, for there is no one to deliver Him. This hath been said concerning Christ. For He that with the great power of Divinity, wherein He is equal to the Father, had raised to life dead persons, on a sudden in the hands of enemies became weak, and as if having no power, was seized. When would He have been seized, except they had first said in their heart, God hath forsaken Him? Whence there was that voice on the Cross, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? So then did God forsake Christ, though God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, though Christ was also God, out of the Jews indeed according to the flesh, Who is over all things, God blessed for ever—did God forsake Him? Far be it. But in our old man our voice it was, because our old man was crucified together with Him: and of that same our old man He had taken a Body, because Mary was of Adam. Therefore the very thing which they thought, from the Cross He said, Why hast Thou forsaken Me? Why do these men think Me left alone to their evil? What is, think Me forsaken in their evil? For if they had known, the Lord of glory they had never crucified. Persecute and seize Him. More familiarly however, brethren, let us take this of the members of Christ, and acknowledge our own voice in these words: because even He used such words in our person, not in His own power and majesty; but in that which He became for our sakes, not according to that which He was, Who hath made us.

13. Ver. 10. O Lord, my God, be not far from me. So it is, and the Lord is not far off at all. For, “The Lord is nigh unto them that have bruised the heart.” My God, unto my help look Thou.

14. Ver. 11. Be they confounded and fail that engage my soul. What hath he desired? Be they confounded and fail. Why hath he desired it? That engage my soul? What is, That engage my soul? Engaging as it were unto some quarrel. For they are said to be engaged that are challenged to quarrel. If then so it is, let us beware of men that engage our soul. What is, That engage our soul? First provoking us to withstand God, in order that in our evil things God may displease us. For when art thou right, so that to thee the

God of Israel may be good, good to men right in heart? When art thou right? Wilt thou hear? When in that good which thou doest, God is pleasing to thee; but in that evil which thou sufferest, God is not displeasing to thee. See ye what I have said, brethren, and be ye on your guard against men that engage your souls. For all men that deal with you in order to make you be wearied in sorrows and tribulations, have this aim, namely, that God may be displeasing to you in that which ye suffer, and there may go forth from your mouth, What is this? For what have I done? Now then hast thou done nothing of evil, and art thou just, He unjust? A sinner I am, thou sayest, I confess, just I call not myself. But what, sinner, hast thou by any means done so much evil as he with whom it is well? As much as Gaiuseius? I know the evil doings of him, I know the iniquities of him, from which I, though a sinner, am very far; and yet I see him abounding in all good things, and I am suffering so great evil things. I do not then say, O God, “what have I done” to Thee, because I have done nothing at all of evil; but because I have not done so much as to deserve to suffer these things. Again, art thou just, He unjust? Wake up, wretched man, thy soul hath been engaged! I have not, he saith, called myself just. What then sayest thou? A sinner I am, but I did not commit so great sins, as to deserve to suffer these things. Thou sayest not then to God, just I am, and Thou art unjust: but thou sayest, unjust I am, but Thou art more unjust. Behold thy soul hath been engaged, behold now thy soul wageth war. What? Against whom? Thy soul, against God; that which hath been made against Him by Whom it was made. Even because thou art in being to cry out against Him, thou art ungrateful. Return, then, to the confession of thy sickness, and beg the healing hand of the Physician. Think thou not they are happy who flourish for a time. Thou art being chastised, they are being spared: perchance for thee chastised and amended an inheritance is being kept in reserve. Return then, return thou, O transgressor, to the heart, let not thy soul be engaged. More mighty He is by far with Whom thou hast declared war. The greater the stones which thou hast thrown at the sky, the mightier the ruin which will overwhelm thee. Return rather, know thyself. God it is that is displeasing to thee: blush, be thou displeasing to thyself. Nothing of good thou hadst done, unless He had been good; and nothing of evil thou hadst suffered, unless He had been just. Awake thou therefore unto this voice, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord so

hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. Unjust men they were that were sitting whole beside Job rotting; and nevertheless he was being scourged to be restored again, they were being spared to be punished. Whatsoever then of tribulation shall have chanced to thee, whatsoever of insult, be not thy soul engaged, be it not engaged, not only against God, but not even against those very persons that are doing these things to thee. For if thou shalt have hated even those very persons, then against them thy heart hath been engaged. Forthwith to Him render thou thanks, for them pray thou. For perchance even a prayer for them is this which thou hast heard, Let them be confounded and fail that engage my soul. "Let them be confounded and fail:" for much on their own righteousness they rely: therefore be they confounded. This is expedient for them, in order that they may acknowledge their sins, as the cause wherefore they are confounded and fail, (for they were to ill purpose relying on their own strength,) and they failing themselves may say, When I am made weak, then mighty I am: and they failing themselves may say, Cast me not away in time of old age. A good thing therefore he hath wished for them, that they may be confounded for their evil doings, and fail from their perverse strength, and then at length failing and being confounded they may seek an Enlightener from this confusion, and a Comforter from discomfiture. Lastly, see what followeth, Let them put on confusion and shame, that think evil things to me. "Confusion and shame," confusion because of a bad conscience, shame because of modesty. Let this befall them, and they will be good. Think thou not that he is enraged: O that he might be hearkened unto in behalf of them! For even Stephen seemed to be enraged, when with flaming mouth these words he darted forth, Ye of a stiff neck, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always withstand the Holy Spirit. How inflamed the anger, how vehement against enemies. Doth his soul seem to thee to be engaged? Far be it. Their health he was seeking; them phrensied, raving to their hurt, he was binding with words. For see how the soul of him was not engaged, not only against God, but not even against them: O Lord Jesu, he saith, receive my spirit. Jesus was not displeasing to him, because he suffered stoning for His word: so his soul was not engaged against God. Also he said, O Lord, set not this sin against them. His soul then was not engaged, not even against his enemies. Let them be clothed with confusion and shame, that think evil things to me. For this all they seek that trouble me, evil things for

me they seek. Which evil things was seeking even that woman, when she suggested, Say thou somewhat against God, and die. And that wife of Tobit, who saith to her husband, where are thy righteousnesses? To this end she was saying it, that God might be displeasing to him; his soul might be engaged.

15. If then no one by troubling hath persuaded thee, if no one hath wrung from thee a confession that God doth displease thee in those things which thou sufferest, or that thou hatest the men through whom thou sufferest, then thy soul is not engaged: safely thou sayest that which followeth.

Ver. 12. But I alway in Thee will hope, and will add to all Thy praise. What is this? I will add to all Thy praise, ought to move us. More perfect wilt thou make the praise of God? Is there any thing to be superadded? If already that is all praise, wilt thou add any thing? God was praised in all His good deeds, in every creature of His, in the whole establishment of all things, in the government and regulation of ages, in the order of seasons, in the height of Heaven, in the fruitfulness of the regions of earth, in the encircling of the sea, in every excellency of the creature every where brought forth, in the sons of men themselves, in the giving of the Law, in delivering His people from the captivity of the Egyptians, and all the rest of His wonderful works: not yet He had been praised for having raised up flesh unto life eternal. Be there then this praise added by the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ: in order that here we may perceive His voice above all past praise: thus it is that we rightly understand this also. What, O thou who art perchance a sinner, who didst fear lest thy soul should be engaged, who in Him alone didst hope in order that thou shouldest be delivered from that first captivity, who on thy own righteousness didst not rely, but on His grace, which this Psalm doth commend, what, wilt thou add any thing to all the praise of God? I will add, he saith. Let us see what he addeth. Thy praise might have been entire, and nothing at all might seem to be wanting to Thy praise, because nothing could be wanting, if Thou didst condemn all unrighteous men. For the very justice whereby unrighteous men are condemned could not but be great praise of God: great praise it would be. Thou didst make man, Thou didst give him a free will, in Paradise didst place him, a command didst impose, death if he broke the command most

justly Thou didst denounce; there was nothing Thou didst not do, there is no one who would require more of Thee: He sinned, mankind became as though a mass of sinners, flowing from sinners; what then, if Thou shouldest condemn this mass of iniquity, will any one say to Thee, unjustly Thou hast done? Thou wouldest be evidently even so just, and this Thy praise would be entire; but because Thou hast delivered even the sinner himself by justifying the ungodly, I will add to all Thy praise.

16. Ver. 13. My mouth shall tell out Thy righteousness: not mine. From thence I will add to all Thy praise: because even that I am righteous, if righteous I am, is Thy righteousness in me, not mine own: for Thou dost justify the ungodly. My mouth shall tell out Thy righteousness, all the day long Thy salvation. What is, Thy salvation? Of the Lord is Salvation. Let no one assume to himself, that he saveth himself, Of the Lord is Salvation. Not any one by himself saveth himself, Of the Lord is Salvation, 'vain is man's salvation.' All the day long Thy Salvation: at all times. Something of adversity cometh, preach the Salvation of the Lord: something of prosperity cometh, preach the Salvation of the Lord. Do not preach in prosperity, and hold thy peace in adversity: otherwise there will not be that which hath been said, all the day long. For all the day long is day together with its own night. Do we when we say, for example, thirty days have gone by, mention the nights also; do we not under the very term days include the nights also? In Genesis what was said? The evening was made, and the morning was made, one day. Therefore a whole day is the day together with its own night: for the night doth serve the day, not the day the night. Whatever thou doest in mortal flesh, ought to serve righteousness: whatever thou doest by the commandment of God, be it not done for the sake of the advantage of the flesh, lest day serve night. Therefore all the day long speak of the praise of God, to wit, in prosperity and in adversity; in prosperity, as though in the day time; in adversity, as though in the night time: all the day long nevertheless speak of the praise of God, so that thou mayest not have sung to no purpose, I will bless God at every time, alway the praise of Him is in my mouth. When sons were safe, cattle, servants, all his property, Job praised God; this as it were in the day time: losses came, bereavement fell upon him, there perished that which was safely kept, they perished for whom it was kept; this as it were in the night time. See nevertheless him

praising all the day long. Did he after that day time wherein he rejoiced, because there came a setting as it were of that light, that is, of his prosperity, fall off from the praises of God? Was there not a day in his heart, whence it shone forth, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed? And it was as it were yet even-tide: there came even a thicker night, darkness more profound, pain of body, cankering of worms; nor even so in that very cankering did he fall away from the praises of God without in the night, who within rejoiced in the day. For to his wife recommending blasphemy and engaging his soul, to that wretched woman alluring to evil like a shadow of the night, Thou hast spoken, he saith, like one of the unwise women. Truly a daughter of the night! If good things we have received from the hand of the Lord, evil things shall we not endure? We have praised in the day, shall we fall off in the night? All the day long, that is, together with its own night, Thy Salvation.

17. For I have not known tradings. Therefore, he saith, All the day long Thy Salvation, for I have not known tradings. What are these tradings? Let traders hear and change their life; and if they have been such, be not such; let them not know what they have been, let them forget; lastly, let them not approve, not praise; let them disapprove, condemn, be changed, if trading is a sin. For on this account, O thou trader, because of a certain eagerness for getting, whenever thou shalt have suffered loss, thou wilt blaspheme; and there will not be in thee that which hath been spoken of, all the day long Thy praise. But whenever for the price of the goods which thou art selling, thou not only liest, but even falsely swearest; how in thy mouth all the day long is there the praise of God? While, if thou art a Christian, even out of thy mouth the name of God is being blasphemed, so that men say, see what sort of men are Christians! Therefore if this man for this reason speaketh the praise of God all the day long, because he hath not known tradings; let Christians amend themselves, let them not trade. But a trader saith to me, behold I bring indeed from a distant quarter merchandise unto these places, wherein there are not those things which I have brought, by which means I may gain a living: I ask but as reward for my labour, that I may sell dearer than I have bought: for whence can I live, when it hath been written, the worker is worthy of his reward? But he is treating of lying, of false

swearing. This is the fault of me, not of trading: for I should not, if I would, be unable to do without this fault. I then, the merchant, do not shift mine own fault to trading: but if I lie, it is I that lie, not the trade. For I might say, for so much I bought, but for so much I will sell; if thou pleasest, buy. For the buyer hearing this truth would not be offended, and not a whit less all men would resort to me: because they would love truth more than gain. Of this then, he saith, admonish me, that I lie not, that I forswear not; not to relinquish business whereby I maintain myself. For to what dost thou put me when thou putttest me away from this? Perchance to some craft? I will be a shoemaker, I will make shoes for men. Are not they too liars? are not they too false-swearers? Do they not, when they have contracted to make shoes for one man, when they have received money from another man, give up that which they were making, and undertake to make for another, and deceive him for whom they have promised to make speedily? Do they not often say, to-day I am about it, to-day I'll get them done? Secondly, in the very sewing do they not commit as many frauds? These are their doings and these are their sayings: but they are themselves evil, not the calling which they profess. All evil artificers, then, not fearing God, either for gain, or for fear of loss or want, do lie, do forswear themselves; there is no continual praise of God in them. How then dost thou withdraw me from trading? Wouldest thou that I be a farmer, and murmur against God thundering, so that, fearing hail, I consult a wizard, in order to learn what to do to protect me against the weather; so that I desire famine for the poor, in order that I may be able to sell what I have kept in store? Unto this dost thou bring me? But good farmers, thou sayest, do not such things. Nor do good traders do those things. But why, even to have sons is an evil thing, for when their head is in pain, evil and unbelieving mothers seek for impious charms and incantations? These are the sins of men, not of things. A trader might thus speak to me—Look then, O Bishop, how thou understand the tradings which thou hast read in the Psalm: lest perchance thou understand not, and yet forbid me trading. Admonish me then how I should live; if well, it shall be well with me: one thing however I know, that if I shall have been evil, it is not trading that maketh me so, but my iniquity. Whenever truth is spoken, there is nothing to be said against it.

18. Let us inquire then what he hath called tradings, which indeed he that hath not known, all the day long doth praise God. Trading even in the Greek language is derived from action, and in the Latin from want of inaction: but whether it be from action or want of inaction, let us examine what it is. For they that are active traders, rely as it were upon their own action, they praise their works, they attain not to the grace of God. Therefore traders are opposed to that grace which this Psalm doth commend. For it doth commend that grace, in order that no one may boast of his own works. Because in a certain place is said, Physicians shall not raise to life, ought men to abandon medicine? But what is this? Under this name are understood proud men, promising salvation to men, whereas of the Lord is Salvation. Just as then against physicians, that is, proud promisers of salvation, this doth guard which hath been said, namely, All the day long Thy Salvation: so against traders, that is, those that rejoice in their action and works, that doth guard which hath been said, My mouth shall tell forth Thy righteousness, that is, not mine own. Who are traders, that is, men as it were with their action self-satisfied? They that being ignorant of God's righteousness, and willing to establish their own, are not subject to the righteousness of God. With reason also trading hath been spoken of, because it admitteth no inaction. How great an evil thing is that which admitteth of no inaction! With reason the Lord drave from the Temple them to whom He said, It is written, My House shall be called the House of prayer, but ye have made it a house of trading; that is, boasting of your works, seeking no inaction, nor hearing the Scripture speaking against your unrest and trading, be ye still, and see that I am the Lord. What is, be ye still, and see that I am the Lord, but that ye should know that it is God that worketh in you, and ye should not be lifted up because of your own works? Dost thou not hear the voice of Him saying, Come ye unto Me, all ye that labour and are laden, and I will refresh you; take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for gentle I am and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls? This rest against traders is preached: this rest against them that hate inaction is preached, while they so act and so boast themselves of their works, that they rest not in God, and they recoil so much the further from grace, the more they are lifted up because of their own works

19. But there is in some copies, For I have not known literature. Where some books have trading, there others literature: how they may accord is a hard matter to find out; and yet the discrepancy of interpreters perchance sheweth the meaning, introduceth no error. Let us enquire then how to understand literature also, lest we offend grammarians in the same way as we did traders a little before: because a grammarian too may live honourably in his calling, and neither forswear nor lie. Let us examine then the literature which he hath not known, in whose mouth all the day long is the praise of God. There is a sort of literature of the Jews: for to them let us refer this; there we shall find what hath been said: just as when we were enquiring about traders, on the score of actions and works, we found that to be called detestable trading, which the Apostle hath branded, saying, For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and willing to establish their own, to the righteousness of God they were not made subject. Against which saith the same Apostle, Not by works, lest perchance a man be lifted up. How then? Shall we not work what is good? We shall work, but with Himself working in us. For His workmanship we are, created in Christ Jesus in good works. Just as then we found out the former charge against traders, that is men boasting of action, exalting themselves because of business which admitteth no inaction, unquiet men rather than good workmen; because good workmen are those in whom God worketh; so also we find a sort of literature among the Jews: may the Lord be with me, that I may explain in words that which He hath vouchsafed to grant me in heart to see. The pride of the Jews who relied as it were on their powers and on the justice of their works, did boast of the Law, because they themselves received the Law, other nations received not; in which Law, of grace they boasted not, but of the letter. For the Law without grace, is the letter alone: it abideth to reprove iniquity, not to give salvation. For what saith the Apostle? For if there had been given a law which could have made alive, by all means out of the law there would have been righteousness; but the Scripture concluded all things under sin, in order that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to men believing. Concerning this letter he saith in another place, The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. Thou hast the letter if thou art a transgressor of the Law. Thou that, he saith, through the letter, and circumcision art a transgressor of the Law. Is it not well sung and said, Deliver Thou me from the hand of the transgressor of the Law and of the

unrighteous man? Thou hast the letter, but dost not fulfil the letter. Whence dost thou not fulfil the letter? For thou, that preachest that a man steal not, stealest; thou, that sayest that a man commit not adultery, committest adultery; thou, that abhorrest idols, committest sacrilege. For the name of God through you is blasphemed among the Gentiles, as it hath been written. What then hath profited thee the letter which thou dost not fulfil? But wherefore dost thou not fulfil? Because on thyself thou reliest. Why dost thou not fulfil? Because a trader thou art, thy own works thou extollest: thou knowest not that the grace of Him helping is necessary, in order that the precept of Him commanding may be fulfilled. Behold it is God that hath commanded, do thou what He hath commanded. Thou beginnest to act as if by thy own powers, and thou fallest: and there abideth upon Thee the letter punishing, not saving. With reason the Law through Moses was given, grace and truth through Jesus Christ hath come to pass. Moses wrote five books: but in the five porches encircling the pool, sick men were lying, but they could not be healed. See how the letter remained, convicting the guilty, not saving the unrighteous. For in those five porches, a figure of the five books, sick men were given over rather than made whole. What then in that place did make whole a sick man? The moving of the water. When that pool was moved there went down a sick man, and there was made whole one, one because of unity: whatsoever other man went down unto that same moving was not made whole. How then was there commended the unity of the Body crying from the ends of the earth? Another man was not healed, except again the pool were moved. The moving of the pool then did signify the perturbation of the people of the Jews when the Lord Jesus Christ came. For at the coming of an Angel the water in the pool was perceived to be moved. The water then encircled with five porches was the Jewish nation encircled by the Law. And in the porches the sick lay, and in the water alone when troubled and moved they were healed. The Lord came, troubled was the water; He was crucified, may He come down in order that the sick man may be made whole. What is, may He come down? May He humble Himself. Therefore whosoever ye be that love the letter without grace, in the porches ye will remain, sick ye will be, lying ill, not growing well: for on the letter ye rely. For if there had been given a law which could have made alive, by all means out of the law there would have been righteousness. But the Law was given to make you guilty, that being made

guilty ye should fear, fearing ye should ask indulgence, no longer rely on your own powers, on the letter not exalt yourselves. For the same figure also it is that Eliseus at first sent a staff by his servant to raise up the dead child. There had died the son of a widow his hostess; it was reported to him, to his servant he gave his staff: go thou, he saith, lay it on the dead child. Did the prophet not know what he was doing? The servant went before, he laid the staff upon the dead, the dead arose not. For if there had been given a law which could have made alive, surely out of the law there had been righteousness. The law sent by the servant made not alive: and yet he sent his staff by the servant, who himself afterwards followed, and made alive. For when that infant arose not, Eliseus came himself, now bearing the type of the Lord, who had sent before his servant with the staff, as though with the Law: he came to the child that was lying dead, he laid his limbs upon it. The one was an infant, the other a grown man: he contracted and shortened in a manner the size of his full growth, in order that he might fit the dead child. The dead then arose, when he being alive adapted himself to the dead: and the Master did that which the staff did not; and grace did that which the letter did not. They then that have remained in the staff, glory in the letter; and therefore are not made alive. But I will to glory concerning Thy grace. But from me, saith the Apostle, far be it to glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, save in Him Who being alive adapted Himself to me dead, in order that I might rise again: that no longer I might live, but there should live in me Christ. In that same grace I glorying literature have not known: that is, men on the letter relying, and from grace recoiling, with whole heart I have rejected.

20. Ver. 14. With reason there followeth, I will enter into the power of the Lord: not mine own, but the Lord's. For they gloried in their own power of the letter, therefore grace joined to the letter they knew not. For the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth through Jesus Christ have come to pass. For He came Himself to fulfil the Law, when He gave love, through which the Law might be fulfilled. For love is the fulfilling of the Law. They not having love, that is, not having the Spirit of grace, (for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which hath been given to us, have remained glorying in the letter. But because "the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive:" I have not known literature, and I will enter

into the power of the Lord. Therefore this verse following doth strengthen and perfect the sense, so as to fix it in the hearts of men, and not suffer any other interpretation to steal in from any quarter. O Lord, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone. Ah! alone. Why hath he added alone, I ask you? It would suffice to say, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness. Alone, he saith, entirely: there of mine own I think not. For what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if also thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not received. Thy righteousness alone doth deliver me, what is mine own alone is nought but sins. May I not glory then of my own strength, may I not remain in the letter; may I reject literature, that is, men glorying of the letter, and on their own strength perversely, like men frantic, relying: may I reject such men, may I enter into the power of the Lord, so that when I am weak, then I may be mighty; in order that Thou in me mayest be mighty, for, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone.

PSALM 71

Sermon II. On the second part of the Psalm.

1. That the grace of God, whereby gratis we were saved, with no merits of ours preceding, save those whereunto punishment was due, in this Psalm was commended, yesterday we intimated to your Love: and because in treating of it we were unable to make an end, the latter part thereof we put off until to-day, promising in the name of the Lord that we would pay the debt. For paying which forasmuch as now is the time, be ye present with mind like a fertile field, wherein ye may both multiply the seed, and to the rain be not ungrateful. We commended to your notice yesterday the title thereof, but for the sake of recalling your attention, and to point it out to those that yesterday were absent, briefly we are going to touch upon what they may call to mind who heard, they may hear who knew not. Of the sons of Jonadab the Psalm is; which name is interpreted, the Lord's spontaneous; because with spontaneous, that is, with good, pure, sincere, and perfect will, not with feigned heart, the Lord must be served: to which truth that passage also doth point, where it hath been said, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. To the sons of this man, that is, to the sons of obedience, the Psalm is sung, and to those that first were led captive, in order that there may be acknowledged here our groaning, and there may be sufficient for the day the naughtiness thereof. For now, if being proud we have forsaken Him, even wearied let us return. Not even to return we are able except through grace. Grace gratis is given. For unless it were gratis, it were no grace. But again, if for this reason it is grace, because it is gratis; nothing of thine hath gone before that thou shouldest receive. For if any good works of thine have gone before; as a reward thou hast received it, not gratis: but the reward which to us was owed, is punishment. Our being delivered then belongeth not to our own merits, but to His grace. Him then let us praise: to Him let us owe all that we are, and that we are saved. With which he

concluded, when he had spoken of many things, saying, (ver. 14.) O Lord, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone. With this verse concluded yesterday's exposition. The first then were captive, that is, belonging to the first man: for because of this they were captive, because of the first man, in whom we all die: for not first is that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards the spiritual: because of the first man the first were captive: because of the second man the second were redeemed. For even redemption itself doth proclaim our captivity. For how redeemed, if not first captive? And that that captivity was more exactly intimated by the Apostle, we, quoting certain words out of his Epistle, intimated, and we repeat: But I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. The same is our first captivity, whereby the flesh doth lust against the Spirit. But this came of the punishment of sin, so that a man should be divided against himself, who willed not to be subject to One. For nothing is so expedient for the soul as to obey. And if it is expedient for the soul in the case of a servant to obey a master, in a son to obey a father, in a wife to obey a husband; how much more in a man to obey God? Adam then having made trial of evil,—now every man is Adam, just as in those that have believed every man is Christ, because members they are of Christ,—having made trial, I say, of evil, which he ought not to have made trial of, if he had believed Him saying, Touch not: having made trial then of evil, henceforth at least let him obey the commandments of the Physician in order that he may arise, that willed not to believe the Physician in order to escape sickness. For even to a man in health a good and faithful physician giveth advice, in order that he may not be necessary to him. For to the whole a physician is not necessary, but to the sick. But good physicians being friends who will not to sell their skill, and who take more delight in the whole than in the sick, give certain precepts to the whole, by observing which they may not fall into sickness. But again, if they shall have despised the precepts, and shall have fallen into sickness, they entreat the physician; him whom they have despised when whole, they implore when sick. O that they would but implore, that they may not, losing their senses in a fever, smite even the Physician! Ye have heard but now, when the Gospel was being read, how against them a parable was spoken. Were they of sound mind who said, This is the Heir, come, let us kill Him, and ours will be the

inheritance? Surely not: let us suppose they that killed the Son were ready to kill the Father also; this is not to have a sound mind. Lastly, behold because they killed the Son: the Son rose again, and the Stone being rejected of the builders became for a Head of the corner. They stumbled against It, and they were broken in pieces: It shall come upon them, and shall grind them to powder. But not so he that singeth in the Psalm, and saith, I will enter into the power of the Lord: not mine own, but the Lord's. O Lord, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone. None as mine own I acknowledge, of Thy righteousness alone I will be mindful. From Thee I have whatever of good I have: but whatever from myself I have, it is of evil that I have. To my deservings Thou hast not repaid punishment, but grace gratis Thou hast imparted. Of Thy righteousness therefore alone I will be mindful.

2. Ver. 15. O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. What hast thou taught me? That of Thy righteousness alone I ought to be mindful. For reviewing my past life, I see what was owing to me, and what I have received instead of that which was owing to me. There was owing punishment, there hath been paid grace: there was owing hell, there hath been given life eternal. O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. From the very beginning of my faith, wherewith Thou hast renewed me, Thou didst teach me that nothing had preceded in me, whence I might say that there was owing to me what Thou hast given. For who is turned to God save from iniquity? Who is redeemed save from captivity? But who can say that unjust was his captivity, when he forsook his Captain and fell off to the deserter? For our Captain is God, a deserter the devil: the Captain gave a commandment, the deserter suggested guile: where were thine ears between precept and deceit? was the devil better than God? Better he that revolted than He that made thee? Thou didst believe what the devil promised, and didst find what God threatened. Now then out of captivity being delivered, still however in hope, not yet in substance, walking by faith, not yet by sight, O God, he saith, Thou hast taught me from my youth. From the time that I have been turned to Thee, renewed by Thee who had been made by Thee, re-created who had been created, reformed who had been formed: from the time that I have been converted, I have learned that no merits of

mine have preceded, but that Thy grace hath come to me gratis, in order that I might be mindful of Thy righteousness alone.

3. What next after youth? For, Thou hast taught me, he saith, from my youth: what after youth? For in that same first conversion of thine thou didst learn, how before conversion thou wast not just, but iniquity preceded, in order that iniquity being banished, there might succeed love: and having been renewed into a new man, only in hope, not yet in substance, thou didst learn how nothing of thy good had preceded, and by the grace of God thou wast converted to God: now perchance since the time that thou hast been converted wilt thou have any thing of thine own, and on thy own strength oughtest thou to rely? Just as men are wont to say, now leave me, it was necessary for thee to shew me the way; it is sufficient, I will walk in the way. And he that hath shewn thee the way, “wilt thou not that I conduct thee to the place?” But thou, if thou art conceited, “let me alone, it is enough, I will walk in the way.” Thou art left, and through thy weakness again thou wilt lose the way. Good were it for thee that He should have conducted thee, who first put thee in the way. But unless He too lead thee, again also thou wilt stray: say to Him then, Conduct me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth. But thy having entered on the way, is youth, the very renewal and beginning of the faith. For before thou wast walking through thy own ways a vagabond; straying through woody places, through rough places, torn in all thy limbs, thou wast seeking a home, that is, a sort of settlement of thy spirit, where thou mightest say, it is well; and being in security mightest say it, at rest from every uneasiness, from every trial, in a word from every captivity; and thou didst not find. What shall I say? Came there to thee one to shew thee the way? There came to thee the Way itself, and thou wast set therein by no merits of thine preceding, for evidently thou wast straying. What, since the time that thou hast set foot therein dost thou now direct thyself? Doth He that hath taught thee the way now leave thee? No, he saith: Thou hast taught me from my youth; and even until now I will tell forth Thy wonderful works. For a wonderful thing is that which still Thou doest; namely, that Thou dost direct me, Who in the way hast put me: and these are Thy wonderful works. What dost thou think to be the wonderful works of God? What is more wonderful among God’s wonderful works, than the raising the dead? But am I by any means dead, thou sayest?

Unless dead thou hadst been, there would not have been said to thee, Rise, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee. Dead are all unbelievers, all unrighteous men; in body they live, but in heart they are extinct. But he that raiseth a man dead according to the body, doth bring him back to see this light and to breathe this air: but he that raiseth is not himself light and air to him; he beginneth to see, as he saw before. A soul is not so resuscitated. For a soul is resuscitated by God; though even a body is resuscitated by God: but God, when He doth resuscitate a body, to the world doth bring it back: when He doth resuscitate a soul, to Himself He bringeth it back. If the air of this world be withdrawn, there dieth body: if God be withdrawn, there dieth soul. When then God doth resuscitate a soul, unless there be with her He that hath resuscitated, she being resuscitated liveth not. For He doth not resuscitate, and then leave her to live to herself: in the same manner as Lazarus, when he was resuscitated after being four days dead, was resuscitated by the Lord's corporal presence. For He drew near in body to the sepulchre, He cried out, Lazarus, come forth: and Lazarus rose up, he came forth from the sepulchre bound, then being unbound he went away. He was resuscitated in the Lord's presence, but he lived even in the Lord's absence. Although the Lord had resuscitated him corporally, as far as regards things visible: yet by the presence of His Majesty He resuscitated him, with respect to which presence He no where withdrew. Meanwhile nevertheless unto visible presence the Lord resuscitated Lazarus; the Lord withdrew from that same city or from that spot, did Lazarus cease to live? Not so is the soul resuscitated: God doth resuscitate her, she dieth if God shall have withdrawn. For I will speak boldly, brethren, but yet the truth. Two lives there are, one of the body, another of the soul: as the life of the body is the soul, so the life of the soul is God: in like manner as, if the soul forsake, the body dieth: so the soul dieth, if God forsake. This then is His grace, namely, that He resuscitate and be with us. Because then He doth resuscitate us from our past death, and doth renew in a manner our life, we say to Him, O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. But because He doth not withdraw from those whom He resuscitateth, lest when He shall have withdrawn from them they die, we say to Him, and even until now I will tell forth Thy wonderful works: because while Thou art with me I live, and of my soul Thou art the life,

which will die if she be left to herself. Therefore while my life is present, that is, my God, even until now, what next?

4. Ver. 18. And even unto oldness and old age. These are two terms for old age, and are distinguished by the Greeks. For the gravity succeeding youth hath another name among the Greeks, and after that same gravity the last age coming on hath another name; for πρεσβύτης signifieth grave, and γέρον old. But because in the Latin language the distinction of these two terms holdeth not, both words implying old age are inserted, oldness and old age: but ye know them to be two ages. Thou hast taught me Thy grace from my youth; and even until now; after my youth, I will tell forth Thy wonderful works, because Thou art with me in order that I may not die, Who hast come in order that I may rise: and even unto oldness and old age, that is, even unto my last breath, unless with me Thou shalt have been, there will not be any merit of mine; may Thy grace alway remain with me. Even one man would say this, thou, he, I; but because this voice is that of a certain great Man, that is, of the Unity itself, for it is the voice of the Church; let us investigate the youth of the Church. When Christ came, He was crucified, dead, rose again, called the Gentiles, they began to be converted, became Martyrs strong in Christ, there was shed faithful blood, there arose a harvest for the Church: this is Her youth. But seasons advancing let the Church confess, let Her say, Even until now I will tell forth Thy wonderful works. Not only in youth, when Paul, when Peter, when the first Apostles told: even in advancing age I myself, that is, Thy Unity, Thy members, Thy Body, will tell forth Thy marvellous works. What then? And even unto oldness and old age, I will tell forth Thy wonderful works: even until the end of the world here shall be the Church. For if She were not to be here even unto the end of the world; to whom did the Lord say, Behold, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the world? Why was it necessary that these things should be spoken in the Scriptures? Because there were to be enemies of the Christian Faith who would say, “for a short time are the Christians, hereafter they shall perish, and there shall come back idols, there shall come back that which was before. How long shall be the Christians?” Even unto oldness and old age: that is, even unto the end of the world. When thou, miserable unbeliever, dost expect Christians to pass away, thou art passing away thyself without

Christians: and Christians even unto the end of the world shall endure; and as for thee with thine unbelief when thou shalt have ended thy short life, with what face wilt thou come forth to the Judge, whom while thou wast living thou didst blaspheme? Therefore from my youth, and even until now, and even unto oldness and old age, O Lord, forsake not me. It will not be, as mine enemies say, even for a time. Forsake not me, until I tell forth Thine arm to every generation that is yet to come. And the arm of the Lord hath been revealed to whom? The arm of the Lord is Christ. Do not Thou then forsake me: let not them rejoice that say, “only for a set time the Christians are.” May there be persons to tell forth Thine arm. To whom? To every generation that is yet to come. If then it be to every generation that is yet to come, it will be even unto the end of the world: for when the world is ended, no longer any generation will come on.

5. Ver. 19. Thy power and Thy righteousness. That is, that I may tell forth to every generation that is yet to come, Thine arm. And what hath Thine arm effected? This then let me tell forth, that same grace to every generation succeeding: let me say to every man that is to be born, nothing thou art by thyself, on God call thou, thine own are sins, merits are God's: punishment to thee is owing, and when reward shall have come, His own gifts He will crown, not thy merits. Let me say to every generation that is to come, out of captivity thou hast come, unto Adam thou didst belong. Let me say this to every generation that is to come, that there is no strength of mine, no righteousness of mine; but Thy strength and Thy righteousness, O God, even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made. Thy power and Thy righteousness, as far as what? even unto flesh and blood? Nay, even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made. For the high places are the heavens, in the high places are the Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers: to Thee they owe it that they are; to Thee they owe it that they live, to Thee they owe it that righteously they live, to Thee they owe it that blessedly they live. Thy power and Thy righteousness, as far as what? Even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made. Think not that man alone belongeth to the grace of God. What was Angel before he was made? What is Angel, if He forsake him Who hath created? Therefore Thy power and Thy justice even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made.

6. And man exalteth himself: and in order that he may belong to the first captivity, he heareth the serpent suggesting, Taste, and ye shall be as Gods. Men as Gods? O God, who is like unto Thee? Not any in the pit, not in Hell, not in earth, not in Heaven, for all things Thou hast made. Why doth the work strive with the Maker? O God, who is like unto Thee? But as for me, saith miserable Adam, and Adam is every man, while I perversely will to be like unto Thee, behold what I have become, so that from captivity to Thee I cry out: I with whom it was well under a good king, have been made captive under my seducer; and cry out to Thee, because I have fallen from Thee. And whence have I fallen from Thee? While I perversely seek to be like unto Thee. For what? doth not God call us unto His own likeness? Is it not He that saith, Love your enemies, pray for them that persecute you, do good to them that hate you? Saying these words, to the likeness of God He exhorteth us. Lastly, what doth he add? In order that ye may be, He saith, the sons of your Father Which is in Heaven. For what doth He Himself do? This thing He doth certainly: that maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, raineth upon just and unjust men. He then that wisheth well to his enemy, is like unto God, nor is this pride, but it is obedience. Why? Because after the image of God we have been made. Let Us make, He saith, man after Our image and Our likeness. It is not then any strange thing, if we hold the image of God in us. O that we may not lose it through pride. But what is it through pride to will to be like unto God? What do we think, when the captive was crying out, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? What is this perverse likeness? Hear and understand, if ye can: but we believe that because He hath set us here to say these words to you, He will give to you to be able to understand also. God needeth no good thing, and is Himself the Chief Good, and from Himself is every good thing. In order then that we may be good, we need God: in order that God may be good, He needeth not us; and not only not us, but even unto the most high mighty works which He hath made, neither celestial things themselves, nor supercelestial things, nor that which is called the Heaven of Heaven, doth God need, in order that He may be either more good, or more mighty, or more blessed. For what would any thing have been, whatever besides there is, unless He had made it? What then doth He need from thee, who was before thee, and was so mighty, that when thou wast not He made thee? Was it by any means as parents make sons? By a sort of carnal concupiscence they beget rather

than create: but while they beget, God doth create. For if thou dost so create, tell me what thy wife will bear? Why should I say, Thou tell me? Let her tell, who knoweth not what she is carrying! Men however beget sons, both for their comfort, and for the support of old age. Did God by any means create all these things in order that by them when old He might be aided? God then doth know the thing which He doth create, and of what sort it is through His goodness, and of what sort it will be through its own will: God doth know, and hath disposed all things. But in order that a man may be any thing at all, he turneth himself to Him by Whom He hath been created. For by withdrawing he waxeth cold, by drawing near he waxeth warm: by withdrawing he is made dark, by drawing near he is made light. For from Whom he hath his being, with Him he hath his well being. Lastly, the younger son, who willed in his own power to have his substance, which was being kept for him in the best manner with his father, having become his own master, set out into a far country, clave to an evil prince, fed swine, by hunger was corrected, who from fulness being proud had departed. Therefore whosoever willet to be thus like unto God, so that by Him he may stand, and keep, as is written, his strength close to Him, may not withdraw from Him; by cleaving to Him may be sealed even as from a ring the wax, being joined to Him may have the image of Him, doing that which hath been said, For me to cleave unto God is a good thing: this man doth truly keep the likeness and image after which he hath been made. But again, if perversely he shall have willed to imitate God, so that, just as God hath no one by whom He is formed, hath no one by whom He is ruled, he may so will of himself to exercise his own power, that like God, he may live with no one forming, no one ruling; what remaineth, brethren, but that withdrawing from His heat he grow benumbed, withdrawing from Truth he become empty, withdrawing from that which hath the highest and unchangeable being, changed for the worse, he sink down.

7. This thing the devil did: he willed to imitate God, but perversely, not to be under His power, but to have power opposed to Him. But man, being set under commandment, heard from the Lord God, Touch not. What? This tree. But what is that tree? If good it is, why do I not touch it? If evil it be, what doth it in Paradise? Assuredly it is in Paradise because it is good: but I will not have thee touch it. Why am I not to touch it? Because I will thee to

be obedient, not gainsaying. Serve thou for this purpose, servant; but do not evil, servant. Servant, hear thou first the Lord's bidding, and then learn thou the design of Him bidding. Good is the tree, I will not have thee touch it. Why? Because I am Lord, and thou a servant. This is the whole reason. If small it is, dost thou disdain to be a servant? But what is expedient for thee except to be under the Lord? How wilt thou be under the Lord, except thou shalt have been under commandment? Again, if it is expedient for thee to be under the Lord, and under commandment, what was God to command thee? For doth He require any thing from thee? Is He to say to thee, offer unto me a sacrifice? Did not He Himself make all things: among which things He made thee also? Is He to say to thee, attend Me, either to the couch when I rest; or to the table, when I refresh myself; or to the baths, when I bathe? Because then God requireth of thee nothing, ought He to have ordered thee nothing? But if He ought to have ordered thee something, in order that thou mightest perceive thyself to be under the Lord, which is expedient for thee, thou wast to be withheld from some object: not because of the badness of that tree, but for the sake of thine own obedience. God could not more perfectly have shewn how great is the goodness of obedience, than when He withheld thee from that object which was not evil. There obedience alone beareth the palm, there disobedience alone doth find punishment. A good thing it is, I will not have thee touch it. For by not touching thou wilt not die. Did He that withheld thee this, by any means withdraw other things? Is not Paradise full of fruitful trees? What is wanting to thee? This thing I will not have thee touch, of this I will not have thee taste. A good thing it is, but obedience is better. Furthermore, when thou shalt have touched it, will that tree be an evil thing so that thou shalt die? But disobedience hath made thee subject to death, because thou hast touched things forbidden. Therefore that tree was called that of the knowledge of discerning good and evil, not because on it were hanging as it were fruits of such sort; but because whatever that tree was, with whatever apple, with whatever fruit it was, it was so called because man, who would not discern good from evil by commandment, was going to discern by experiment: so that by touching a thing forbidden he found punishment. But why did he touch it, my brethren? What was wanting to him? Let it be told me, what was wanting to him set in Paradise, in the midst of opulence, in the midst of pleasures, whose great pleasures were the very sight of God,

whose face as of an enemy he feared after the sin? What was wanting to him that he touched it, save that he willed to exercise his own power, delighted to break a commandment, so that with no one having dominion over him he might become as God, because over God indeed no one hath dominion? Ill straying, ill presuming, doomed to die by withdrawing from the path of righteousness: behold he breaketh the commandment, he hath shaken off from his neck the yoke of discipline, uplifted with high spirit he hath broken in sunder the reins of guidance: where is he now? Truly captive he crieth, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? I perversely willed to be like unto Thee, and I have been made like unto a beast! Under Thy dominion, under Thy commandment, I was indeed like: But a man in honour set hath not perceived, he hath been compared to beasts without sense, and hath been made like unto them. Now out of the likeness of beasts cry though late and say, O God, who is like unto Thee?

8. Ver. 20. How great troubles hast Thou shewn to me, many and evil! Deservedly, proud servant. For thou hast willed perversely to be like thy God, who hadst been made after the image of thy Lord. Wouldest thou have it to be well with thee, when withdrawing from that good? Truly God saith to thee, if thou withdrawest from Me, and it is well with thee, I am not thy good. Again, if He is good, and in the highest degree good, and of Himself to Himself good, and by no foreign good thing good, and is Himself our chief good; by withdrawing from Him, what wilt thou be but evil? Also if He is Himself our blessedness, what will there be to one withdrawing from Him, except misery? Return thou then after misery, and say, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? How great troubles hast Thou shewn to me, many and evil!

9. But this was discipline; admonition, not desertion. Lastly, giving thanks, he saith what? And being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. But when before? What is this again? Thou hast fallen from a high place, O man, disobedient slave, O thou proud against thy Lord, thou hast fallen. There hath come to pass in thee, every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled: may there come to pass in thee, every one that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Return thou from the deep. I return, he saith, I return, I acknowledge; O God, who is like unto Thee? How great troubles hast Thou

shewn to me, many and evil! and being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. "We perceive," I hear. Thou hast brought us back from the bottomless places of the earth, hast brought us back from the depth and drowning of sin. But why again? When had it already been done? Let us go on, if perchance the latter parts of the Psalm itself do not explain to us the thing which here we do not yet perceive, namely, why he hath said again. Therefore let us hear: How great troubles Thou hast shewn to me, many and evil! And being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. What then? (Ver. 21.) Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness, and being turned Thou hast comforted me, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. Behold a second again! If we labour to unravel this again when written once, who will be able to unravel it when doubled? Now again itself is a redoubling, and once more there is written again. May He be with us from Whom is grace, may there be with us the arm also which we are telling forth to every generation that is to come: may He be with us Himself, and as with the key of His Cross open to us the mystery that is locked up. For it was not to no purpose that when He was crucified the vail of the temple was rent in the midst, but to shew that through His Passion the secret things of all mysteries were opened. May He then Himself be with men passing over unto Him, be the vail taken away: may our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ tell us why such a voice of the Prophet hath been sent before, Thou hast shewn to me troubles many and evil: and being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. Behold this is the first again which hath been written. Let us see what this is, and we shall see why there is a second again.

10. What is Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the Same was in the beginning with God. All things through Him were made, and without Him was made nothing. An amazing thing this, a great thing this. What of thee captive? Where art thou lying? In the flesh, under death. Who then is He? Who thou? And what was He afterwards? For whose sake? Who is He but that which hath been spoken of, the Word? What Word? Doth it perchance sound and pass away?

The Word, God with God, the Word by Which were made all things. What was He for thy sake? And the Word became flesh, and dwelled in us. He that spared not His own Son, but for us all delivered Him up: how hath He not also together with Him given us all things? See what, who, for whose sake. The Son of God, flesh, for the sake of a sinner, for the sake of an unrighteous man, for the sake of a deserter, for the sake of a proud man, for the sake of a perverse imitator of His God. He became what thou art, Son of Man, in order that we might be made sons of God. He became flesh: whence the flesh? Of the Virgin Mary. Whence the Virgin Mary? Of Adam. Therefore He was of that first captive, and the flesh in Christ was from the lump of captivity. Why this? For an example. He took upon Him from thee that wherein He might die for thee: He took upon Him from thee that which He might offer for thee, by which example He might teach thee. Might teach thee what? That thou art to rise again. For from whence shouldest thou believe, unless an example of flesh assumed from the lump of thy death went before? Therefore in Him first we have risen again: because also when Christ rose again, we rose again. For the Word died not and rose again: but in the Word the flesh died and rose again. Therein Christ died, wherein thou art to die: and therein Christ rose again, wherein thou art to rise again. By His example He taught thee what thou shouldest not fear, for what thou shouldest hope. Thou didst fear death, He died: thou didst despair of rising again, He rose again. But thou sayest to me, He rose again, do I by any means rise again? But He rose again in that which for thee He received of thee. Therefore thy nature in Him hath preceded thee; and that which was taken of thee, hath gone up before thee: therein therefore thou also hast ascended. Therefore He ascended first, and we in Him: because that flesh is of the human race. Therefore also He rising again, we have been brought back out of the bottomless places of the earth. When therefore Christ rose again, from the bottomless places of the earth Thou didst bring me back. But when we believe in Christ, from the deep places of the earth again thou hast brought me back. Behold one again. Hear of its being fulfilled from the Apostle: If then ye have risen with Christ, the things which are above seek ye, where Christ is sitting on the right hand of God; the things which are above mind ye, not the things which are upon the earth. He then hath gone before: already we also have risen again, but still in hope. Hear the Apostle Paul saying this same thing: Even we ourselves groan in ourselves, looking

for the adoption, the redemption of our body. What is it then that Christ hath granted to thee? Hear that which followeth; For by hope we are saved: but hope which is seen is not hope. For that which a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. We have been brought back therefore again from the bottomless places in hope. Why again? Because already Christ had gone before. But because we shall rise again in substance, for now in hope we are living, now after faith we are walking; we have been brought back from the bottomless places of the earth, by believing in Him Who before us hath risen again from the bottomless places of the earth: our soul hath been resuscitated from the iniquity of unbelief, and there hath come to pass in us as it were the first Resurrection through faith. But if it shall be alone, where is that which the Apostle saith, Looking for the adoption, the redemption of our body? Where is that whereof he hath spoken in that passage, The body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness? But if He that raised Christ from the dead dwelleth in you; He that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies also through His Spirit dwelling in you. Therefore already we have risen again in mind, in faith, in hope, in love: but it remaineth for us to rise again in body. Thou hast heard one again, thou hast heard the other again; one again because of Christ going before; and the other, yet however in hope, and a thing which remaineth to be in substance. Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness, already in men believing, already in those that first have risen again in hope. Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness. To this same righteousness belongeth the scourge also: for it is time that judgment begin with the House of God, saith Peter, that is, with His Saints. But He scourgeth every son that He receiveth: Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness: because now not even sons Thou hast spared; but those for whom Thou wast keeping an eternal inheritance, Thou hast not left without discipline. Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness, and being turned Thou hast comforted me: and because of the body to rise again at the end, even from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back.

11. Ver. 22. For I will confess to Thee in the vessels of a Psalm Thy truth. The vessels of a Psalm are a Psalter. But what is a Psalter? An instrument of wood with strings. What doth it signify? There is some difference

between it and a harp: they that are acquainted with it say, that the difference is, that the hollow piece of wood on which the strings are stretched over to make them sound, the Psaltery hath on the upper part, the harp on the lower. And because the Spirit is from above, flesh from the earth; there seemeth to be signified by the Psaltery the Spirit, by the harp the flesh. And because he had spoken of two bringings back of ours from the bottomless places of the earth, one after the Spirit in hope, the other after the body in substance; hear thou of these two: for I will confess to Thee in the vessels of a Psalm Thy truth. This after the Spirit: concerning the body what? I will psalm to Thee on a harp, Holy One of Israel.

12. Again hear this because of that same again and again. (Ver. 23.) My lips shall exult when I shall psalm to Thee. Because lips are wont to be spoken of both belonging to the inner and to the outward man, it is uncertain in what sense lips have been used: there followeth therefore, And my soul which Thou hast redeemed. Therefore regarding the inward lips having been saved in hope, brought back from the bottomless places of the earth in faith and love, still however waiting for the redemption of our body, we say what? Already he hath said, And my soul which Thou hast redeemed. But lest thou shouldest think the soul alone redeemed, wherein now thou hast heard one again, (Ver. 24.) but still, he saith; why still? but still my tongue also: therefore now the tongue of the body: all day long shall meditate of Thy righteousness: that is, in eternity without end. But when shall this be? Hereafter at the end of the world, at the resurrection of the body and the changing into the Angelic state. Whence is it proved that this is spoken of the end, but still my tongue also all day long shall meditate of Thy righteousness? When they shall have been confounded and shall have blushed, that seek evil things for me. When shall they be confounded, when shall they blush, save at the end of the world? For in two ways they shall be confounded, either when they shall believe in Christ, or when Christ shall have come. For so long as the Church is here, so long as grain groaneth amid chaff, so long as wheat groaneth amid tares, so long as vessels of mercy groan amid vessels of wrath made for dishonour, so long as lily groaneth amid thorns, there will not be wanting enemies to say, When shall he die, and his name perish? "Behold there shall come the time when Christians shall be ended and shall be no more: as they began at a set time,

so even unto a particular time they shall be.” But while they are saying these things and without end are dying, and while the Church is continuing preaching the Arm of the Lord to every generation that is to come; there shall come Himself also at last in His glory, there shall rise again all the dead, each with his cause: there shall be severed good men to the right hand, but evil men to the left, and they shall be confounded that did insult, they shall blush that did mock: and so my tongue after resurrection shall meditate of Thy righteousness, all day long of Thy praise, when they shall have been confounded and shall have blushed, that seek evil things for me.

PSALM 72

Exposition

1. For Salomon indeed this Psalm's title is fore-noted: but things are spoken of therein which could not apply to that Salomon king of Israel after the flesh, according to those things which holy Scripture speaketh concerning him: but they can most pertinently apply to the Lord Christ. Whence it is perceived, that the very word Salomon is used in a figurative sense, so that in him Christ is to be taken. For Salomon is interpreted peace-maker: and on this account such a word to Him most truly and excellently doth apply, through Whom, the Mediator, having received remission of sins, we that were enemies are reconciled to God. For when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. The Same is Himself that Peace-maker, Who hath made both things one, and dissolving the middle wall of partition, making void in His flesh enmities, the law of commandments in decrees, in order that He might build up two into Himself unto one new man, making peace: and coming He hath preached peace to them that are afar, and peace unto them that are near. He saith Himself in the Gospel, Peace I leave unto you, My peace I give unto you. And by many other testimonies the Lord Christ is shewn to be a Peace-maker: not according to the peace which this world knoweth and seeketh; but that peace whereof is said in the Prophet, I will give unto them true comfort, peace upon peace, when, to wit to the peace of reconciliation, there is added the peace of immortality. For after all things have been given to us, which God hath promised, that we ought to look for the last peace, wherein with God we may live for everlasting, the same Prophet doth shew in the place where he saith, O Lord, our God, peace give Thou unto us, for all things Thou hast given unto us. That will be evidently the perfect peace, when the last enemy shall be destroyed, to wit, death. And in whom will this be save in that Peace-maker, our Reconciliation? For as in Adam all

die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. Since then we have found out the true Salomon, that is, the true Peace-maker: next let us observe what the Psalm doth teach concerning Him.

2. Ver. 1. O God, Thy judgment to the King give Thou, and Thy justice to the King's Son. The Lord Himself in the Gospel saith, The Father judgeth not any one, but all judgment He hath given to the Son: this is then, O God, Thy judgment to the King give Thou. He that is King is also the Son of the King: because God the Father also is certainly King. Thus it hath been written, that the King made a marriage for His Son. But after the manner of Scripture the same thing is repeated. For that which he hath said in, Thy judgment; the same he hath otherwise expressed in, Thy justice: and that which he hath said in, the King, the same he hath otherwise expressed in, to the King's Son: in like manner as is this passage, He that dwelleth in the Heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall mock at them. Whatever is meant by He that dwelleth in the Heavens, the same is, and the Lord: and whatever is meant by, shall laugh them to scorn, the same is, shall mock at them; and, The Heavens are telling forth the Glory of God, and the works of His hands the firmament is announcing. The Heavens are repeated under the name of firmament: and that which hath been said in, the glory of God, hath been repeated in, the works of His hands: and that which hath been said in, are telling forth, hath been repeated in, is announcing. But these repetitions do much commend the divine sayings, whether the same words, or whether in other words the same sense be repeated: and they are mostly found in the Psalms, and in the kind of discourse whereby the mind's affection is to be awakened.

3. Next there followeth, (ver. 2.) to judge Thy people in justice, and Thy poor in judgment. For what purpose the royal Father gave to the royal Son His judgment and His justice is sufficiently shewn when he saith, To judge Thy people in justice, that is, for the purpose of judging Thy people. Such an idiom is found in Salomon: The Proverbs of Salomon, son of David, to know wisdom and discipline: that is, the Proverbs of Salomon, for the purpose of knowing wisdom and discipline. So, Thy judgment give Thou, to judge Thy people: that is, Thy judgment give Thou for the purpose of judging Thy people. But that which he saith before in, Thy people, the same

he saith afterwards in, Thy poor: and that which he saith before in, in justice; the same afterward in, in judgment: according to that manner of repetition. Whereby indeed he sheweth, that the people of God ought to be poor, that is, not proud, but humble. For, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. In which poverty even blessed Job was poor even before he had lost those great earthly riches. Which thing for this reason I thought should be mentioned, because there are certain persons who are more ready to distribute all their goods to the poor, than themselves to become the poor of God. For they are puffed up with boasting wherein they think their living well should be ascribed to themselves, not to the grace of God: and therefore now they do not even live well, however great the good works which they seem to do. For of their own they think they have, and they glory as if they have not received: being rich to themselves, not poor to God; abounding to themselves, not needing God. But the Apostle saith, If I shall have distributed all my goods to the poor, and shall have given up my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. As though he were saying, If I shall have distributed all my goods to the poor, and shall not have been a poor man of God, it profiteth me nothing. For love is not puffed up: nor is there the true love of God in him that is ungrateful to His Holy Spirit, by Which there is shed abroad in our hearts the love of Him. And therefore such men belong not to the people of God, because they are not the poor of God. For the poor of God say, But we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is from God, in order that we may know the things which by God have been given to us. For though even in this Psalm, because of the mystery of the taking on Him of man, whereby the Word became flesh, it is being said to the King, God the Father, Thy justice give Thou to the King's Son: these men will not have justice to be given them, but are confident that they have it of themselves. For being ignorant of God's justice, and their own willing to establish, to the justice of God they are not subject. They are not therefore, as I have said, the poor of God, but the rich of themselves: because they are not humble but proud. He will come, however, to judge the people of God in justice, and the poor of God in judgment: and in the judgment He will sever from their rich His poor, whom however by His poverty He hath made His rich. For the poor people crieth to Him, Judge Thou me, O God, and sever my cause from the nation unholy.

4. But seeing that he hath changed the order of the words, (though he had first said, O God, Thy judgment to the King give Thou, and Thy justice to the King's Son, putting judgment first, then justice,) and hath put justice first, then judgment, saying, To judge Thy people in justice, and Thy poor in judgment: he doth more clearly shew that he hath called judgment justice, proving that there is no difference made by the order in which the word is placed, because it signifieth the same thing. For it is usual to say 'wrong judgment' of that which is unjust: but justice iniquitous or unjust we are not wont to speak of. For if wrong and unjust it be; no longer must it be called justice. Again, by putting down judgment and repeating it under the name of justice, or by putting down justice and repeating it under the name of judgment, he clearly sheweth that he specially nameth that judgment which is wont to be put instead of justice, that is, that which cannot be understood of giving an evil judgment. For in the place where He saith, Judge not according to persons, but right judgment judge ye; He sheweth that there may be a wrong judgment, when He saith, right judgment judge ye: lastly, the one He doth forbid, the other He doth enjoin. But when without any addition He speaketh of judgment, He would at once have just judgment to be understood: as is that which He saith, Ye forsake the weightier matters of the Law, mercy and judgment. That also which Jeremias saith is, making his riches not with judgment. He saith not, making his riches by wrong or unjust judgment, or not with judgment right or just, but not with judgment: calling not any thing judgment but what is right and just.

5. Ver. 3. Let the mountains bear peace to the people, and the hills justice. The mountains are the greater, the hills the less. These are without doubt those which another Psalm hath, little with great. For those mountains did exult like rams, and those hills like lambs of the sheep, at the departure of Israel out of Egypt, that is, at the deliverance of the people of God from this world's servitude. Those then that are eminent in the Church for passing sanctity, are the mountains, who are meet to teach other men also, by so speaking as that they may be faithfully taught, by so living as that they may imitate them to their profit: but the hills are they that follow the excellence of the former by their own obedience. Why then the mountains peace: and the hills justice? Would there perchance have been no difference, even if it

had been said thus, Let the mountains bear justice to the people and the hills peace? For to both justice, and to both peace is necessary: and it may be that under another name justice herself may have been called peace. For this is true peace, not such as unjust men make among them. Or rather with a distinction not to be overlooked must that be understood which he saith, the mountains peace, and the hills justice? For men excelling in the Church ought to counsel for peace with watchful care; lest for the sake of their own distinctions by acting proudly they make schisms and dissever the bond of union. But let the hills so follow them by imitation and obedience, that they prefer Christ to them: lest being led astray by the empty authority of evil mountains, (for they seem to excel,) they tear themselves away from the Unity of Christ. Therefore hath it been said, Let the mountains bear peace to the people. Let them say indeed, Imitators of me be ye, as I am of Christ. But again let them say, Though if we, or an Angel from Heaven, shall have preached to you beside that which ye have received, be he anathema. Let them say also, Hath Paul by any means been crucified for you, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? So let them bear peace to the people of God, that is, to the poor of God: not over them, but with them desiring to reign. Let not also the latter say, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, but I of Cephas: but let all say, I am of Christ. This is justice; not to set servants before the Lord, nor to make them equal; so to lift eyes unto the mountains whence may come help to them, so that however their help they may not hope for from the mountains, but from the Lord who hath made Heaven and earth.

6. Thus also most pertinently may be understood, let the mountains bear peace to the people, namely, that we understand the peace to consist in the reconciliation whereby we are reconciled to God: for the mountains receive this for His people. Of this the Apostle thus testifieth: old things have passed away, behold they have been made new: but all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Behold in what manner the mountains receive peace for His people! For God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not ascribing to them their offences, and placing in us the word of reconciliation. In whom, but in the mountains that receive peace for His people? Wherefore the ambassadors of peace afterwards continue and say,

for Christ therefore we are executing an embassy, as though God were exhorting through us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. This peace the mountains do bear to His people, that is, the preaching and legation of His peace: but the hills justice, that is, obedience, which is in men and in every rational creature the fountain and perfection of all justice, so that of the two men, that is, of Adam, who was the head of our death, and of Christ Who is the Head of our salvation, there is this great distinction set forth, that "as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one man many shall be made just." Let the mountains, therefore, receive peace for the people, and the hills justice: so that in this manner both being at one, there may come to pass that which hath been written, justice and peace have kissed one another. But that which other copies have, let the mountains receive peace for the people, and let the hills: I think must be understood of both sorts of preaching of Gospel peace, whether those that go before, or those that follow after. But in these copies this followeth, in justice He shall judge the poor of the people. But those copies are more approved of which have that which we have expounded above, let the mountains bear peace to the people, and the hills justice. But some have, to Thy people; some have not to Thy, but only to the people.

7. Ver. 4. He shall judge the poor of the people, and shall save the sons of the poor. The poor and the sons of the poor seem to me to be the very same, as the same city is Sion and the daughter of Sion. But if it is to be understood with a distinction, the poor we take to be the mountains, but the sons of the poor the hills: for instance, Prophets and Apostles, the poor, but the sons of them, that is, those that profit under their authority, the sons of the poor. But that which hath been said above, shall judge; and afterwards, shall save; is as it were a sort of exposition in what manner He shall judge. For to this end He shall judge, that He may save, that is, may sever from those that are to be destroyed and condemned, those to whom He giveth salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. For by such men to Him is said, Destroy not with ungodly men my soul: and, Judge Thou me, O God, and sever my cause from the nation unholy. We must observe also that he saith not, He shall judge the poor people, but, the poor of the people. For above when he had said, to judge Thy people in justice and Thy poor in judgment, the same he called the people of God as His poor, that is, only the

good and those that belong to the right hand side. But because in this world those for the right and those for the left feed together, who, like lambs and goats at the last are to be put asunder; the whole, as it is mingled together, he hath called by the name of the People. And because even here he putteth judgment in a good sense, that is, for the purpose of saving: therefore he saith, He shall judge the poor of the people, that is, shall sever for salvation those that are poor among the people. Already who are the poor we have explained above: the same also let us perceive to be needy. And He shall humble the false-accuser. No false-accuser can be more suitably recognised here than the devil. False accusation is his business. Doth Job worship God gratis? But the Lord Jesus doth humble him, by His grace aiding His own, in order that they may worship God gratis, that is, may take delight in the Lord. He humbled him also thus; because when in Him the devil, that is, the prince of this world, had found nothing, he slew Him by the false accusations of the Jews, whom the false-accuser made use of as his vessels, working in the sons of unbelief. For he was humbled in that He Whom they had slain rose again, and took away the kingdom of death: whereof he had so much the power, as that by one man whom he had deceived, he drew all men through death unto condemnation. But he was humbled: for if because of one man's transgression death reigned through one, much more they that receive abundance of grace and righteousness, in life shall reign through One Jesus Christ, Who humbled the false-accuser, that was putting in false accusations, unjust judges, false witnesses, in order that he might destroy Him.

8. Ver. 5. And He shall endure to the sun, or, shall endure with the sun. For thus some of our writers have thought would be more exactly translated that which in the Greek is *συμπαραμενεῖ*. But if in Latin it could have been expressed in one word, it must have been expressed by *compermanebit*: however, because in Latin the word cannot be expressed, in order that the sense at least might be translated, it hath been expressed by, He shall endure with the sun. For He shall coendure to the sun is nothing else but, He shall endure with the sun. But what great matter is it for Him to endure with the sun, through Whom all things were made, and without Whom nothing was made, save that this prophecy hath been sent before for the sake of those who think that the religion of the Christian name up to a particular time in

this world will live, and afterwards will be no more? He shall endure therefore with the sun, so long as the sun riseth and setteth, that is, so long as these times revolve, there shall not be wanting the Church of God, that is, Christ's body on earth. But that which he addeth, and before the moon, generations of generations: he might have expressed by, and before the sun, that is, both with the sun and before the sun: which would have been understood by both with times and before times. That then which goeth before time is eternal: and that is truly to be held eternal which by no time is changed, as, in the beginning was the Word. But by the moon he hath chosen rather to intimate the waxings and wanings of things mortal. Lastly, when he had said, before the moon, wishing in a manner to explain for what purpose he inserted the moon, generations, he saith, of generations. As though he were saying, before the moon, that is, before the generations of generations which pass away in the departure and succession of things mortal, like the lunar wanings and waxings. And thus what is better to be understood by His enduring before the moon, than that He taketh precedence of all mortal things by immortality? Which also as followeth may not impertinently be taken, that whereas now, having humbled the false-accuser, He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, this is to endure with the sun. For the brightness of the eternal glory is understood to be the Son: as though the Sun were the Father, and the Brightness of Him His Son. But as these things may be spoken of the invisible Substance of the Creator, not as of that visible creation wherein are bodies celestial, of which bright bodies the sun hath the preeminence, from which this similitude hath been drawn: just as they are drawn even from things earthly, to wit, stone, lion, lamb, man having two sons, and the like: therefore having humbled the false-accuser, He endureth with the sun: because having vanquished the devil by the Resurrection, He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, where He dieth no more, and death no longer over Him shall have dominion. This too is before the moon, as though the First-born from the dead were going before the Church, which is passing on in the departure and succession of mortals. These are the generations of generations. Or perchance it is because generations are those whereby we are begotten mortally; but generations of generations those whereby we are begotten again immortally. And such is the Church which He went before, in order that He might endure before the moon, being the First-born of the dead. To be sure, that

which is in the Greek γενεας γενεων, some have interpreted, not generations, but, of a generation of generations: because γενεας is of ambiguous case in Greek, and whether it be the genitive singular τῆς γενεᾶς, that is, of the generation, or the accusative plural τὰς γενεὰς, that is, the generations, doth not clearly appear, except that deservedly that sense hath been preferred wherein, as though explaining what he had called ‘the moon,’ he added in continuation, generations of generations.

9. Ver. 6. And He shall come down like rain into a fleece, and like drops distilling upon the earth. He hath called to our minds and admonished us, that what was done by the Judge Gedeon, in Christ hath its end. For he asked a sign of the Lord, that a fleece laid on the floor should alone be rained upon, and the floor should be dry; and again, the fleece alone should be dry, and the floor should be rained upon; and so it came to pass. Which thing signified, that, being as it were on a floor in the midst of the whole round world, the dry fleece was the former people Israel. The same Christ therefore Himself came down like rain upon a fleece, when yet the floor was dry: whence also He said, I am not sent but to the sheep which were lost of the house of Israel. There He chose out a Mother by whom to receive the form of a servant, wherein He was to appear to men: there the disciples, to whom He gave this same injunction, saying, Into the way of the nations go ye not away, and into the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not: go ye first to the sheep which are lost of the house of Israel. When He saith, go ye first to them, He sheweth also that hereafter, when at length the floor was to be rained upon, they would go to other sheep also, which were not of the old people Israel, concerning whom He saith, I have other sheep which are not of this fold, it behoveth Me to bring in them also, that there may be one flock and one Shepherd. Hence also the Apostle: for I say, he saith, that Christ was a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises of the fathers. Thus rain came down upon the fleece, the floor being yet dry. But inasmuch as he continueth, but that the nations should glorify God for His mercy: that when the time came on, that should be fulfilled which by the Prophet He saith, a people whom I have not known hath served Me, in the hearkening of the ear it hath obeyed Me: we now see, that of the grace of Christ the nation of the Jews hath remained dry, and the whole round world through all nations is being rained upon by clouds

full of Christian grace. For by another word he hath indicated the same rain, saying, drops distilling: no longer upon the fleece, but upon the earth. For what else is rain but drops distilling? But that the above nation under the name of a fleece is signified, I think is either because they were to be stripped of the authority of teaching, just as a sheep is stripped of its skin; or because in a secret place He was hiding that same rain, which He willed not should be preached to uncircumcision, that is, be revealed to uncircumcised nations.

10. Ver. 7. There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace, until the moon be taken away. The expression tollatur, some have interpreted by be taken away, but others by be exalted, translating one Greek word, which is there used, ἀνταναίρεθῆ, just as each of them thought good. But they who have said, be removed, and they who have said, be taken away, do not so very much differ. For by the expression, be removed, custom doth teach us that there should be rather implied, that a thing is taken away and is no more, than that it is raised to a higher place: but be taken away can be understood in no other way at all, than that a thing is destroyed: that is, it is no more: but by be exalted, only that it is raised to a higher place. Which indeed when it is put in a bad sense is wont to signify pride: as is the passage, In thy wisdom be not exalted. But in a good sense it belongeth to a more exceeding honour, as, for instance, when any thing is being raised; as is, In the nights exalt ye your hands unto holy places, and bless ye the Lord. Here then if we have understood the expression, be removed, what will be, until the moon be removed, but that it be so dealt with that it be no more? For perchance he willed this also to be perceived, that mortality is to be no longer, ‘when the last enemy shall be destroyed, death:’ so that abundance of peace may be brought down so far as that nothing may withstand the felicity of the blessed from the infirmity of mortality: which will come to pass in that age, of which we have the faithful promise of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, concerning which it is said, There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace: until, death being utterly overcome and destroyed, all mortality be consumed. But if under the term moon, not the mortality of the flesh through which the Church is now passing, but the Church Herself in general hath been signified, which is to endure for everlasting, being delivered from this

mortality, thus must be taken the expression, There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace, until the moon be exalted; as though it were said, There shall arise in His days justice, to conquer the contradiction and rebellion of the flesh, and whereby there may be made a peace so increasing and abundant, until the moon be exalted, that is, until the Church be lifted up, through the glory of the Resurrection to reign with Him, Who went before Her in this glory, the first-born of the dead, that He might sit at the right hand of the Father; thus with the sun enduring before the moon, in the place whereunto hereafter was to be exalted the moon also.

11. Ver. 8. And He shall be Lord from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world: He to wit concerning Whom he had said, There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace, until the moon be exalted. If the Church here is properly signified under the term moon, in continuation he shewed how widely that same Church He was going to spread abroad, when He added, and He shall be Lord from sea even unto sea. For the land is encircled by a great sea which is called the Ocean: from which there floweth in some small part in the midst of the lands, and maketh those seas known to us, which are frequented by ships. Again, in from sea even unto sea He hath said, that from any one end of the earth even unto any other end, He would be Lord, Whose name and power in the whole world were to be preached and to prevail exceedingly. To which, that there might not be understood in any other manner, from sea even unto sea: He immediately added, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world. Therefore that which He saith in even unto the ends of the round world, the same He had said before in from sea even unto sea. But in that which now He saith, from the river, He hath evidently expressed that He willed Christ to publish at length His power from that place from whence also He began to choose His disciples, to wit from the river Jordan, where upon the Lord, on His baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended, there sounded a voice from Heaven, This is My beloved Son. From this place then His doctrine and the authority of the heavenly ministry setting out, is enlarged even unto the ends of the round world, when there is preached the Gospel of the kingdom in the whole world, for a testimony unto all nations: and then shall come the end.

12. Ver. 9. In His presence shall fall down the Ethiopians, and His enemies shall lick the earth. By the Ethiopians, as by a part the whole, He hath signified all nations, selecting that nation to mention especially by name, which is at the ends of the earth. By in His presence shall fall down hath been signified, shall adore Him. And because there were to be schisms in divers quarters of the world, which would be jealous of the Church Catholic spread abroad in the whole round world, and again those same schisms dividing themselves into the names of men, and by loving the men under whose authority they had been rent, opposing themselves to the glory of Christ which is throughout all lands; so when He had said, in His presence shall fall down the Ethiopians, He added, and His enemies shall lick the earth: that is, shall love men, so that they shall be jealous of the glory of Christ, to Whom hath been said, Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory. For man earned to hear, Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go. By licking this earth, that is, being delighted with the vainly talking authority of such men, by loving them, and by counting them for the most pleasing of men, they gainsay the divine sayings, whereby the Catholic Church hath been foretold, not as to be in any particular quarter of the world, as certain schisms are, but in the whole universe by bearing fruit and growing so as to attain even unto the very Ethiopians, to wit, the remotest and foulest of mankind.

13. Ver. 10. The kings of Tharsis and the isles shall offer gifts, the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall lead presents. (Ver. 11.) And there shall adore Him all kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. This no longer requireth an expounder but a thinker; yea it doth thrust itself upon the sight not only of rejoicing believers, but also of groaning unbelievers—except perchance we must enquire why there hath been said, shall lead presents. For there are wont to be led those things which can walk. For could it by any means have been spoken with reference to the sacrifice of victims? Far be it that such ‘righteousness’ should arise in His days. But those gifts which have been foretold as to be led, seem to me to signify men, whom into the fellowship of the Church of Christ the authority of kings doth lead: although even persecuting kings have led gifts, knowing not what they did, in sacrificing the holy Martyrs.

14. But while he is explaining the reasons why so great honour is paid Him by kings, and He is served of all nations: (ver. 12.) because He hath delivered, he saith, the needy man from the mighty, and the poor man, to whom was no helper. This needy and poor man is the people of men believing in Him. In this people are also kings adoring Him. For they do not disdain to be needy and poor, that is, humbly confessing sins, and needing the glory of God and the grace of God, in order that this King, Son of the King, may deliver them from the mighty one. For this same mighty one is he who above was called the Slanderer: whom mighty to subdue men to himself, and to hold them bound in captivity, not his virtue did make, but men's sins. The same is himself also called strong; therefore here mighty also. But He that hath humbled the slanderer and hath entered into the house of the strong man to bind him and to spoil his vessels, He hath delivered the needy man from the mighty, and the poor man to whom was no helper. For this neither the virtue of any one could accomplish, nor any just man, nor any Angel. When then there was no helper, by His coming He saved them Himself.

15. But it might occur to one; if because of sins man was held by the devil, have sins pleased Christ, Who saved the needy man from the mighty? Far be it. But, (ver. 13.) He it is that shall spare the helpless and poor man: that is, shall remit sins to the man, humble and not trusting in his own merits, or hoping for salvation because of his own virtue, but needing the grace of his Saviour. But when he hath added, and the souls of the poor He shall save: he hath recommended to our notice both the aids of grace; both that which is for the remission of sins, when he saith, He shall spare the poor and needy man; and that which doth consist in the imparting of righteousness, when he hath added, and the souls of the poor He shall save. For no one is meet of himself for salvation, (which salvation is perfect righteousness,) unless God's grace aid: because the fulness of the law is nought but love, which doth not exist in us of ourselves, but is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Which hath been given unto us.

16. Ver. 14. From usuries and iniquity He shall redeem the souls of them. What are these usuries but sins, which are also called debts? But I think they have been called usuries, because more of ill is found in the

punishments than hath been committed in the sins. For, for example's sake, while a man-slayer killeth only the body of a man, but can no wise hurt the soul; of himself both soul and body is destroyed in hell. Because of such despisers of present commandment and deriders of future punishment hath been said, I coming would have exacted with usuries, from these usuries are redeemed the souls of the poor by that blood which hath been shed for the remission of sins. He shall redeem, I say, from usuries, by remitting sins which owed larger punishments: but He shall redeem from iniquity, by helping them by grace even to do righteousness. Therefore the same two things have been repeated which were said above. For in that which is above, He shall spare the helpless and poor man, there is understood from usuries: but in that which there he saith, and the souls of the poor He shall save; there seemeth to have been implied, from iniquity: so that the words He shall redeem, are understood with both. So when He shall spare the poor and helpless man, and shall save the souls of the poor: thus from usuries and iniquity He shall redeem the souls of them. And honourable shall be the name of Him in the presence of them. For they give honour to His name for so great benefits, and they reply that "meet and right it is" to render thanks to the Lord their God. Or, as some copies have it, and honourable is the name of them in the presence of Him: for even if Christians seem despicable to this world, the name of them in the presence of Him is honourable, Who to them hath given it, no longer remembering those names in His lips, whereby before they used to be called, when they were bound fast by the superstitions of the Gentiles, or signed with names derived from their own evil deserts, before they were Christians, which name is honourable in the presence of Him, even if it seemeth despicable to enemies.

17. Ver. 15. And He shall live, and there shall be given to Him of the gold of Arabia. There would not have been said, and He shall live, (for of whom could not this be said, though living for ever so brief a space of time on this earth?) unless that life were being recommended to our notice, wherein He dieth no more, and death over Him shall have no more dominion. And thus, and He shall live, that was despised in death: for, as another Prophet saith, there shall be taken away from the earth the life of Him. But what is, and there shall be given to Him of the gold of Arabia? For the fact that from

thence even the former Salomon received gold, in this Psalm hath been in a figure transferred unto another true Salomon, that is, the true Peace-maker. For the former did not have dominion from the river even unto the ends of the round world. Thus then hath been prophesied, that even the wise men of this world in Christ would believe. But by Arabia we understand the Gentiles; by gold wisdom, which doth as much excel among all doctrines as gold among metals. Whence hath been written, "Receive ye prudence as silver, and wisdom as proved gold." And they shall pray concerning Himself alway. That which the Greek hath, *περὶ αὐτοῦ*, some have interpreted by concerning Himself, some for Himself, or for Him. But what is, concerning Himself, except perchance that for which we pray, saying, Thy kingdom come? For Christ's coming shall make present to believers the kingdom of God. But how to understand for Him is difficult; except that when prayer is made for the Church, for Himself prayer is made, because she is His Body. For concerning Christ and the Church hath been sent before a great Sacrament, there shall be two in one flesh. But now that which followeth, all the day long, that is, in all time, they shall bless Him, is sufficiently evident.

18. Ver. 16. And there shall be a firmament on the earth, on the tops of the mountains. For, all the promises of God in Him are Yea, that is, in Him are confirmed: because in Him hath been fulfilled whatever hath been prophesied for our salvation. For the tops of the mountains it is meet to understand as the authors of the divine Scriptures, that is, those persons through whom they were supplied: wherein He is indeed Himself the Firmament: for unto Him all things that have been divinely written are ascribed. But this He willed should be on earth; because for the sake of those that are upon earth, they were written. Whence He came also Himself upon earth, in order that He might confirm all these things, that is, in Himself might shew them to have been fulfilled. For it was necessary, He saith, for all things to be fulfilled which were written in the Law, and the Prophets, and Psalms, concerning Me: that is, in the tops of the mountains. For so there cometh in the last times the evident Mount of the Lord, prepared on the summit of the mountains: of which here he speaketh, "in the tops of the mountains." Highly superexalted above Libanus shall be His fruit. Libanus we are wont to take as this world's dignity: for Libanus is a

mountain bearing tall trees, and the name itself is interpreted whiteness. For what marvel, if above every brilliant state of this world there is superexalted the fruit of Christ, of which fruit the lovers have contemned all secular dignities? But if in a good sense we take Libanus, because of the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted: what other fruit must be understood, that is being exalted above this Libanus, except that whereof the Apostle speaketh when he is going to speak concerning that love of his, yet a preeminent way to you I shew? For this is put forward even in the first rank of divine gifts, in the place where he saith, but the fruit of the Spirit is love: and with this are conjoined the remaining words as consequent. And they shall flourish from the city like hay of the earth. Because city is used ambiguously, and there is not annexed of Him, or of God, for there hath not been said, from the city of Him, or from the city of God, but only from the city: in a good sense it is understood, in order that from the city of God, that is, from the Church, they may flourish like grass; but grass bearing fruit, as is that of wheat: for even this is called grass in Holy Scripture; as in Genesis there is a command for the earth to bring forth every tree and every grass, and there is not added every wheat: which without doubt would not have been passed over unless under the name of grass this also were understood; and in many other passages of the Scriptures this is found. But if we must take, and they shall flourish like the grass of the earth, in the same manner as is said, all flesh is grass, and the glory of a man like the flower of grass: certainly then that city must be understood which doth intimate this world's society: for it was not to no purpose that Cain was the first to build a city. Thus the fruit of Christ being exalted above Libanus, that is, above enduring trees and undecaying timbers, because He is the everlasting fruit, all the glory of a man according to the temporal exaltation of the world is compared to grass; for by believers and by men already hoping for life eternal temporal felicity is despised, in order that there may be fulfilled that which hath been written, all flesh is grass, and all the glory of flesh as the flower of grass: the grass hath dried, the flower hath fallen off, but the word of the Lord doth endure for ever. There is the fruit of Him exalted above Libanus. For always flesh hath been grass, and the glory of flesh as the flower of grass: but because it was not clearly proved what felicity ought to have been chosen and preferred, the flower of grass was esteemed for a great matter: not only it was by no means despised, but it was even chiefly sought after. As if

therefore at that time He shall have begun to be thus, when there is reprov'd and despis'd whatever used to flourish in the world, thus hath been said, super-exalted above Libanus shall be the fruit of Him, and they shall flourish from the city like grass of the earth: that is, glorified above all things shall be that which is promised for everlasting, and compared to the grass of the earth shall be whatever is counted a great matter in the world.

19. Ver. 17. Be, therefore, the name of Him blessed for ever: before the sun endureth the name of Him. By the sun times are signified. Therefore for everlasting endureth the name of Him. For eternity doth precede times, and is not bounded by time. And there shall be blessed in Him all the tribes of the earth. For in Him is fulfilled that which hath been promised to Abraham. For He saith not, In seeds, as though in many; but as though in one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. But to Abraham is said, In thy Seed shall be blessed all the tribes of the earth. And not the sons of the flesh but the sons of promise are counted in the Seed. All nations shall magnify Him. As if in explanation there is repeated that which above hath been said. For because they shall be blessed in Him, they shall magnify Him; not of themselves making Him to be great, that of Himself is great, but by praising and confessing Him to be great. For thus we magnify God: thus also we say, Hallowed be Thy name, which is indeed always holy.

20. Ver. 18. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, Who hath done wonderful things alone. Contemplating all things above spoken of, a hymn bursteth forth; and the Lord God of Israel is blessed. For that is being fulfilled which hath been spoken to that barren woman, and He that hath delivered Thee, the God of Israel, shall Himself be called of the whole earth. He doeth Himself marvellous things alone: for whosoever do them, He doth Himself work in them, Who doeth wonderful things alone.

21. Ver. 19. And blessed be the name of His glory for everlasting, and for age of age. For what else should the Latin interpreters have said, who could not have said for everlasting, and for everlasting of everlasting? For it soundeth as if one thing were meant in the expression for everlasting, and another thing in the expression for age: but the Greek hath εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, which perchance more meetly might have been rendered by, 'for age, and for age of age:' so that by 'for age,' might

have been understood as long as this age endureth; but 'for age of age,' that which after the end of this is promised to be. And there shall be fulfilled with the glory of Him every land: so be it, so be it. Thou hast commanded, O Lord, so it is coming to pass: so it is coming to pass, until that which began with the river, may attain fully even unto the ends of the round world.

PSALM 73

Exposition

Hear ye, hear ye, dearly beloved, bowels of the Body of Christ, whose hope is the Lord your God, and who regard not vanities and lying follies: and ye that still regard them, hear ye in order that ye may not regard them. This Psalm hath an inscription, that is, a title, There have failed the hymns of David, the son of Jesse. A Psalm of Asaph himself. So many Psalms we have on the titles whereof is written the name David, no where there is added, son of Jesse, except in this alone. Which we must believe hath not been done to no purpose, nor capriciously. For every where God doth make intimations to us, and to the understanding thereof doth invite the godly study of love. What is, there have failed the hymns of David, the son of Jesse? Hymns are praises of God accompanied with singing: hymns are songs containing the praise of God. If there be praise, and it be not of God, it is no hymn: if there be praise, and God's praise, and it be not sung, it is no hymn. It must needs then, if it be a hymn, have these three things, both praise, and that of God, and singing. What is then, there have failed the hymns? There have failed the praises which are sung unto God. He seemeth to tell of a thing painful, and so to speak deplorable. For he that singeth praise, not only praiseth, but also praiseth with gladness: he that singeth praise, not only singeth, but also loveth him of whom he singeth. In praise, there is the speaking forth of one confessing, in singing; the affection of one loving. There have failed then the hymns of David, he saith: and he hath added, the son of Jesse. For David was king of Israel, son of Jesse, at a certain time of the Old Testament, at which time the New Testament was therein hidden, like fruit in a root. For if thou seek fruit in a root, thou wilt not find, and yet dost thou not find any fruit in the branches, except that which hath gone forth from the root. At that time then to the first people, coming from the seed of Abraham carnally; (for the second people also,

though belonging to the New Testament, doth belong to the seed of Abraham, but now spiritually;) to this first people then, as yet carnal, where but few Prophets understood, both what was to be desired of God, and when it should be to be publicly preached, they foretold these future times, and the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in like manner as Christ Himself to be born after the flesh was hidden in the root, that is in the seed of the Patriarchs, and at a certain time must be revealed, as at the fruit appearing, according as it is written, there hath flourished a shoot from the root of Jesse: so also the New Testament itself which is in Christ, in those former times was hidden, being known to the Prophets alone, and to the very few godly men, not by the manifestation of things present, but by the revelation of things future. For what meaneth it, brethren, (to mention but one thing,) that Abraham sending his faithful servant to espouse a wife for his only son, maketh him swear to him, and in the oath saith to him, Put thy hand under my thigh, and swear? What was there in the thigh of Abraham, where he put his hand in swearing? What was there there, except that which even then was promised to him, In thy seed shall be blessed all nations? Under the name of thigh, flesh is signified. From the flesh of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, and not to mention many names, through Mary was our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. But that the root was in the Patriarchs, how shall we shew? Let us question Paul. The Gentiles now believing in Christ, and desiring as it were to boast over the Jews who crucified Christ; although also from that same people there came another wall, meeting in the corner, that is, in Christ Himself, the wall of uncircumcision, that is, of the Gentiles, coming from a different quarter: when, I say, the nations were lifting up themselves, he doth thus depress them. For if thou, he saith, being cut out of the natural wild olive, hast been grafted in among them, do not boast against the branches: for if thou boastest, thou dost not bear the root, but the root thee. Therefore he speaketh of certain branches broken off from the root of the Patriarchs because of unbelief, and the wild olive therein grafted in, that it might be partaker of the fatness of the olive, that is, the Church coming out of the Gentiles. And who doth graff the wild olive on the olive? The olive is wont to be grafted on the wild olive; the wild olive on the olive we never saw. For whosoever may have done so will find no berries but those of the

wild olive. For that which is grafted in, the same groweth, and of that kind the fruit is found. There is not found the fruit of the root but of the graft. The Apostle shewing that God did this thing by His Omnipotence, namely, that the wild olive should be grafted into the root of the olive, and should not bear wild berries, but olive—ascribing it to the Omnipotence of God, the Apostle saith this, If thou hast been cut out of the natural wild olive and against nature hast been grafted into a good olive, do not boast, he saith, against the branches. But thou sayest, he saith, the branches have been broken off, that I may be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they have been broken off: but do thou by faith stand; be not high minded, but fear. But what is, be not high minded? Do not be proud, because thou hast been grafted in; but fear lest thou be broken off through unbelief, as they have been broken off. Because of unbelief, he saith, they have been broken off: but do thou by faith stand; be not high minded, but fear. For if God hath not spared the natural branches, neither thee will He spare. And there followeth a good passage, and necessary, and the whole to be hearkened unto: Thou seest then, he saith, the goodness and severity of God: upon those indeed that have been broken off, severity: but on thee that hast been grafted in, goodness, if thou shalt have remained in goodness. Otherwise (that is, if thou shalt not have remained in goodness) both thou shalt be cut off; and they (if they shall not have remained in unbelief) shall be grafted in.

3. In the time then of the Old Testament, brethren, the promises from our God to that carnal people were earthly and temporal. There was promised an earthly kingdom, there was promised that land into which they were also led, after being delivered from Egypt: by Jesus son of Nave they were led into the land of promise, where also earthly Jerusalem was builded, where David reigned: they received the land, after being delivered from Egypt, by passing through the Red sea; having ended their circuits and the wanderings over the deserts, they received the land, they received the kingdom; secondly, after they had received the kingdom, because they had received earthly things, they began on account of their sins to be besieged, stormed, led captive; at the last there was overthrown even the city itself. Such were also those promises, which were not to endure, through which however were figured future promises which were to endure, so that all that course of temporal promises was a figure and a sort of prophecy of things future.

Accordingly when that kingdom was failing, where reigned David, the son of Jesse, that is, one that was a man, though a Prophet, though holy, because he saw and foresaw Christ to come, of whose seed also after the flesh He was to be born: nevertheless a man, nevertheless not yet Christ, nevertheless not yet our King Son of God, but king David son of Jesse: because then that kingdom was to fail, through the receiving of which kingdom at that time God was praised by carnal men; for this thing alone they esteemed a great matter, namely, that they were delivered temporally from those by whom they were being oppressed, and that they had escaped from persecuting enemies through the Red sea, and had been led through the desert, and had found country and kingdom: for this alone they praised God, not yet perceiving the thing which God was designing beforehand and promising in these figures. In the failing therefore of those things for which the carnal people, over whom reigned that David, was praising God, there failed the hymns of David, not the Son of God, but the son of Jesse. The dangerous passage of the present Psalm's title, as the Lord hath willed, we have weathered: ye have heard why there hath been said, there have failed the hymns of David, the son of Jesse.

4. Whose voice is the Psalm? Of Asaph. What is Asaph? As we find in interpretations from the Hebrew language into the Greek, and those again translated to us from the Greek into the Latin, Asaph is interpreted Synagogue. It is the voice therefore of the Synagogue. But when thou hast heard Synagogue, do not forthwith abhor it, as if it were the murderer of the Lord. That Synagogue was indeed the murderer of the Lord, no man doubteth it: but remember, that from the Synagogue were the rams whereof we are the sons. Whence it is said in a Psalm, Bring ye to the Lord the sons of rams. What rams are thence? Peter, John, James, Andrew, Bartholomew, and the rest of the Apostles. Hence also he too at first Saul, afterwards Paul: that is, at first proud, afterwards humble. For ye know how Saul, whence was derived the name Saul, was a proud and unbridled king. Not as though for any arrogance the Apostle changed his name: but from being Saul he became Paul, from being proud, a small one. For the name Paul doth signify a small one. Wilt thou know what Saul is? Hear now Paul himself recording what he hath been by his naughtiness, and what now he is by the grace of God: hear after what sort he hath been Saul, and after what sort he is Paul: I

that was, he saith, before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. Thou hast heard Saul, hear also Paul: For I am, he saith, the least of Apostles. What is least, but that I am Paul? And he continueth, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle. Wherefore? Because I have been Saul. What is, I have been Saul? Let him tell himself; because I persecuted, he saith, the Church of God; but by the grace of God, he saith, I am what I am. He hath taken from himself all his greatness, now being least in himself, he is great in Christ. And this Paul saith what? God hath not cast away His people, (he is speaking of the people coming out of the Jews,) His people, he saith, which He hath foreknown. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Therefore even Paul came to us from the Synagogue, and Peter and the other Apostles from the Synagogue. Therefore when thou hast heard the voice of the Synagogue, do not look to the deserving thereof, but observe the offspring. There is speaking therefore in this Psalm, the Synagogue, after the failing of the hymns of David, the son of Jesse: that is, after the failing of things temporal, through which God was wont to be praised by the carnal people. But why did these fail, except in order that others might be sought for? That there might be sought for what? Was it things which were not there? No, but things which were there being hidden in figures: not which were not yet there, but which there as it were in a sort were concealed in certain secret things of mysteries. What things? These, saith the Apostle himself, were our figures.

5. And observe now briefly that same figure of us: the people Israel under the domination of Pharaoh and the Egyptians is the Christian people before believing already predestined for God, and as yet serving demons and the devil the chief of them: behold the people under the yoke of the Egyptians is this people doing service to their sins. For not except through our sins is the devil able to have dominion. The people are delivered from the Egyptians through Moses: the people are delivered from the past life of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ. The one people doth pass through the Red sea; the other through Baptism. There die in the Red sea all the enemies of that people: there die in Baptism all our sins. Observe, brethren: after that Red sea not forthwith is the land given, nor, as though foes are no more, do they triumph securely, but there remaineth the desert's solitude, there remain foes lying in wait in the way: so also after Baptism there remaineth

the Christian life amid temptations. In that desert they sighed for the promised land: for what else do Christians sigh now that they have been washed in Baptism? Do they now by any means reign with Christ? We have not yet come to our land of promise, though that will not fail us, for there will not fail the hymns of David. This thing however let all believers hear, let them know where they are: in a desert they are, for the land they sigh. Dead are the foes in Baptism, but they follow behind. What is, they follow behind? Before our face we have things future, behind our back things past: all past sins have been effaced in Baptism; those whereby now we are tried, do follow us not behind, but lie in wait in the way. Whence the Apostle, while yet set in the way of this desert, saith, the things which are behind forgetting, unto those things which are before reaching out, with earnestness I follow unto the palm of the high calling of God: as though he were saying, unto the land of the high promise of God. And there now, brethren, whatever that people suffered in the desert, and whatever God bestowed upon them, whatever those scourges were, whatever the gifts, they are intimations of those things, which we walking in Christ in the wilderness of this life, seeking the land, both receive for consolation and suffer for probation. It is no marvel therefore that this hath failed which did figure the future. For the people was led to a land of promise, but was that land always to remain? Nay; if this had been so, it would not have been a figure but a substance. But because it was a figure, unto something temporal that people was led. If unto something temporal they were led, it must needs have failed, and by its failing they be compelled to seek that which never would fail.

6. It was the Synagogue therefore, that is, they that there worshipped God after a godly sort, but yet for the sake of earthly things, for the sake of these present things: (for there are ungodly men who seek the blessings of present things from demons: but this people was on this account better than the Gentiles, because although it were blessings present and temporal, yet they sought them from the One God, who is the Creator of all things both spiritual and corporal.) When therefore those godly men after the flesh were observing—that is that Synagogue which was made up of good men, men for the time good, not spiritual men, such as were the Prophets therein, such as were the few that understood the kingdom heavenly, eternal—that

Synagogue, I say, observed what things it received from God, and what things God promised to that people, abundance of things earthly, land, peace, earthly felicity: but in all these things were figures, and they not perceiving what was there concealed in things figured, thought that God gave this for a great matter, and had nothing better to give to men loving Him and serving Him: they remarked and saw certain sinners, ungodly, blasphemers, servants of demons, sons of the Devil, living in great naughtiness and pride, yet abounding in such things earthly, temporal, for which sort of things they were serving God themselves: and there sprang up a most evil thought in the heart, which made the feet to totter, and almost slip out of God's way. And behold this thought was in the people of the Old Testament: I would it be not in our carnal brethren, when now openly there is being proclaimed the felicity of the New Testament. For what said that Synagogue at that time? What said that people? We serve God, and are cut short, we are scourged; there are withdrawn from us the things which we love, and which we had received from God as a great matter: but those wicked men, most naughty, proud, blasphemers, restless, do abound in all the things for which we serve God: I think to no purpose God is served. This is the meaning of the Psalm, which belongeth to the failing and tottering people: while they remark that earthly blessings, for which they were serving God, do abound to those who served not God, they totter and they well nigh slip, and together with those hymns they fail, because in such hearts hymns were failing. What is, in such hearts hymns were failing? Because now of such things they were thinking, they praised not God. For after what sort should they praise God, to whom as if perverse He seemed, in giving to ungodly men so great felicity, and taking it away from them that served Him? To them God did not seem to be good: and by those to whom God did not seem to be good, He was not indeed praised: in them again by whom God was not praised, there failed hymns. But afterwards this people perceived what God was admonishing them to seek, when He was withdrawing those temporal blessings from His servants, and was giving them to His enemies, to blasphemers, to ungodly men: being admonished they perceived how that above all things which God giveth both to good men and evil men, and sometimes taketh away from both good men and evil men—above all things He reserveth something for good men. What is, He reserveth something for good men. What doth He reserve for

them? Himself. Now as far as I can judge, we are running on in the Psalm, it is understood in the name of the Lord. Hear one laying it to heart and repentant who had gone astray, in thinking God not good, Who giveth earthly good things to evil men, and taketh them away from His servants. For He perceived what God was reserving for His servants, and reconsidering and chastening himself, he brake forth in this manner:

7. Ver. 1. How good is the God of Israel! But to whom? To men right in heart. To men perverse what? Perverse He seemeth. So also in another Psalm He saith: With a holy man holy Thou shalt be, and with the innocent man innocent Thou shalt be, and with the perverse man perverse Thou shalt be. What is, perverse Thou shalt be with the perverse man? Perverse the perverse man shall think Thee. Not that by any means God is made perverse. Far be it: what He is, He is. But in like manner as the sun appeareth mild to one having clear, sound, healthy, strong eyes, but against weak eyes doth dart hard spears, so to say; the former looking at it it doth invigorate, the latter it doth torture, though not being itself changed, but the man being changed: so when thou shalt have begun to be perverse, and to thee God shall seem to be perverse; thou art changed, not He. That therefore to thee will be punishment which to good men is joy. He calling to mind this thing, saith, How good is the God of Israel to men right in heart!

8. But what to thee? (Ver. 2.) But my feet were almost moved. When were the feet moved, except when the heart was not right? Whence was the heart not right? Hear: my steps were well nigh overthrown. What he hath meant by almost, the same he hath meant by well nigh: and what he hath meant by my feet were almost moved, the same he hath meant by my steps were overthrown. Almost my feet were moved, almost my steps were overthrown. Moved were the feet: but whence were the feet moved and the steps overthrown? Moved were the feet to going astray, overthrown were the steps to falling: not entirely, but almost. But what is this? Already I was going to stray, I had not gone; already I was falling, I had not fallen.

9. But why even this? (Ver. 3.) For I was jealous, he saith, in the case of sinners, looking on the peace of sinners. I observed sinners, I saw them to have peace. What peace? Temporal, transient, falling, and earthly: but yet such as I also was desiring of God. I saw them that served not God to have

that which I desired in order that I might serve God: and my feet were moved, and my steps were almost overthrown.

10. But why sinners have this, he saith briefly:

Ver. 4. Because there is no avoidance of their death, and there is a firmament in their scourge. (Ver. 5.) In the labours of men they are not, and with men they shall not be scourged. Now I have perceived, he saith, why they have peace, and flourish on the earth; because of their death there is no avoidance, because death sure and eternal doth await them, which neither doth avoid them, nor can they avoid it, because there is no avoidance of their death, and there is a firmament in their scourge. And there is a firmament in their scourge. For their scourge is not temporal, but firm for everlasting. Because of these evil things then which are to be to them eternal, now what? In the labours of men they are not, and with men they shall not be scourged. Doth not even the devil himself escape scourging with men, for whom nevertheless an eternal punishment is being prepared?

11. Wherefore on this account what do these men, while they are not scourged, while they labour not with men?

Ver. 6. Therefore, he saith, there hath holden them pride. Observe these men, proud, undisciplined; observe the bull, devoted for a victim, suffered to stray at liberty; and to damage whatever he may, even up to the day of his slaughter. Now it is a good thing, brethren, that we should hear in the very words of a prophet of this bull as it were, whereof I have spoken. For thus of him the Scripture doth make mention in another place: he saith that they are, as it were, made ready as for a victim, and that they are spared for an evil liberty. Therefore, he saith, there hath holden them pride. What is, there hath holden them pride? They have been clothed about with their iniquity and ungodliness. He hath not said, covered; but, clothed about, on all sides covered up with their ungodliness. Deservedly miserable, they neither see nor are seen, because they are clothed about; and the inward parts of them are not seen. For whosoever could behold the inward parts of evil men, that are as it were happy for a time, whosoever could see their torturing consciences, whosoever could examine their souls racked with such mighty perturbations of desires and fears, would see them to be miserable even

when they are called happy. But because they are clothed about with their iniquity and ungodliness, they see not; but neither are they seen. The Spirit knew them, that saith these words concerning them: and we ought to examine such men with the same eye as that wherewith we know that we see, if there is taken from our eyes the covering of ungodliness. Let us see them, and while they are happy let us avoid them: and while they are happy let us not imitate them: and let us not desire of the Lord our God such things for ourselves as a great matter, as they that serve Him not have deserved to receive. Something else He reserveth, something else must be desired: but what this is, hear ye.

12. At first these men are being described. (Ver. 7.) There shall go forth as if out of fat their iniquity. See whether that bull is not perceived. Hear ye, brethren: not in any chance way must be passed over that which he hath said, there shall go forth as if out of fat their iniquity. For there are evil men, but evil because of leanness, evil because lean; that is, thin, puny, affected with a sort of wasting of need, and they too are evil, and to be condemned. For every need must be borne, rather than that any iniquity should be committed. Nevertheless, it is one thing to sin because of need, another thing to sin in abundance. A poor beggar committeth a theft; out of leanness hath gone forth the iniquity: but when a rich man aboundeth in so many things, why doth he plunder the things of others? Of the former the iniquity out of leanness, of the other out of fatness, hath gone forth. Therefore to the lean man when thou sayest, Why hast thou done this? Humbly afflicted and abject he replieth, Need hath compelled me. Why hast thou not feared God? Want was urgent. Say to a rich man, Why doest thou these things, and fearest not God?—supposing thee to be great enough to be able to say it—see if he even deigneth to hear; see if even against thyself there will not go forth iniquity out of his fatness. For now they declare war with their teachers and reprovers, and become enemies of them that speak the truth, having been long accustomed to be coaxed with the words of flatterers, being of tender ear, of unsound heart. Who would say to a rich man, Thou hast ill done in robbing other men's goods? Or perchance if any man shall have dared to speak, and he is such a man as he could not withstand, what doth he reply? All that he saith is in contempt of God. Why? Because he is

proud. Why? Because he is fat. Why? Because he is devoted for a victim. There shall go forth as out of fatness their iniquity.

13. They have passed over unto purpose of heart. Here within they have passed over. What is, they have passed over? They have crossed over the way. What is, they have passed over? They have exceeded the bounds of mankind, men like the rest they think not themselves. They have passed over, I say, the bounds of mankind. When thou sayest to such a man, Thy brother this beggar is; when thou sayest to such a man, Thy brother this poor man is; the same parents ye have had, Adam and Eve: do not heed thy haughtiness, do not heed the vapour unto which thou hast been elevated; although an establishment waiteth about thee, although countless gold and silver, although a marbled house doth contain thee, although fretted ceilings cover thee, thou and the poor man together have for covering that roof of the universe, the sky; but thou art different from the poor man in things not thine own, added to thee from without: thyself see in them, not them in thee. Observe thyself, how thou art in relation to the poor man; thyself, not that which thou hast. For why dost thou despise thy brother? In the bowels of your mothers ye were both naked. Forsooth, even when ye shall have departed this life, and these bodies shall have rotted, when the soul hath been breathed forth, let the bones of the rich and poor man be distinguished! I am speaking of the equality of condition, of that very lot of mankind, wherein all men are born: for both here doth a man become rich, and a poor man will not alway be here: and as a rich man doth not come rich, so neither doth he depart rich; the very same is the entrance of both, and like is the departure. I add, that perchance ye will change conditions. Now every where the Gospel is being preached: observe a certain poor man full of sores, who was lying before the gate of a rich man, and was desiring to be filled with crumbs, which used to fall from the table of the rich man; observe also that likeness of thine who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. It chanced, I say, for that poor man to die, and to be borne by the Angels into the bosom of Abraham: but the other died and was buried; (for the other's burial perchance no one cared for:) and when in Hell that rich man was in torments, did he not lift up his eyes, and see in endless joy him whom he despised before his gate, and long for a drop of water from the finger of him who had longed for crumbs

falling from his table? Brethren, how great was the toil of the poor man! Of how long duration were the luxuries of the rich man! But the condition which they have received in exchange is everlasting. The one then because there was no accordance in the case of death, and there was a firmament in the scourging of him, was not in the labours of men, among men he was not scourged: but the other was scourged here, hath reposed there, because He doth scourge every son whom He doth receive. But to whom dost thou say these words? To one faring sumptuously, and clothing himself daily with purple and fine linen. To whom speakest thou? To him who hath passed over unto purpose of heart. Deservedly too late he will say, "Send Lazarus," "let him tell even my brethren;" since to himself there is not granted the fruit of repentance. For it is not that repentance is not given, but everlasting will be the repentance, and no salvation after repentance. Therefore these men have passed over unto purpose of heart.

14. Ver. 8. They have thought and have spoken spitefulness. But men do speak spitefulness even with fear: but these men how? Iniquity on high they have spoken. Not only they have spoken iniquity; but even openly, in the hearing of all, proudly; "I will do it;" "I will shew you;" "thou shalt know with whom thou hast to do;" "I will not let thee live." Thou mightest have but thought such things, not have given utterance to them! Within the chambers of thought at least the evil desire might have been confined, he might have at least restrained it within his thought. Why? Is he perchance lean? 'There shall go forth as if out of fatness the iniquity of them.' Iniquity on high they have spoken.

15. Ver. 9. They have set against Heaven their mouth, and their tongue hath passed over above the earth. What is this, hath passed over above the earth? The same which hath been said in, they have set against Heaven their mouth. For this, hath passed over above the earth is, they pass over all earthly things? What is it to pass over all earthly things? He doth not think of himself as a man that can die suddenly, when he is speaking; he doth menace as if he were alway to live: his thought doth transcend earthly frailty, he knoweth not with what sort of vessel he is enwrapped; he knoweth not what hath been written in another place concerning such men; His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return unto his earth, in that day shall

perish all his thoughts. But these men not thinking of their last day, speak pride, and unto Heaven they set their mouth, they transcend the earth. If a robber were not to think of his last day, that is, the last day of his trial, when sent to prison, nothing would be more monstrous than he: and yet he might escape. Whither dost thou flee to escape death? Certain will that day be. What is the long time which thou hast to live? How much is the long time which hath an end, even if it were a long time? To this there is added that it is nought: and the very thing which is called long time is not a long time, and is uncertain. Why doth he not think of this? Because he hath set against Heaven his mouth, and his tongue hath passed over above the earth.

16. Ver 10. Therefore there shall return hither My people. Now Asaph himself is returning hither. For he saw these things abound to unrighteous men, he saw them abound to proud men: he is returning to God, and is beginning to inquire and discuss. But when? When full days shall be found in them. What is full days? But when there came the fulness of time, God sent His Son. This is the very fulness of time, when He came to teach men that things temporal should be despised, that they should not esteem as a great matter whatever object evil men covet, that they should suffer whatever evil men fear. He became the way, He recalled us to inward thought, admonished us of what should be sought of God. And see from what thought reacting upon itself, and in a manner recalling the waves of its impulse, he doth pass over unto choosing true things. Therefore My people shall return hither, and full days shall be found in them.

17. Ver. 11. And they said, How hath God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High? See through what thought they pass. Behold unjust men are happy, God doth not care for things human. Doth He indeed know what we do? See what things are being said. We are inquiring, brethren, (no longer let Christians say it,) How hath God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High?

18. For how doth it appear to thee that God knoweth not, and that there is no knowledge in the Most High? He replieth, (ver. 12.) Lo! themselves they are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. Both sinners they are, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. He confessed that he willed not to be a sinner in order that he might have riches. A carnal

soul for things visible and earthly would have sold its justice. What sort of justice is that which is retained for the sake of gold, as if gold were a more precious thing than justice herself, or as if when a man denieth the deposit of another man's goods, he to whom he denied them should suffer a greater loss, than he that denieth them to him. The former doth lose a garment, the latter fidelity. Lo! they are themselves sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. On this account therefore God knoweth not, and on this account there is no knowledge in the Most High.

19. Ver. 13. And I said, therefore without cause I have justified my heart. In that I serve God, and have not these things; they serve him not, and they abound in these things: therefore without cause I have justified my heart, and have washed among the innocent my hands. This without cause I have done. Where is the reward of my good life? Where is the wage of my service? I live well and am in need; and the unjust man doth abound. And I have washed among the innocent my hands.

20. Ver. 14. And I have been scourged all the day long. From me the scourges of God do not depart. I serve well, and I am scourged; he serveth not, and is honoured. He hath proposed to himself a great question. The soul is disturbed, the soul doth pass over things which are to pass away unto despising things earthly and to desiring things eternal. There is a passage of the soul herself in this thought; where she doth toss in a sort of tempest she will reach the harbour. And it is with her as it is with sick persons, who are less violently sick, when recovery is far off: when recovery is at hand they are in higher fever; physicians call it the critical accession through which they pass to health: greater fever is there, but leading to health: greater heat, but recovery is at hand. So also is this man enfevered. For these are dangerous words, brethren, offensive, and almost blasphemous, How hath God known? This is why I say, and almost; He hath not said, God hath not known: he hath not said, there is no knowledge in the Most High: but as if inquiring, hesitating, doubting. This is the same as he said a little before, "My steps were almost overthrown." How hath God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High? He doth not affirm it, but the very doubt is dangerous. Through danger he is passing to health. Hear now the health: Therefore in vain I have justified my heart, and have washed among the

innocent my hands: and I have been scourged all the day long, and my chastening was in the morning. Chastening is correction. He that is being chastened is being corrected. What is, in the morning? It is not deferred. That of the ungodly is being deferred, mine is not deferred: the former is too late or is not at all; mine is in the morning. And I have been scourged all the day long, and my chastening was in the morning.

21. Ver. 15. If I said, I will declare this: that is, I will teach thus. How wilt thou teach? that there is no knowledge in the Most High, that God doth not know? Wilt thou propound this opinion, that without cause men live justly who do live justly; that a just man hath lost his service, because God doth more shew favour to evil men, or else He doth care for no one? Wilt thou tell this, declare this? He doth restrain himself by an authority repressing him. What authority? A man wisheth sometime to break out in this sentiment: but he is recalled by the Scriptures directing us alway to live well, saying, that God doth care for things human, that He maketh a distinction between a godly man and an ungodly man. Therefore this man also wishing to put forth this sentiment, doth recollect himself. And what saith he? If I said, I shall declare thus; behold, the generation of Thy sons I have reprobated. I have reprobated the generation of Thy sons. If I shall declare thus, the generation of just men I shall reprobate. As also some copies have it, Behold, the generation of thy sons with which I have been in concert: that is, with which consisting of Thy sons I have been in concert; that is, with which I have agreed, to which I have been conformed: I have been out of time with all, if so I teach. For he doth sing in concert who giveth the tune together; but he that giveth not the tune together doth not sing in concert. Am I to say something different from that which Abraham said, from that which Isaac said, from that which Jacob said, from that which the Prophets said? For all they said that God doth care for things human, am I to say that he careth not? Is there greater wisdom in me than in them? Greater understanding in me than in them? A most wholesome authority hath called back his thought from ungodliness.

22. And what followeth? If I said it, I shall declare thus: behold, the generation of Thy children I have reprobated. Therefore that he might not reprobate, he did what? (Ver. 16.) And I undertook to know. May God be

with him in order that he may know. Meanwhile, brethren, from a great fall he is being withheld, when he doth not presume that he already knoweth, but hath undertaken to know that which he knew not. For but now he was willing to appear as if knowing, and to declare that God hath no care of things human. For this hath come to be a most naughty and ungodly doctrine of unrighteous men. Know, brethren, that many men dispute and say that God careth not for things human, that by chances all things are ruled, or that our wills have been made subject to the stars, that each one is not dealt with according to his deserts, but by the necessity of his stars,—an evil doctrine, an impious doctrine. Unto these thoughts was going that man whose feet were almost moved, and whose steps were all but overthrown, into this error he was going; but because he was not in tune with the generation of the sons of God, he undertook to know, and condemned the knowledge wherein with God's just men he agreed not. And what he saith let us hear; how that he undertook to know, and was helped, and learned something, and declared it to us. And I undertook, he saith, to know. In this labour is before me. Truly a great labour; to know in what manner both God doth care for things human, and it is well with evil men, and good men labour. Great is the importance of the question; therefore, and this labour is before me. As it were there is standing in my face a sort of wall, but thou hast the voice of a Psalm, 'In my God I shall pass over the wall.' This labour is before me.

23. Sooth thou sayest, labour is before thee; before God it is no labour: put thyself before God where there is no labour, and not even to thee will there be labour. And he hath done this; for he saith how long labour is before him; (ver. 17.) until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand upon the last things. A great thing it is, brethren: now for a long time I labour, he saith, and before my face I see a sort of insuperable labour, to know in what manner both God is just, and doth care for things human, and is not unjust because men sinning and doing wicked actions have happiness on this earth; but the godly and men serving God are wasted oftentimes in trials and in labours: a great difficulty it is to know this, but only until I enter into the Sanctuary of God. For in the Sanctuary what is presented to thee, in order that thou mayest solve this question? And I understand, he saith, upon the last things: not present things. I, he saith, from the Sanctuary of God stretch

out mine eye unto the end, I pass over present things. All that which is called the human race, all that mass of mortality is to come to the balance, is to come to the scale, thereon will be weighed the works of men. All things now a cloud doth enfold: but to God are known the merits of each severally. And I understand, he saith, upon the last things: but not of myself; for before me there is labour. Whence may I understand upon the last things? Let me enter into the Sanctuary of God. In that place then he understood also the reason why these men now are happy.

24. Ver. 18. To wit, because of deceitfulness Thou hast set upon them. Because deceitful they are, that is fraudulent; because deceitful they are, they suffer deceits. What is this, because fraudulent they are they suffer a fraud? They desire to play a fraud upon mankind in all their naughtinesses, they themselves also suffer a fraud, in choosing earthly good things, and in forsaking the eternal. Therefore, brethren, in their very playing off a fraud they suffer a fraud. In that which but now I said, brethren, “What manner of wit hath he who to gain a garment doth lose his fidelity?” hath he whose garment he hath taken suffered a fraud, or he that is smitten with so great a loss? If a garment is more precious than fidelity, the former doth suffer the greater loss: but if incomparably good faith doth surpass the whole world, the latter shall seem to have sustained the loss of a garment; but to the former is said, What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul? Therefore what hath befallen them? Because of deceitfulness Thou hast set for them: Thou didst throw them down while they were being exalted. He hath not said, Thou didst throw them down because they were lifted up: not as it were after that they were lifted up Thou didst throw them down; but in their very lifting up they were thrown down. For thus to be lifted up is already to fall; Thou didst throw them down while they were being lifted up.

25. Ver. 19. How have they become a desolation suddenly? He is wondering at them, understanding unto the last things. They have vanished. Truly like smoke, which while it mounteth upward, doth vanish, so they have vanished. How doth he say, They have vanished? In the manner of one who understandeth the last things. They have vanished: they have perished because of their iniquity.

26. Ver. 20. Like as the dream of one rising up. How have they vanished? As vanisheth the dream of one rising up. Fancy a man in sleep to have seen himself find treasures: he is a rich man, but only until he awaketh. Like as the dream of one rising up: so they have vanished, like the dream of one awaking. It is sought then and it is not: there is nothing in the hands, nothing in the bed. A poor man he went to sleep, a rich man in sleep he became: had he not awoke, he were a rich man: he woke up, he found the care which he had lost while sleeping. And these men shall find the misery which they had prepared for themselves. When they shall have awoke from this life, that thing doth pass away which was grasped as if in sleep. Like as the dream of one rising up. And that there might not be said, "What then? a small thing doth their glory seem to thee, a small thing doth their state seem to thee, small things seem to thee inscriptions, images, statues, distinctions, troops of clients?" O Lord, he saith, in Thy city their image Thou shalt bring to nothing. Therefore, my brethren, speaking freely of this passage, or whence it is allowed me, (for when we mingle with you we do rather smite you than teach you,) in the name of Christ and in the fear of Him I exhort you: that whosoever of you have not these things, should not covet them; whosoever of you have them, should not rely on them. Behold, I have told you; I say not, ye are condemned because ye have them; but ye are condemned if on such things ye rely, if because of such things ye are puffed up, if because of such things ye think yourselves to be great men, if because of such things ye acknowledge not the poor, if because of your excelling in this emptiness ye forget the common lot of mankind. For then God must needs make retribution at the last, and in His City bring to nothing the image of such men. For he that is rich let him be so in the way that the Apostle hath enjoined: Charge, he saith, the rich men of this world not to think proudly, nor to hope in the uncertainty of their riches, but in the living God, Who bestoweth upon us all things abundantly to enjoy. He hath taken away the pride of rich men, he giveth counsel. As if they were saying, We are rich men, thou dost forbid us to be proud, dost prohibit us from boasting of the parade of our riches: what then are we to do with these riches? Is it come to this, that there is nothing which they may do therewith? Be they rich, he saith, in good works; let them readily distribute, communicate. And what doth this profit? Let them treasure unto themselves a good foundation for the future, that they may lay hold of true life. Where ought they to lay

up treasure for themselves? In that place whereunto he set his eye, when entering into the Sanctuary of God. Let there shudder all our rich brethren, abounding in money, gold, silver, household, honours, let them shudder at that which but now hath been said, O Lord, in Thy city Thou shalt bring to nothing their image. Are they not worthy to suffer these things, to wit that God bring to nothing their image in His city, because also they have themselves brought to nothing the image of God in their earthly city? In Thy city Thou shalt bring to nothing their image.

27. Ver. 21. Because my heart was delighted. He is saying with what things he is tempted: because my heart was delighted, he saith, my reins also were changed. When those temporal things delighted me, my reins were changed. It may also be understood thus: because my heart was delighted in God, my reins also were changed, that is, my lusts were changed, and I became wholly chaste. My reins were changed. And hear how.

28. Ver. 22. And I was brought unto nothing, and I knew not. I, the very man, who now say these things of rich men, once longed for such things: therefore even I was brought to nothing when my steps were almost overthrown. And I was brought unto nothing, and I knew not. We must not therefore despair even of them, against whom I was saying such things.

29. What is, I knew not? As it were a beast I became to Thee, (ver. 23.) and I am alway with Thee. There is a great difference between this man and others. He became as it were a beast in longing for earthly things, when being brought to nothing he knew not things eternal: but he departed not from his God, because he did not desire these things of demons, of the devil. For this I have already brought to your notice. The voice is from the Synagogue, that is, from that people which served not idols. A beast indeed I became, when desiring from my God things earthly: but I never departed from That my God.

30. Because then, though having become a beast, I departed not from my God, there followeth, Thou hast held the hand of my right hand. He hath not said my right hand, but the hand of my right hand. If the hand of the right hand it is, a hand hath a hand. The hand Thou hast held of my right hand, in order that Thou mightest conduct me. For what hath he put hand? For

power. For we say that a man hath that in his hand which he hath in his power: just as the devil said to God concerning Job, Lay to Thine hand, and take away the things which he hath. What is, lay to Thine hand? Put forth power. The hand of God he hath called the power of God: as hath been written in another place, death and life are in the hands of the tongue. Hath the tongue hands? But what is, in the hands of the tongue? In the power of the tongue. What is, in the power of the tongue? Out of thy mouth thou shalt be justified, and out of thy mouth thou shalt be condemned. Thou hast held, therefore, the hand of my right hand, the power of my right hand. What was my right hand? That I was alway with Thee. Unto the left I was holding, because I became a beast, that is, because there was an earthly concupiscence in me: but the right was mine, because I was alway with Thee. Of this my right hand Thou hast held the hand, that is, hast directed the power. What power? He gave them power to become sons of God. He is beginning now to be among the sons of God, belonging to the New Testament. See in what manner the hand of his right hand was held. In Thy will Thou hast conducted me. What is, in Thy will? Not in my merits. What is, in Thy will? Hear the Apostle, who was at first a beast longing for things earthly, and living after the Old Testament. He saith what? I that at first was a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious: but mercy I obtained. What is, in Thy will? "By the grace of God I am what I am." And in glory Thou hast taken me up. Now to what glory he was taken up, and in what glory, who can explain, who can say? Let us await it, because in the Resurrection it will be, in the last things it will be. With glory Thou hast taken me up.

31. And he is beginning to think of that same Heavenly felicity, and to reprove himself, because he hath been a beast, and hath longed for things earthly. (Ver. 25.) For what have I in Heaven, and from Thee what have I willed upon earth? By your voice I see that ye have understood. He compared with his earthly will the heavenly reward which he is to receive; he saw what was there being reserved for him; and while thinking and burning at the thought of some ineffable thing, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor into the heart of man hath ascended, he hath not said, this or that I have in Heaven, but, what have I in Heaven? What is that thing which I have in Heaven? What is it? How great is it? Of what sort is it? And, since that which I have in heaven doth not pass away, from Thee what

have I willed upon earth? Thou reservest for me, (I will speak as I am able, but forgive me; accept my endeavour, mine earnestness to attempt; for to explain it I have not power.) Thou reservest, he saith, for me in Heaven riches immortal, even Thyself, and I have willed from Thee on earth that which even ungodly men have, which even evil men have, which even abandoned men have, money, gold, silver, jewels, households, which even many wicked men have: which even many profligate women have, many profligate men: these things as a great matter I have desired of my God upon earth: though my God reserveth Himself for me in Heaven! For what have I in Heaven? He hath to display that very what. And from Thee what have I willed upon earth?

32. Ver. 26. My heart and my flesh hath failed, O God of my heart. This then for me in Heaven hath been reserved, God of my heart, and my portion is my God. What is it, brethren? Let us find out our riches, let mankind choose their parts. Let us see men torn with diversity of desires: let some choose war-service, some advocacy, some divers and sundry offices of teaching, some merchandise, some farming, let them take their portions in human affairs: let the people of God cry, my portion is my God. Not for a time my portion; but my portion is my God for everlasting. Even if I always have gold, what have I? Even if I did not always have God, how great a good should I have? To this is added, that He promiseth Himself to me, and He promiseth that I shall have this for everlasting. So great a thing I have, and never have it not. Great felicity: my portion is God! How long? For everlasting. For behold and see after what sort He hath loved him; He hath made his heart chaste: God of my heart, and my portion is God for everlasting. His heart hath become chaste, for nought now God is loved, from Him is not sought any other reward. He that doth seek any other reward from God, and therefore is willing to serve God, more precious doth make that which he willeth to receive, than Him from whom he willeth to receive. What then, is there no reward belonging to God? None except Himself. The reward belonging to God, is God Himself. This he loveth, this he esteemeth; if any other thing he shall have loved, the love will not be chaste. Thou art receding from the Fire immortal, thou wilt grow cold, wilt be corrupted. Do not recede. Recede not, it will be thy corruption, it will be thy fornication. Now he is returning, now he is repenting, now he is

choosing repentance, now he is saying, my portion is God. And after what sort is he delighted with that Same, whom he hath chosen for his portion.

33. Ver. 27. Behold, they that put themselves afar from Thee shall perish. He therefore departed from God, but not far: for I have become as it were a beast, he saith, and I am alway with Thee. But they have departed afar, because not only things earthly they have desired, but have sought them from demons and the Devil. They that put themselves afar from Thee shall perish. And what is it, to become afar from God? Thou hast destroyed every man that committeth fornication away from Thee. To this fornication is opposed chaste love. What is chaste love? Now the soul doth love her Bridegroom: what doth she require of Him, from Her Bridegroom whom she loveth? Perchance in like manner as women choose for themselves men either as sons-in-law or as bridegrooms: she perchance chooseth riches, and loveth his gold, and estates, and silver and cattle and horses, and household, and the like. Far be it. He doth love Him alone, for nought he doth love Him: because in Him he hath all things, for by Him were made all things. Thou hast destroyed, he saith, every one that committeth fornication away from Thee.

34. Ver. 28. But thou doest what? But for me to cleave to God is a good thing. This is whole good. Will ye have more? I grieve at your willing. Brethren, what will ye have more? Than to cleave to God nothing is better, when we shall see Him face to face. But now what? For yet as a stranger I am speaking: to cleave, he saith, to God is a good thing: but now in my sojourning, (for not yet hath come the substance,) I have to put in God my hope. So long therefore as thou hast not yet cloven, therein put thy hope. Thou art wavering, cast forward an anchor to the land. Not yet dost thou cleave by presence, cleave fast by hope. To put in God my hope. And by doing what here wilt thou put in God thy hope? What will be thy business, but to praise Him Whom thou lovest, and to make others to be fellowlovers of Him with thee? Lo, if thou shouldest love a charioteer, wouldest thou not carry along other men to love him with thee? A lover of a charioteer whithersoever he goeth doth speak of him, in order that as well as he others also may love him. For nought are loved abandoned men, and from God is reward required in order that He may be loved? Love thou God for nought,

grudge God to no one. Seize Him as many as ye are able, as many as shall possess: He is not made strait, ye will make no limits in Him, Him wholly each of you will possess, and Him wholly all ye will have. Therefore this do while here thou art, that is, while thou art putting thy hope in God. For what followeth? In order that I may tell forth all Thy praises in the courts of the daughter of Sion. "In order that I may tell forth all Thy praises:" but where? "In the courts of the daughter of Sion:" for the preaching of God beside the Church is vain. A small thing it is to praise God and to tell forth all His praise. In the courts of the daughter of Sion tell thou forth. Make for unity, do not divide the people; but draw them unto one, and make them one. I have forgotten how long I have been speaking. Now the Psalm being ended, even judging by this closeness, I suppose I have held a long discourse: but it doth not suffice for your zeal; ye are too impetuous. O that with this impetuosity ye would seize upon the kingdom of Heaven.

PSALM 74

Exposition

Sermon to the people.

1. This Psalm's Title is, Of the Understanding of Asaph. Asaph in Latin is translated congregation, in Greek Synagogue. Let us see what this Synagogue hath understood. But let us understand firstly Synagogue: from thence we shall understand what the Synagogue hath understood. Every congregation is spoken of under the general name of Synagogue: one both of beasts and of men may be called a congregation; but here there is no congregation of beasts when we heard understanding. For when a man being in honour hath neglected in himself his understanding, hear what hath been said concerning him: A man being in honour is compared to beasts without sense, and is become like unto them. That then it is no congregation of beasts, we must neither for a long time discuss, nor more diligently notice: but because it is a congregation of men, of what men this is we ought to understand. It is not indeed of those men, who being in honour and not understanding are compared to the beasts without sense, and have become like unto them; but of those that do understand. For this the Psalm's Title doth prescribe, saying, Of the understanding of Asaph. It is therefore a certain understanding congregation whereof we are about to hear the voice. But since properly Synagogue is said of the congregation of the people of Israel, so that wheresoever we may have heard Synagogue, we are no longer wont to understand any but the people of the Jews; let us see whether perchance the voice in this Psalm be not of that same people. But of what sort of Jews and of what sort of people of Israel? For they are not of the chaff, but perchance of the grain; not of the broken branches, but perchance of those that are strengthened. For not all that are of Israel are Israelites: but in Isaac, He saith, there shall be called for thee a seed: that is, not they that are sons of the flesh are the sons of God: but the sons of promise are

counted for a seed. There are therefore certain Israelites, of whom was he concerning whom was said, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. I do not say in the same manner as we are Israelites, for we also are the seed of Abraham. For to the Gentiles the Apostle was speaking, when he said, Therefore the seed of Abraham ye are, heirs according to promise. According to this therefore all we are Israelites, that follow the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham. But let us understand here the voice of the Israelites in the same manner as the Apostle saith, For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Here therefore let us understand that whereof the Prophets have spoken, a remnant shall be saved. Of the remnant therefore saved let us hear in this place the voice; in order that there may speak that Synagogue which had received the Old Testament, and was intent upon carnal promises; and by this means it came to pass that their feet were shaken. For in another Psalm, where too the title hath Asaph, there is said what? How good is the God of Israel to men right in heart. But my feet were almost moved. And as if we were saying, whence were thy feet moved? Well nigh, he saith, my steps were overthrown, because I was jealous in the case of sinners, looking on the peace of sinners. For while according to the promises of God belonging to the Old Testament he was looking for earthly felicity, he observed it to abound with ungodly men; that they who worshipped not God were enriched with those things which he was looking for from God: and as though without cause he had served God, his feet tottered. For in that place he is saying, Behold sinners themselves have gotten even abundant riches in the world. Have I not in vain justified my heart? See in what manner his steps have been well-nigh overthrown; so that now the soul saith to herself, What profit is it that I serve God? Behold that man serveth not, and is happy; I serve, and I toil. Lastly, suppose that I am happy; seeing that he also is happy that serveth not, why should I think myself happy because I serve? But that Psalm whereof I have brought forward the testimony precedes that which now we have in hand.

2. But opportunely it hath chanced not by our own but by God's dispensation, that just now we heard out of the Gospel, that the Law was given by Moses, Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. For if we distinguish between the two Testaments, Old and New, there are not the

same Sacraments nor the same promises; nevertheless, the same commandments for the most part. For, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Honour father and mother, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet the property of thy neighbour, Thou shalt not covet the wife of thy neighbour, to us too hath been commanded; and whosoever shall not have kept those, doth go astray, and is by no means worthy to earn to receive the Holy Mountain of God, concerning which hath been said, Who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest upon Thy Holy Mountain? The innocent in hands and of a pure heart. The commandments therefore when examined are either all found to be the same, or there are scarce any in the Gospel which have not been spoken by the Prophets. The Commandments are the same, the Sacraments are not the same, the Promises are not the same. Let us see wherefore the commandments are the same; because according to these we ought to serve God. The Sacraments are not the same, for some Sacraments there are giving Salvation, others promising a Saviour. The Sacraments of the New Testament give Salvation, the Sacraments of the Old Testament did promise a Saviour. When therefore thou hast now the things promised, why dost thou seek the things promising, having now the Saviour? I say, thou hast the things promised, not because we have already received life eternal, but because Christ hath now come who was foretold by the Prophets. The Sacraments have been changed, have been made more easy, of fewer number, more saving, more blessed. Why are the promises not the same? Because there was promised the land of Chanaan, a land plentiful, fruitful, flowing with milk and honey, there was promised a kingdom temporal, there was promised the felicity of the world, there was promised fruitfulness of children, there was promised the subduing of enemies. All these things to earthly felicity do belong. But why should these things first have been promised? Because not first is that which is spiritual, but that which is natural: afterward, he saith, that which is spiritual. The first man was of earth earthy, the second Man was from Heaven Heavenly: such as is the earthly man, such are also earthly men; and such as is the Heavenly Man, such are also the Heavenly men. As we have borne the image of the earthly man, let us bear also the image of Him Who is from Heaven. To the image of the earthly man doth belong the Old Testament, to the image of the Heavenly Man the New Testament. But that no one might suppose that

by one was made the earthly man, by another the Heavenly; therefore God shewing Himself to be the Creator of both, even of both Testaments willed Himself to be the Author; in order that both things earthly He might promise in the Old Testament, and things Heavenly in the New Testament. But how long art thou at first an earthly man, how long dost thou mind things earthly? When to a boy are given some boyish playthings, wherewith his boyish mind may be amused, are they not taken out of his hands when he groweth up in order that he may now take in hand something more useful, which becometh a grown person? For example, thou didst thyself give to thy son nuts when he was little, and a book when he was bigger. By no means therefore, because God through the New Testament hath taken out of the hands of His sons those things which are like the playthings of boys, in order that He might give something more useful to them growing up, on that account must He be supposed not to have given those former things Himself. He gave both Himself. But the Law itself through Moses was given, Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ: Grace because there is fulfilled through love that which by the letter was being enjoined, Truth because there is being rendered that which was promised. This thing therefore this Asaph hath understood. In a word, all things which to the Jews had been promised have been taken away. Where is their kingdom? Where the Temple? Where the Anointing? Where is Priest? Where are now the Prophets among them? From what time there came He that by the Prophets was foretold, in that nation there is now nothing of these things; now she hath lost things earthly, and not yet doth seek things Heavenly.

3. Thou shouldest not therefore hold fast to things earthly, although God doth bestow them. Nevertheless, because we ought not to cleave to them, we ought by no means to believe that any other doth give them but God: He doth Himself give them: but do not as a great matter expect from Him the good which He doth give even to one not good. For if as a great matter He were to give these things, to evil men He would not give them. But for this purpose He hath willed to give them to evil men also, that good men may learn to seek from Him some other thing which He giveth not to evil men also. But these miserable men cleaving to things earthly and not relying on Him Who made Heaven and earth, Who gave to them even those very earthly things, who delivered them even temporarily from Egyptian

bondage; who led them through the severed sea, Who overwhelmed their pursuing enemies in the waves, not relying on Him Who would give indeed things Heavenly to them grown up as He gave things earthly to them when children, fearing to lose that which they had received, they slew Him Who had given it. These things we say, brethren, in order that ye being men of the New Testament may learn not to cleave to things earthly. For if they without excuse did cleave to things earthly, to whom the New Testament itself had not yet been revealed; how much more without excuse do they pursue things earthly, to whom now the things Heavenly promised in the New Testament have been revealed! For call to mind, my brethren, what was said by them that persecuted Christ. If we shall have let Him go, the Romans will come and will take from us both place and nation. See ye how that in fearing to lose things earthly, they slew the King of Heaven. And what was done to them? They lost even those very things earthly: and in the place where they slew Christ, there they were slain: and when, being unwilling to lose the land, they slew the Giver of life, that same land being slain they lost; and at that very time when they slew Him, in order that by that very time they might be admonished of the reason wherefore they suffered these things. For when the city of the Jews was overthrown, they were celebrating the Passover, and with many thousands of men the whole nation itself had met together for the celebration of that festival. In that place God (through evil men indeed, but yet Himself good; through unjust men, but Himself just and justly) did so take vengeance upon them, that there were slain many thousands of men, and the city itself was overthrown. Of this thing in this Psalm the understanding of Asaph doth complain, and in the very plaint the understanding as it were doth distinguish things earthly from things heavenly, doth distinguish the Old Testament from the New Testament: in order that thou mayest see through what things thou art passing, what thou shouldest look for, what to forsake, to what to cleave. Thus then he beginneth.

4. Ver. 1. Wherefore hast Thou repelled us, O God, unto the end? “Hast repelled unto the end,” in the person of the congregation which is properly called Synagogue. Wherefore hast Thou repelled us, O God, unto the end? He censureth not, but enquireth wherefore, for what purpose, because of what hast Thou done this? What hast Thou done? Thou hast repelled us

unto the end. What is, unto the end? Perchance even unto the end of the world. Hast Thou repelled us unto Christ, Who is the End to every one believing? For, Wherefore hast Thou repelled us, O God, unto the end? Thy spirit hath been wroth at the sheep of Thy flock. Wherefore wast Thou wroth at the sheep of Thy flock, but because to things earthly we were cleaving, and the Shepherd we knew not?

5. Ver. 2. Remember Thou Thy congregation, which Thou hast possessed from the beginning. Can this by any means be the voice of the Gentiles? Hath He possessed the Gentiles from the beginning? Nay, but He hath possessed the seed of Abraham, the people of Israel even according to the flesh, born of the Patriarchs our fathers: of whom we have become the sons, not by coming out of their flesh, but by imitating their faith. But those, possessed by God from the beginning, what befel them? Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast possessed from the beginning. Thou hast redeemed the rod of Thine inheritance. That same congregation of Thine, being the rod of Thine inheritance, Thou hast redeemed. This same congregation he hath called 'the rod of the inheritance.' Let us look back to the first thing that was done, when He willed to possess that same congregation, delivering it from Egypt, what sign He gave to Moses, when Moses said to Him, What sign shall I give that they may believe me, that Thou hast sent me? And God saith to him, What dost thou bear in thine hand? A rod. Cast it on to the ground. And he let fall the rod upon the ground, and it became a serpent: and Moses was afraid, and Moses fled from it. And the Lord saith to him, Take hold of the tail thereof. And he took hold; and it returned to its own shape, having become a rod as it was a rod before. What doth it intimate? For this was not done to no purpose. Let us enquire of the writings of God. To what did the serpent persuade man? To death. Therefore death is from the serpent. If death is from the serpent, the rod in the serpent is Christ in death. Therefore also when by serpents in the desert they were being bitten and being slain, the Lord commanded Moses to exalt a brazen serpent in the desert, and admonish the people that whosoever by a serpent had been bitten, should look thereupon and be made whole. Thus also it was done: thus also men, bitten by serpents, were made whole of the venom by looking upon a serpent. To be made whole of a serpent is a great Sacrament. What is it to be made whole of a serpent by

looking upon a serpent? It is to be made whole of death by believing in one dead. And nevertheless Moses feared and fled. What is it that Moses fled from that serpent? What, brethren, save that which we know to have been done in the Gospel? Christ died and the disciples feared, and withdrew from that hope wherein they had been. But what was said? Take hold of the tail thereof. What is, the tail? On the latter parts seize thou. This was intimated by the following also, My back parts Thou shalt see. At first it became a serpent, but when the tail was grasped it became a rod; at first He was slain, afterwards He rose again. There is also in the tail of the serpent the end of the world. For thus now the mortality of the Church doth walk: some go, others come through death, as though through the serpent; because by the serpent death was sown: but at the end of the world, as though by the tail, we go back to the hand of God. And we are made the stablished kingdom of God, in order that there may be fulfilled in us, Thou hast redeemed the rod of Thine inheritance. But the voice is for the sake of the Synagogue; but the redeemed rod of the inheritance of God is more apparent in the Gentiles; but the hope of the Jews was hidden, that is to say, either of those who are to believe hereafter, or of those who believed at that time when, at the sending of the Holy Ghost, the disciples spake with the tongues of all nations.—For at that time some thousands of the Jews themselves, the crucifiers of Christ, believed: and because they had been found at hand, they so believed as that they sold all that they had, and the price of their goods before the feet of the Apostles they laid.—Because then this thing was hidden, and the redemption of the rod of God was to be more conspicuous in the Gentiles: he explaineth of what he saith that which he hath said, Thou hast redeemed the rod of Thine inheritance. This he hath said not of the Gentiles in whom it was evident. But of what? Mount Sion. Yet even Mount Sion can be otherwise understood. That one which Thou hast dwelled in the same. In the place where the People was aforetime, where the Temple was set up, where the Sacrifices were celebrated, where at that time were all those necessary things giving promise of Christ. A promise, when the thing promised is bestowed is now become superfluous. For before that there is bestowed that which is promised, the promise itself is necessary lest the person to whom the promise is made forget the thing promised and through not expecting it die. He ought therefore to expect, in order that he may receive it when it shall have come: therefore he ought not

to neglect the promise. For this reason figures were not neglected, in order that when the day came the shadows might be taken away. Mount Sion. That one which Thou hast dwelled in the same.

6. Ver. 3. Lift up Thine hand upon their pride at the end. As Thou didst repel us at the end, so lift up Thine hand upon the pride of them at the end. The pride of whom? Of those by whom Jerusalem was overthrown. But by whom was it, but by the kings of the Gentiles? Well was the hand of Him lifted up upon the pride of them at the end: for they too have now known Christ. For the end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every one believing. How well doth he wish for them! As if angry he is speaking, and he is seeming to speak evil: and O that there would come to pass the evil which he speaketh: nay now in the name of Christ that it is coming to pass let us rejoice. Now they holding the sceptre are being made subject to the Word of the Cross: now is coming to pass that which was foretold, there shall adore Him all the kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. Now on the brows of kings more precious is the sign of the Cross, than the jewel of a crown. Lift up Thine hand upon the pride of them at the end. How great things hath the enemy of malice wrought in Thy holy places! In those which were Thy holy places, that is, in the temple, in the priesthood, in all those sacraments which were at that time, how great things hath the enemy of malice wrought! In good sooth the enemy at that time wrought. For the Gentiles at that time who did this, were worshipping false Gods, were adoring idols, were serving demons: nevertheless they wrought many evil things on the Saints of God. When could they if they had not been permitted? But when would they have been permitted, unless those holy things, at first promised, were no longer necessary, when He that had promised was Himself holden? Therefore, how great things hath the enemy of malice wrought in Thy holy places!

7. Ver. 4. And all they have boasted, that hate Thee. Observe the servants of demons, the servants of idols: such as at that time the Gentiles were, when they overthrew the temple and city of God, and they boasted. In the midst of Thy festival. Remember what I said, that Jerusalem was overthrown at the time when the very festival was being celebrated: at which festival they

crucified the Lord. Gathered together they raged, gathered together they perished.

8. They have set signs, their own signs, (ver. 5.) and they have not known. They had signs to place there, their standards, their eagles, their own dragons, the Roman signs; or even their statues which at first in the temple they placed; or perchance their signs are the things which they heard from the prophets of their demons. And they have not known. Have not known what? How thou shouldest have had no power against Me, except it had been given thee from above. They knew not how that not on themselves honour was conferred, to afflict, to take, or overthrow the city, but their ungodliness was made as it were the axe of God. They were made the instrument of Him enraged, not so as to be the kingdom of Him pacified. For God doth that which a man also ofttime doth. Sometimes a man in a rage catcheth up a rod lying in the way, perchance any sort of stick, he smiteth therewith his son, and then throweth the stick into the fire, and reserveth the inheritance for his son: so sometime God through evil men doth instruct good men, and through the temporal power of them that are to be condemned He worketh the discipline of them that are to be saved. For why do ye suppose, brethren, that discipline was even thus inflicted upon that nation, in order that it might perish utterly? How many out of this nation did afterwards believe, how many are yet to believe? Some are chaff, others grain; over both however there cometh in the threshing-drag; but under one threshing-drag the one is broken up, the other is purged. How great a good hath God bestowed upon us by the evil of Judas the traitor! By the very ferocity of the Jews how great a good was bestowed upon believing Gentiles! Christ was slain in order that there might be on the Cross One for him to look to who had been stung by the serpent. Thus then these men also perchance had heard from their diviners, that they ought to go to Jerusalem, and take her captive; and when they had taken and overthrown her, they said to themselves that it had been done by their devils; They have set signs, their own signs, and they have not known. Have not known what? As in the going forth from above. How that unless from above there went forth a mandate; never would such things have been permitted to the Gentiles raging against the people of the Jews. But it went forth from above: as Daniel saith, From the beginning of thy prayer there

went forth a word. The same also the Lord said to Pilate puffing up himself, and setting for signs his own signs, and not knowing, and saying to Christ, To me makest thou no answer? Knowest Thou not that I have power to kill Thee and have power to let Thee go—and to him swollen, as though pricking a blown bladder, the Lord saith, Thou couldest have no power against Me, unless it had been given to thee from above. So also here, they have set signs, their own signs, and they have not known. How have they not known? As in the going forth from above. Were they by any means able to understand how the going forth took place from above, to the end that this might be fulfilled?

9. Now let us hasten over the verses following after the destruction of Jerusalem, for the reason that they are both evident, and it doth not please me to tarry over the punishment even of enemies. As if in a forest of trees with axes, (ver. 6.) they have cut down the doors thereof at once; with mattock and hammer they have thrown Her down. That is, conspiring together, with firm determination, with mattock and hammer they have thrown Her down.

10. Ver. 7. They have burned with fire Thy Sanctuary, they have defiled on the ground the Tabernacle of Thy name.

11. Ver. 8. They have said in their heart, (the kindred of them is in one)—Have said what? Come ye, let us suppress the solemnities of the Lord from the land. ‘Of the Lord,’ hath been inserted in the person of this man, that is, in the person of Asaph. For they raging would not have called Him the Lord whose temple they were overthrowing. Come ye, let us suppress all the solemnities of the Lord from the land. What of Asaph? What understanding hath Asaph in these words? What? Doth he not profit even by the discipline accorded? Is not the mind’s crookedness made straight? Overthrown were all things that were at first: no where is there priest, no where Altar of the Jews, no where victim, no where Temple. Is there then no other thing to be acknowledged which succeeded this departing? Or indeed would this promissory sign have been taken away, unless there had come that which was being promised? Let us see therefore in this place now the understanding of Asaph, let us see if he profiteth by tribulation. Observe what he saith: (Ver. 9.) Our signs we have not seen, no longer is there

prophet, and us He will not know as yet. Behold those Jews who say that they are not known as yet, that is, that they are yet in captivity, that not yet they are delivered, do yet expect Christ. Christ will come, but He will come as Judge; the first time to call, afterwards to sever. He will come, because He hath come, and that He will come is evident; but hereafter from above He will come. Before thee He was, O Israel. Thou wast bruised because thou didst stumble against Him lying down: that thou mayest not be ground to powder, observe Him coming from above. For thus it was foretold by the prophet: Whoever shall stumble upon that stone shall be bruised, and upon whomsoever it shall have come, it shall grind him to powder. He doth bruise when little, He shall grind to powder when great. Now thy signs thou seest not, now there is no prophet: and thou sayest, and us He will not know as yet: because yourselves know not Him as yet. No longer is there a prophet; and us He will not know as yet.

12. Ver. 10. How long, O God, shall the enemy revile? Cry out as if forsaken, as if deserted: cry out like a sick man, who hast chosen rather to smite the physician than to be made whole: not as yet doth He know thee. See what He hath done, Who doth not know thee as yet. For they to whom there hath been no preaching of Him, shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand: and thou yet criest out, No longer is there a prophet, and us He will not know as yet. Where is thine understanding? The adversary doth provoke Thy name at the end. For this purpose the adversary doth provoke Thy name at the end, that being provoked Thou mayest reprove, reproving Thou mayest know them at the end: or certainly, at the end, in the sense of even unto the end. Even unto what end? Until thou knowest, until thou criest, until grasping the tail thou return to the kingdom.

13. Ver. 11. Wherefore dost Thou turn away Thine hand, and Thy right hand from the midst of Thy bosom unto the end? Again, another sign which was given to Moses. For in like manner as above from the rod was a sign, so also from the right hand now. For when that thing had been done concerning the rod, God gave a second sign: thrust, He saith, thine hand into thy bosom, and he thrust it: draw it forth, and he drew it forth: and it was found white, that is, unclean. For whiteness on the skin is leprosy, not fairness of complexion. For the heritage of God itself, that is, His people,

being cast out became unclean. But what saith He to him? Draw it back into thy bosom. He drew it back, and it was restored to its own colour. When doest Thou this, saith this Asaph? How long dost Thou alienate Thy right hand from Thy bosom, so that being without unclean it remaineth? Draw it back, let it return to its colour, let it acknowledge the Saviour. Wherefore dost thou turn away Thine hand, and Thy right hand from the midst of Thy bosom unto the end? These words he crieth, being blind, not understanding, and God doeth what He doeth. For wherefore came Christ? Blindness in part happened unto Israel, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so all Israel might be saved. Therefore now, O Asaph, acknowledge that which hath gone before, in order that thou mayest at least follow, if thou wast not able to go before. For not in vain came Christ, or in vain was Christ slain, or in vain did the corn fall into the ground; but it fell that it might rise manifold. A serpent was lifted up in the desert, in order that it might cure of the poison him that was smitten. Observe what was done. Do not think it to be a vain thing that He came: lest He find thee evil, when He shall have come a second time.

14. Asaph hath understood, because on the Title of the Psalm there is, understanding of Asaph. And what saith he? (ver. 12.) But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. On the one hand we cry, No longer is there prophet, and us He will not know as yet: but on the other hand, our God, our King, Who is before the worlds, (for He is Himself in the beginning the Word by Whom were made the worlds,) hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. God therefore, our King before the worlds, hath done what? hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth: and I am yet crying as if forsaken! He doth work Salvation in the midst of the earth, and I have remained earth! Asaph hath well understood; because it is understanding of Asaph. But why these things, or what sort of Salvation hath Christ wrought, but that men may learn to long after things eternal, and not always cleave to things temporal? But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. While we are crying, How long, O Lord, shall the enemy revile at the end, how long doth the adversary provoke, how long dost Thou turn away Thine hand from Thy bosom? We the while are saying these words: but God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought Salvation in the midst of

the earth: and we are sleeping. Now the Gentiles are awake, and we are snoring, and as though God hath forsaken us, in dreams we are delirious. He hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth.

15. Now therefore, O Asaph, amend thyself according to thy understanding, tell us what sort of Salvation God hath wrought in the midst of the earth. When that earthly Salvation of yours was overthrown, what did He do, what did He promise? (Ver. 13.) Thou didst confirm in Thy virtue the sea. As though the nation of the Jews were as it were dry land severed from the waves, the Gentiles in their bitterness were the sea, and on all sides they washed about that land: behold, Thou hast confirmed in Thy virtue the sea, and the land remained thirsting for Thy rain. Thou hast confirmed in Thy virtue the sea, Thou hast broken in pieces the heads of dragons in the water. Dragons' heads, that is, demons' pride, wherewith the Gentiles were possessed, Thou hast broken in pieces upon the water: for those persons whom they were possessing, Thou by Baptism hast delivered.

16. What more after the heads of dragons? For those dragons have their chief, and he is himself the first great dragon. And concerning him what hath He done that hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth? Hear: (ver. 14.) Thou hast broken the head of the dragon. Of what dragon? We understand by dragons all the demons that war under the devil: what single dragon then, whose head was broken, but the devil himself ought we to understand? What with him hath He done? Thou hast broken the head of the dragon. That is, the beginning of sin. That head is the part which received the curse, to wit that the seed of Eve should mark the head of the serpent. For the Church was admonished to shun the beginning of sin. Which is that beginning of sin, like the head of a serpent? The beginning of all sin is pride. There hath been broken therefore the head of the dragon, hath been broken pride diabolical. And what with him hath He done, that hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth? Thou hast given him for a morsel to the Ethiopian peoples. What is this? How do I understand the Ethiopian peoples? How but by these all nations? And properly by black men: for Ethiopians are black. They are themselves called to the faith who were black; the very same indeed, so that there is said to them, for ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. They are themselves indeed

called black, but let them not remain black: for out of these is made the Church, to whom is said, Who is She that hath gone up made white? For what hath been made out of Her black, save that which hath been spoken of in, black I am, but comely? And how have these men received for meat that dragon? I suppose that they have rather received Christ for meat: but Christ whereby they may consummate themselves; the devil whom they may consume. For thence was also that calf which the people worshipped, unbelieving, apostate, seeking the gods of the Egyptians, forsaking Him who had delivered them from the slavery of the Egyptians: whence there was enacted that great Sacrament. For when Moses was thus wroth with them worshipping and adoring the idol, and, inflamed with zeal for God, was punishing temporally, in order that he might terrify them to shun death everlasting; yet the head itself of the calf he cast into the fire, and ground to powder, destroyed, strawed on the water, and gave to the people to drink: so there was enacted a great Sacrament. O anger prophetic, and mind not perturbed but enlightened! He did what? Cast it into the fire, in order that first the form itself may be obliterated; piece by piece grind it down, in order that little by little it may be consumed: cast it into the water, give to the people to drink! What is this but that the worshippers of the devil were become the body of the same? In the same manner as men confessing Christ become the Body of Christ; so that to them is said, but ye are the Body of Christ and the members. The body of the devil was to be consumed, and that too by Israelites was to be consumed. For out of that people were the Apostles, out of that people the first Church. And it was said to Peter concerning the Gentiles, Kill and eat. What is, Kill and eat? Slay thou the thing which they are, and make them that which thou art. On the one hand, kill and eat; on the other hand, break in pieces and drink: but both are in the same Sacrament: because it must have needs been, and without doubt must have needs been, that the body, which was of the devil, by believing should pass over into the Body of Christ. Thus the devil is being consumed with the loss of his members. This was figured also in the serpent of Moses. For the magicians did likewise, and casting down their rods they exhibited serpents: but the serpent of Moses swallowed up the rods of all those magicians. Let there be perceived therefore even now the body of the devil: this is what is coming to pass, he is being devoured by the Gentiles who have believed, he hath become meat for the Ethiopian peoples. This again,

may be perceived in, Thou hast given him for meat to the Ethiopian peoples, how that now all men bite him. What is, bite him? By reproof, blaming, accusing. Just as hath been said, by way of prohibition indeed, but yet the idea expressed: but if ye bite and eat up one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another. What is, bite and eat up one another? Ye go to law with one another, ye detract from one another, ye heap revilings upon one another. Observe therefore now how that with these bitings the devil is being consumed. What man, when angry with his servant, even a heathen, would not say to him, Satan? Behold the devil given for meat. This saith Christian, this saith Jew, this saith heathen: him he worshippeth, and with him he curseth!

17. Let us therefore look to the remaining verses, brethren; I beseech you attend: with great pleasure they are heard, because when heard, even throughout the round world they are recognised. When these things were being spoken of, they were not; because at that time they were in promise, they were not then in accomplishment: but now with what pleasure we are penetrated, when those things which we read of predicted in a book, we see fulfilled in the world? Let us see what He hath done whom now Asaph doth understand, how He hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth.

Ver. 15. Thou hast cleft the fountains and torrents: in order that they might flow with the stream of wisdom, might flow with the riches of the faith, might water the saltiness of the Gentiles, in order that they might convert all unbelievers into the sweetness of the faith by their watering. Thou hast cleft the fountains and torrents. Perhaps it is a distinct thing; perhaps it is one thing, because the fountains were so abundant as to make rivers. Thou hast cleft the fountains and torrents. But if for distinction's sake, in some men the Word of God becometh a well of water springing up unto life eternal; but others hearing the Word, and not so keeping it as that they live well, yet not keeping silence with tongue, they become torrents. For they are properly called torrents which are not perennial: for sometimes also in a secondary sense torrent is used for river: as hath been said, they shall be inebriated with the plenteousness of Thy House, and with the torrent of Thy pleasures Thou shalt give them to drink. For that torrent shall not ever be dried up. But torrents properly are those rivers named, which in summer

fail, but with winter rains are flooded and run. Thou seest therefore a man sound in faith, that will persevere even unto the end, that will not forsake God in any trial; for the sake of the truth, not for the sake of falsehood and error, enduring all difficulties. Whence is this man so vigorous, but because the Word hath become in him a well of water springing up unto life eternal? But the other receiveth the Word, he preacheth, he is not silent, he runneth: but summer proveth whether he be fountain or torrent. Nevertheless through both be the earth watered, by Him Who hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth: let the fountains overflow, let the torrents run. Thou hast cleft fountains and torrents.

18. Ver. 16. Thou hast dried up the rivers of Etham. On the one side He breaketh up fountains and torrents, on the other He drieth up rivers, in order that from those may run waters, and from these waters may be dried up. Rivers, he saith, of Etham. What is Etham? For the word is Hebrew. What is Etham interpreted? Strong, stout. Who is this strong and stout one, whose rivers God drieth up? Who but that very dragon? For no one entereth into the house of a strong man that he may spoil his vessels, unless first he shall have bound fast the strong man. This is that strong man on his own virtue relying, and forsaking God: this is that strong man, who saith, I will set my seat by the north, and I will be like the Most High. Out of that very cup of perverse strength he hath given man to drink. Strong they willed to be, who thought that they would be Gods by means of the forbidden food. Adam became strong, over whom was reproachfully said, 'Behold, Adam hath become like one of us.' For knowing not God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, as though they were strong, to the righteousness of God they have not been made subject. Observe ye that a man hath put out of the way his own strength, and remained weak, needy, standing afar off, not daring even to raise his eyes to Heaven; but smiting his breast, and saying, O Lord, merciful be Thou to me a sinner. Now he is weak, now he confesseth his weakness, he is not strong: dry land he is, be he watered with fountains and torrents. They are as yet strong who rely on their own virtue. Be their rivers dried up, let there be no advancement in the doctrines of the Gentiles, of wizards, of astrologers, of magic arts: for dried up are the rivers of the strong man: Thou hast dried up the rivers of Etham. Let there dry up that doctrine; let minds be flooded with the Gospel of truth.

19. Ver. 16. Thine own is the day and Thine own is the night. Who is ignorant of this, seeing that He hath Himself made all these things; for by the Word were made all things? To that very One Himself Who hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth, to Him is said, Thine own is the night. Something here we ought to perceive which belongeth to that very Salvation which He hath wrought in the midst of the earth. Thine own is the day. Who are these? The spiritual. And Thine own is the night. Who are these? The carnal. Thine own is the day and Thine own is the night. Let the spiritual speak spiritual things to the spiritual: for it hath been said, with things spiritual things spiritual comparing, we speak wisdom among the perfect. Not yet do carnal men receive this wisdom. I could not speak to you as if unto spiritual men, but as if unto carnal men. Therefore when spiritual men are speaking unto spiritual men, day unto day is breaking forth the Word: but while even carnal men themselves do not keep secret the faith of Christ crucified, which they are able to receive though being but little, 'night unto night is telling forth knowledge.' Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night. Unto Thee belong spiritual men, unto Thee belong carnal men: those Thou dost enlighten with immutable wisdom and truth; these Thou dost comfort with the manifestation of the Flesh, as it were the moon comforting the night. Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night. Wilt thou hear the day? See whether thou canst receive it, lift up, as much as thou art able, thy mind. Let us see whether thou dost belong to the day, let us now see, if thy face doth not shrink therefrom. Canst thou see that which thou hast heard but now from the Gospel, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God? For thou knowest not how to think of any words save those which sound and pass away. Canst thou now receive the Word, not as a sound, but as God? Hast thou not there heard, and the Word was God? But thou art thinking of these words: all things by Himself were made: and by Himself were made even they that make words. Of what sort then is that Word? Dost thou receive Him, O carnal man? Answer me, dost thou receive Him? Thou dost not receive Him yet, unto night thou belongest: a moon for thee is necessary, lest in darkness thou die. For certain sinners have bended the bow, in order that they might shoot under the obscure moon men right in heart. For the flesh of Christ was obscured when it was taken down from the Cross and laid in the tomb: and they that slew Him gloried over Him,

and He had not yet risen again, and His disciples were shot at, men right in heart, but under the obscure moon. Therefore in order that not only day to day may break forth the Word, but also night to night may tell forth knowledge; because, Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night, vouchsafe Thou to come down, to remain with Him from Whom Thou comest down, but to come to those unto whom Thou comest down. Vouchsafe to come down Who wast in this world, and the world by Thee was made, and the world knew Thee not. Let even night have her consolation. Let her have it, He saith: 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelled in us.' Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night. Thou hast made perfect sun and moon: the sun, spiritual men, the moon, carnal men. As yet carnal he is, may he not be forsaken, and may he too be made perfect. Thou hast made perfect sun and moon: the sun, as it were a wise man: the moon, as it were an unwise man: Thou hast not however forsaken. For thus it is written, A wise man endureth as the sun, but a foolish man as the moon is changed. What then? Because the sun endureth, that is, because the wise man endureth as the sun, a foolish man is changed like the moon, is one as yet carnal, as yet unwise, to be forsaken? And where is that which hath been said by the Apostle, "To the wise and unwise a debtor I am?" Thou hast made perfect the sun and the moon.

20. Ver. 17. Thou hast made all the ends of the earth. Had He not also made them before, when He founded the earth? But in what manner hath He made the ends of the earth, Who hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth? In what manner save in that manner whereof the Apostle saith, But by grace we are saved, and that not of ourselves, but God's gift it is; not of works, lest perchance a man be exalted. Therefore were there no good works? There were: but in what manner? By the grace of God. Go on, let us see; For of Himself we are the workmanship created in Christ Jesus in good works. Behold in what manner He hath made the ends of the earth, That hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou hast made all the ends of the earth. Summer and spring Thou hast made them. Men fervent in the Spirit are the summer. Thou, I say, hast made men fervent in the Spirit: Thou hast made also the novices in the Faith, they are the spring. Summer and spring Thou hast made them. They shall not glory as if they have not received: Thou hast made them.

21. Ver. 18. Mindful be Thou of this Thy creature. Of what creature of Thine? The enemy hath reviled the Lord. O Asaph, grieve over thine old blindness in understanding: the enemy hath reviled the Lord. It was said to Christ in His own nation, a sinner is this Man: we know not whence He is: we know Moses, to him spake God; this Man is a Samaritan. The enemy hath reviled the Lord; and the unwise people hath provoked Thy name. The unwise people Asaph was at that time, but not the understanding of Asaph at that time. What is said in the former Psalm? As it were a beast I have become unto Thee, and I am alway with Thee: because He went not to the gods and idols of the Gentiles. Although he knew not, being like a beast, yet he knew again as a man. For he said, alway I am with Thee, like a beast: and what afterwards in that place in the same Psalm, where Asaph is? Thou hast held the hand of my right hand, in Thy will Thou hast conducted me, and with glory Thou hast taken me up. In Thy will, not in my righteousness: by Thy gift, not by my work. Therefore here also, the enemy hath reviled the Lord: and the unwise people hath provoked Thy name. Have they all then perished? Far be it. Even if some of the branches have been broken, there remain nevertheless some whereupon the wild olive might be grafted in, and the root remaineth, and out of those same branches through unbelief broken there have been recovered some through faith. For even the Apostle Paul through unbelief had been broken, and through faith unto the root he was restored. So evidently the unwise people provoked Thy name, when it was said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross.

22. But what sayest thou, O Asaph, now in understanding? (Ver. 19.) Deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing to Thee. I acknowledge, saith Asaph: for, as in another Psalm is said, My sin I am conscious of, and my evil-doing I have not covered. Wherefore? Because Peter hath spoken to the Israelites marvelling at the tongues; how that they themselves killed Christ, though for their sakes Christ was sent. When they heard this, they were pricked in heart, and they said to the Apostles, What then shall we do? tell us. And the Apostles, Do penance, and be baptized each one of you in the name of the Lord Jesu Christ, and there shall be remitted to you your sins. Because then through penance confession hath come: deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing to Thee. Why confessing to Thee? Because I am converted in sorrow, while the thorn is being thrust in. They were pricked in

heart, and they became sorrowful in penance, that had been boastful in their saying. Deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing to Thee. To what beasts, save to those the heads whereof were broken in pieces upon the water? For the same devil is called, beast, lion, and dragon. Do not, he saith, give to the Devil and his Angels a soul confessing to Thee. Let the serpent devour, if still I mind things earthly, if for things earthly I long, if still in the promises of the Old Testament, after the revealing of the New, I remain. But forasmuch as now I have laid down pride, and my own righteousness I will not acknowledge, but Thy Grace; against me let proud beasts have no power. Deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing Thee. The souls of Thy poor forget Thou not unto the end. Rich we were, strong we were: but Thou hast dried up the rivers of Etham: no longer we establish our own righteousness, but we acknowledge Thy Grace; poor we are, hearken to Thy beggars. Now we do not dare to lift our eyes to Heaven, but smiting our breasts we say, "O Lord, be Thou merciful to me a sinner." The souls of Thy poor forget not at the end.

23. Ver. 20. Have regard unto Thy Testament. Fulfil that which Thou hast promised: the tables we have, for the inheritance we are looking. Have regard unto Thy Testament, not that old one: not for the sake of the land of Canaan I ask, not for the sake of the temporal subduing of enemies, not for the sake of carnal fruitfulness of sons, not for the sake of earthly riches, not for the sake of temporal welfare: Have regard unto Thy Testament, wherein Thou hast promised the kingdom of Heaven. Now I acknowledge Thy Testament: now understanding is Asaph, no beast is Asaph, now he seeth that which was spoken of, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, and I will accomplish with the House of Israel and of Juda a new Testament, not after the Testament which I ordered with their fathers." Have regard unto Thy Testament: for they that have been darkened have been filled of the earth of unrighteous houses: because they had unrighteous hearts. Our 'houses' are our hearts: therein gladly dwell they that are blessed with pure heart. Have regard, therefore, unto Thy Testament: and let the remnant be saved: for many men that give heed to earth are darkened, and filled with earth. For there hath entered into their eyes dust, and it hath blinded them, and they have become dust which the wind sweepeth from the face of the earth. They that have been darkened have been filled of the earth of

unrighteous houses. For by giving heed to earth they have been darkened, concerning whom there is said in another Psalm, Let their eyes be blinded, that they see not, and their back ever bow Thou down. With earth, then, they that have been darkened have been filled, with the earth of unrighteous houses: because they have unrighteous hearts. For our houses, as we have said above, are our hearts: therein gladly we dwell, if we cleanse them from that iniquity: there is the evil conscience, which driveth the man from thence, whereunto he is bidden to go, carrying his bed, whose sins have been remitted, at the Lord's saying, Take up thy bed, and go into thine house: carry thy flesh, and enter into thy conscience that is now made whole. For they that have been darkened have been filled of the earth of unrighteous houses. They have been darkened, they have been filled with earth. They that have been obscured are who? They that have unrighteous hearts. To them the Lord rendereth after their heart.

24. Ver. 21. Let not the humble man be turned away confounded. For them pride hath confounded. The needy and helpless man shall praise Thy name. Ye see, brethren, how sweet ought to be poverty: ye see that poor and helpless men belong to God, but poor in spirit, for of them is the Kingdom of Heaven. Who are the poor in spirit? The humble, men trembling at the words of God, confessing their sins, neither on their own merits, nor on their own righteousness relying. Who are the poor in spirit? They who when they do any thing of good, praise God, when any thing of evil, accuse themselves. Upon whom shall rest My Spirit, saith the Prophet, but upon the humble man, and peaceful, and trembling at My words? Now therefore Asaph hath understood, now to the earth he adhereth not, now the earthly promises out of the Old Testament he requireth not. Thy beggar he hath become; Thy poor man he hath become; for Thy rivers he is thirsting, for his own have been dried up. Seeing then such an one he hath become, may he not be defrauded of his hope; he hath sought with hands by night in Thy presence, let him not be deceived; Let not the humble man be turned away confounded: the needy and helpless man shall praise Thy name. Confessing their sins, they shall praise Thy name; longing for Thine eternal promises, they shall praise Thy name: not they that are puffed up because of things temporal, not they that because of their own righteousness are lifted up and

distended, not they; but who? The needy and helpless man shall praise Thy name.

25. Ver. 22. Arise, O Lord, judge Thou my cause. For forsaken I seem, for not yet I have received that which Thou hast promised: and my tears have become for me bread by day and by night, while it is said to me daily, Where is thy God? And because I am not able to shew my God, as if I were following an empty thing, they revile me. And not only Heathen, or Jew, or heretic; but sometimes even a Catholic brother doth make a grimace when the promises of God are being preached, when a future resurrection is being foretold. And still even he, though already washed with the water of eternal Salvation, bearing the Sacrament of Christ, perchance saith, 'and what man hath yet risen again?' And, 'I have not heard my father speaking out of the grave, since I buried him!' 'God hath given to His servants a law for time, to which let them betake themselves: for what man cometh back from beneath?' And what shall I do with such men? Shall I shew them what they see not? I am not able: for not for the sake of them ought God to become visible. Now let them do this, if they so please, let them thus do, thus endeavour; because they themselves will not be changed for the better, let them change God for the worse. Let him see that is able, let him believe that is not able, that there is a God. And if he seeth that is able, doth he with eyes see? With understanding he seeth, with heart he seeth. For not sun and moon He willed to shew, Who said, Blessed are they of pure heart, for they shall see God. But an impure heart is meet not even for faith, so as that it may even believe that which it seeth not. I see not, he saith: what am I to believe? Thy soul is seen then, I suppose? Fool, thy body is seen: thy soul who doth see? Since therefore thy body alone is seen, why art thou not buried? He marvelleth that I have said, If body alone is seen, why art thou not buried? And he answereth, (for he knoweth as much as this,) Because I am alive. How know I that thou art alive, of whom I see not the soul? How know I? Thou wilt answer, Because I speak, because I walk, because I work. Fool, by the operations of the body I know thee to be living, by the works of creation canst thou not know the Creator? And perchance he that saith, when I shall be dead, afterwards I shall be nothing; hath both learned letters, and hath learned this doctrine from Epicurus, who was a sort of doting philosopher, or rather lover of folly not of wisdom, whom even the

philosophers themselves have named the hog: who said that the ‘chief good’ was pleasure of body; this philosopher they have named the hog, wallowing in carnal mire. From him perchance this lettered man hath learned to say, I shall not be, after I have died. Dried be the rivers of Etham! Perish those doctrines of the Gentiles, flourish the plantations of Jerusalem! Let them see what they can, in heart believe what they cannot see! Certainly all those things which throughout the world now are seen, when God was working Salvation in the midst of the earth, when those things were being spoken of, they were not then as yet: and behold at that time they were foretold, now they are shewn as fulfilled, and still the fool saith in his heart, there is no God. Woe to the perverse hearts: for so will there come to pass the things which remain, as there have come to pass the things which at that time were not, and were being foretold as to come to pass. Hath God indeed performed to us all the things which He promised, and concerning the Day of Judgment alone hath He deceived us? Christ was not on the earth; He promised, He hath performed: no virgin had conceived; He promised, He hath performed: the precious Blood had not been shed whereby there should be effaced the hand-writing of our death; He promised, He hath performed: not yet had flesh risen again unto life eternal; He promised, He hath performed: not yet had the Gentiles believed; He promised, He hath performed: not yet heretics armed with the name of Christ, against Christ were warring; He foretold, He hath performed: not yet the idols of the Gentiles from the earth had been effaced; He foretold, He hath performed: when all these things He hath foretold and performed, concerning the Day of Judgment alone hath He lied? It will come by all means as these things came; for even these things before they came to pass were future, and as future were first foretold, and afterwards they came to pass. It will come, my brethren. Let no one say, it will not come: or, it will come, but far off is that which will come. But to thyself it is near at hand to go hence. Let the first deception suffice: if we have not been able to remain in the precept, at least let us be amended by example. Not yet was there an example of human falling, when it was said to Adam, With death thou shalt die, if thou shalt have touched. And there came athwart the serpent, and said, Thou shalt not die with death. Believed was the serpent, despised was God: believed was the serpent, touched was the thing forbidden, man died. Was there not more fulfilled that which God had threatened than what the enemy

had promised? So it is indeed: we acknowledge this; thence all men are under death: now that we have experience let us beware. For even now the serpent doth not cease to whisper in our ears and to say, Will God indeed condemn so great multitudes, and save so few? What else is this but, Do contrary to commandment, ye will not die? But as it was then, so also it is now. If thou shalt have done that which the devil doth suggest, and shalt have despised that which God hath commanded; there will come the Judgment Day, and thou wilt find that true which God hath threatened, and that false which the devil hath promised. Arise, O Lord, judge Thou my cause. ‘Dead thou art, and despised thou art;’ it is being said to me, ‘Where is thy God?’ Arise, judge Thou my cause. For there is not to come to judgment any but He that hath arisen from the dead. As to come He was foretold, He came, and He was despised by the Jews while walking upon the earth; He is despised by false Christians while sitting in Heaven. Arise, O Lord, judge Thou my cause. Because in Thee I have believed, let me not perish; because I have believed that which I have not seen, of my hope let me not be beguiled, let me receive that which Thou hast promised. Judge Thou my cause. Remember Thy reproaches, those which are from the imprudent man all the day long. For still Christ is reviled: nor will there be wanting all the day long, that is, even unto the end of time, the vessels of wrath. Still is it being said, ‘Vain things the Christians do preach:’ still is it being said, ‘A fond thing is the resurrection of the dead.’ Judge Thou my cause: remember Thy reproaches. But what reproaches, save those which are from the imprudent man all the day long? Doth a prudent man say this? Nay, for a prudent man is said to be one far-seeing. If a prudent man is one far-seeing, by faith he seeth afar: for with eyes scarce that before the feet is seen. All the day long.

26. Ver. 23. Forget not the voice of them that implore Thee. While they groan for and expect now that which Thou hast promised from the New Testament, and walk by that same Faith, do Thou not forget the voice of them imploring Thee. But those still say, Where is Thy God? Let the pride of them that hate Thee come up alway to Thee. Do not forget even their pride. Nor doth He forget: no doubt He doth either punish or amend.

PSALM 75

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. This Psalm to the swelling of pride applieth the medicine of humility; but the humble it doth comfort in hope: with this design, that not any one may proudly rely on himself, that not any humble man may despair of the Lord. For the promise of God is ratified, sure, fixed, and unshaken, faithful, and devoid of all doubt, which doth comfort the afflicted. For the whole life of man upon the earth, as it is written, is trial. Nor is one as it were prosperous to be chosen, and adversity alone to be shunned; but of both we are to beware, of the one lest it corrupt, of the other lest it crush: so that for every man, in whatever state of affairs he shall have lived in this life, there may be no refuge but God, nor any joy but in His promises. For this life with whatsoever felicity overflowing doth deceive many men, God no man. Because then to every man, when converted unto God, his pursuit is changed, his pleasures are changed: (for they are not withdrawn, but are changed:) so all our pleasures in this life are not yet in substance, but in hope, but the hope itself is so sure, that to all this world's pleasures it is to be preferred, as it is written, delight thyself in the Lord. And that thou mightest not think thyself already to have that which He doth promise, he added forthwith, and He shall give thee the petitions of thy heart. If then not yet thou hast the petitions of thy heart, whence dost thou delight in the Lord, except because thou hast a sure promiser, who hath made Himself by promising a debtor? Of this entreaty then, in order that our hope may remain with us, and that we may be introduced unto that which God hath promised, the Title of this Psalm speaketh: At the end, corrupt not. What is, corrupt not? That which Thou hast promised, perform. But when? At the end. To this then let the mind's eye be directed, unto the end. Let all the things which have occurred in the way be passed over, in order that we may

attain to the end. Let proud men exult because of present felicity, let them swell with honours, glitter in gold, overflow with domestics, be encircled with the services of clients: these things pass away, they pass away like a shadow. When that end shall have come, when all who now hope in the Lord are to rejoice, then to them shall come sorrow without end. When the meek shall have received that which the proud deride, then the vapouring of the proud shall be turned into mourning. Then shall there be that voice which we know in the Book of Wisdom: for they shall say at that time when they see the glory of the Saints, who, when they were in humiliation, endured them; who, when they were exalted, consented not—at that time then they shall say, These are they whom sometime we have had in derision. Where they also say, What hath pride profited us, and the boasting of riches hath bestowed upon us what? All things have passed away like a shadow. Because on things corruptible they relied, their hope shall be corrupted: but our own hope at that time shall be substance. For in order that the promise of God may remain whole and sure and certain towards us, we have said out of a heart of faith, at the end corrupt not. Fear not, therefore, lest any mighty man should corrupt the promises of God. He doth not corrupt, because He is truthful; He hath no one more mighty by whom His promise may be corrupted: let us be then sure concerning the promises of God; and let us sing now from the place where the Psalm beginneth.

2. Ver. 1. We will confess to Thee, O Lord, we will confess to Thee, and will invoke Thy name. Do not invoke, before thou confess: confess, and invoke. For Him Whom thou art invoking, unto thyself thou callest. For what is it to invoke, but unto thyself to call? If He is invoked by thee, that is, if He is called to thee, unto whom doth He draw near? To a proud man He draweth not near. High indeed He is, one lifted up attaineth not unto Him. In order that we may reach all exalted objects, we raise ourselves, and if we are not able to reach them, we look for some appliances or ladders, in order that being exalted we may reach exalted objects: contrariwise God is both high, and by the lowly He is reached. It is written, Nigh is the Lord to them that have bruised the heart. The bruising of the heart is Godliness, humility. He that bruises himself is angry with himself. Let him make himself angry in order that he may make Him merciful; let him make himself judge, in order that he may make Him Advocate. Therefore God

doth come when invoked. Unto whom doth He come? To the proud man He cometh not. Hear another testimony: Exalted is the Lord, and things lowly He regardeth; but things exalted from afar He scanneth. Exalted is the Lord, and things lowly He regardeth, not from afar, but things exalted from afar He scanneth. And lest perchance when it was being said that He regardeth things lowly, proud men should rejoice for their impunity, as if He that dwelleth in exalted places doth not observe them in their pride; they are terrified, and there is said to them, He seeth you and scanneth you, but from afar. Those He maketh blessed, unto whom He approacheth: but ye, He saith, O proud men, O exalted men, shall not be unpunished, because He scanneth; shall not be blessed, because from afar He scanneth you. Take heed therefore what ye do: for if He knoweth, He is not unobservant. It is better therefore that He be unobservant than known. For what is that same being unobservant, but not knowing? What is, not to know? Not to animadvert. For even as the act of one avenging animadversion is wont to be spoken of. Hear one praying that He be unobservant: Turn away Thy face from my sins. What then wilt thou do if He shall have turned away His face from thee? A grievous thing it is, and to be feared, lest He forsake thee. Again, if He turn not away His face, He animadverteth. God knoweth this thing, God can do this thing, namely, both turn away face from one sinning, and not turn away from one confessing. Therefore in one place to Him is said, Turn away Thy face from my sins: and in another place to Him is said, Turn not away Thy face from me. There, from my sins turn away; but here, from me turn not away. Confess therefore and invoke. For by confessing thou purgest the Temple, into which He may come, when invoked. Confess and invoke. May He turn away face from thy sins, not turn away from thee: turn away face from that which thou hast wrought, not turn away from that which He hath Himself wrought. For thee, as man, He hath Himself wrought, thy sins thou hast thyself wrought. Confess, therefore, and invoke: say, We will confess to Thee, O Lord, we will confess to Thee.

3. This repetition is confirmation, that it doth not repent thee to have confessed. For not to any cruel one thou hast confessed, nor to one vindictive, nor to one that upbraideth; confess securely. Hear another voice of a Psalm exhorting: Confess ye to the Lord, for good He is. What is, for good He is? Why do ye fear to confess? Good He is, He is unobservant

when one confesseth. Fear to confess to a human judge, lest perchance he punish thee after confession: to God, fear not: make Him by confessing merciful, Whom by denying thou dost not make ignorant. We will confess to Thee, O God, we will confess, and now being secure, we will invoke Thy name. We have emptied our hearts by confession, Thou hast terrified, hast purged. Confession doth make us humble: draw Thou near to us humble Who dost withdraw from us exalted. But that there is a strengthening of the sense in repetition, by many passages of the Scriptures we are taught. Thence is that which the Lord saith, Verily, Verily. Thence in certain Psalms is, So be it, So be it. To signify the thing, one So be it would have been sufficient: to signify confirmation, there hath been added another So be it. Pharaoh, king of Egypt—ye know how that, when Joseph was in that country because of his love of chastity now shut up in prison, this Pharaoh saw a dream well known to us all, by seven lean kine there were devoured seven fat kine, and again that by seven thin ears of corn were devoured seven fruitful ears. And how did Joseph interpret? If ye remember, he said that these dreams were not two, but one vision. One is, he saith, their interpretation: but that thou hast seen it again, he saith, doth signify confirmation. These words I have said, that ye may not suppose that repetition in the words of the holy language is, as it were, a love of talkativeness. Ofttimes therein repetition hath the force of confirmation. Prepared is my heart, O God, he saith, prepared is my heart. In another place he saith, Wait for the Lord, do manfully, and may He strengthen thy heart, and wait for the Lord. Countless passages of such sort there are throughout all the Scriptures. With these it is sufficient that we have commended to your notice a way of speaking which ye may observe in all like cases: now to the substance attend: We will confess to Thee, he saith, and we will invoke. I have said why before invocation confession doth precede: because whom thou dost invoke, him thou dost invite. But he willeth not to come when invoked, if thou shalt have been lifted up: lifted up if thou shalt have been, thou wilt not be able to confess. And thou deniest not any things to God that He knoweth not. Therefore thy confession doth not teach Him, but it purgeth thee.

4. And now he hath confessed, he hath invoked: yea, they have confessed, they have invoked; and it is said in the person of one man, I will tell forth

all Thy marvellous things. Having confessed, he hath emptied himself of evil things, invoking, he hath filled himself with good things; in telling forth he hath belched out that wherewith he hath filled himself. And observe, brethren, when they were confessing there were many: We will confess to Thee, O God, we will confess to Thee, and we will invoke Thy name. For many are the hearts of men confessing, one of men believing. Why is it that many are the hearts of men confessing, one of men believing? Because divers sins men confess, one faith they believe. Now therefore when Christ hath begun to dwell in the inner man through faith, and hath begun when invoked to possess him that hath confessed; there is made up whole Christ, Head and Body, and out of many, One. Hear ye now the words of Christ. For these seemed not as it were to be His words, We will confess to Thee, O God, we will confess to Thee, and will invoke Thy name. Now beginneth the discourse in the person of the Head. But whether Head speaketh or whether members speak, Christ speaketh: He speaketh in the person of the Head, He speaketh in the person of the Body. But what hath been said? There shall be two in one flesh. This is a great Sacrament: I, he saith, speak in Christ and in the Church. And He Himself in the Gospel, Therefore no longer two, but one flesh. For in order that ye may know these in a manner to be two persons, and again one by the bond of marriage, as one He speaketh in Isaiah, and saith, As upon a Bridegroom he hath bound upon me a mitre, and as a Bride he hath clothed me with an ornament. A Bridegroom He hath called Himself in the Head, a Bride in the Body. He is speaking therefore as One, let us hear Him, and in Him let us also speak. Let us be the members of Him, in order that this voice may possibly be ours also. I will tell forth, he saith, all Thy marvellous things. Christ is preaching Himself, He is preaching Himself even in His members now existing, in order that He may guide unto Him others, and they may draw near that were not, and may be united with those members of Him, through which members of Him the Gospel hath been preached; and there may be made one Body under one Head, in one Spirit, in one Life.

5. Ver. 2. And he saith what? When I shall have received, he saith, the time, I will judge justices. When shall He judge justices? When He shall have received the time. Not yet is the precise time. Thanks to His mercy: He first preacheth justices, and then He judgeth justices. For if He willed to judge

before He willed to preach, who would be found that should be delivered: who would meet Him that should be absolved? Now therefore is the time of preaching: I will tell, he saith, all Thy marvellous works. Hear Him telling, hear Him preaching: for if thou shalt have despised Him, when I shall have received the time, He saith, I will judge justices. I forgive, He saith, now sins to one confessing, I will not spare hereafter one despising. Mercy and judgment I will sing to Thee, O Lord, is said in a Psalm. Mercy and judgment: now mercy, hereafter judgment: in which mercy sins are forgiven, in which judgment sins are punished. Wilt thou not fear the punisher of sinners? Love the forgiver, scorn Him not, exalt not thyself, say not, I have nothing which He may forgive me: for hear what followeth, When I shall have received the time I will judge justices. Hath Christ received a time? Hath the Son of God received a time? The Son of God hath not received a time: but the Son of Man hath received a time. But the self-same Person is both Son of God by Whom we were made, and Son of Man by Whom we were made again. By the assuming of man He was not Himself assumed, by the changing of man into something better He was by no means changed into any thing worse: He ceased not to be what He was, He received that which He was not. He was what? Seeing that in form of God He was, no robbery He judged it to be equal with God. They are the words of the Apostle. And He received what? But he emptied Himself, receiving the form of a servant. As the form of a servant He hath received, so also a time He hath received. He hath been changed then? Hath been wasted? Hath been made thinner? Hath fallen off into wasting? Far be it! What then? He hath emptied Himself, receiving the form of a servant. He hath been said to have emptied Himself by receiving an inferior, not by degenerating from an equal. Therefore, brethren, what is this, When I shall have received the time I will judge justices? He hath received a time as Son of Man; He doth govern times as Son of God. Hear how as Son of Man He hath received the time of judging. He saith in the Gospel, He hath given to Him power to execute judgment, because Son of Man He is. According to His nature as Son of God, He hath never received power of judging, because He never lacked the power of judging: according to His nature as Son of Man He hath received a time, as of being born, and of suffering, as of dying, and of rising again, and of ascending, so of coming and of judging. In Him His Body also saith these words, for not without them He

will judge. For He saith in the Gospel, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Therefore whole Christ saith, that is, Head and Body in the Saints, when I shall have received the time, I will judge justices.

6. But now what? (Ver. 3.) The earth hath flowed down. If the earth hath flowed down, whence hath it flowed down except by sins? Therefore also they are called delinquencies. To delinquish is as it were by a kind of liquidity to slip down from the stability of firmness in virtue and righteousness. For it is through desire of lower things that every man sinneth: as he is strengthened by the love of higher things, so he falleth down and as it were melteth away by desire of lower things. This flux of things by the sins of man the merciful forgiver observing, being a merciful forgiver of sins, not yet an exactor of punishments, He observeth and saith: The earth hath flowed down, and all they that dwell therein. The earth herself indeed hath flowed down by them that dwell in her. That which followeth is an exposition, not an addition. As though thou wert saying, in what manner hath the earth flowed down? Have the foundations been withdrawn, and hath any thing therein been swallowed up in a sort of gulf? What I mean by earth is all they that dwell therein. I have found, he saith, the earth sinful. And I have done what? I have strengthened the pillars thereof. What are the pillars which He hath strengthened? Pillars He hath called the Apostles. So the Apostle Paul concerning his fellow-Apostles saith, who seemed to be pillars. And what would those pillars have been, except by Him they had been strengthened? For on occasion of a sort of earthquake even these very pillars rocked: at the Passion of the Lord all the Apostles despaired. Therefore those pillars which rocked at the Passion of the Lord, by the Resurrection were strengthened. The Beginning of the building hath cried out through the pillars thereof, and in all those pillars the Architect Himself hath cried out. For the Apostle Paul was one pillar of them when he said, Would ye receive a proof of Him that speaketh in me—Christ? Therefore, I, he saith, have strengthened the pillars thereof: I have risen again, I have shewn that death is not to be feared, I have shewn to them that fear, that not even the body itself doth perish in the dying. There terrified them wounds, there strengthened them scars. The Lord Jesus could have risen again without any scar: for what great matter were it for that

power, to restore the frame of the body to such perfect soundness, as that no trace at all of past wound should appear? He had power whence He might make it whole even without scar: but He willed to have that whereby He might strengthen the rocking pillars.

7. We have heard now, brethren, that which day by day is not kept secret: let us hear now what He hath cried through these pillars. It is time to hear because of that terrific utterance, I will judge justices when I shall have received the time. He is to receive the time of judging justices, ye even now have the time of doing justices. If He kept silence, ye would not have any thing to do: but to the strengthened pillars He crieth. He crieth what? (Ver. 4.) I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly. He crieth, my brethren, truly ye cry, He delighteth you, hear ye Him crying. By Himself I pray, let that voice terrify you: these voices of yours ought not so much to delight us, as those to terrify you. I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly. But already they have done, and they are guilty: already there hath flowed down the earth, and all they that dwell therein. Pricked to the heart were they that crucified Christ, they acknowledged their sin, they learned something of the Apostle, that they might not despair of the pardon of the Preacher. For as Physician He had come, and therefore had not come to the whole. For there is no need, He saith, to the whole of a physician, but to them that are sick. I have not come to call righteous men, but sinners to repentance. Therefore, I have said to unjust men, do not unjustly. They heard not. For of old to us it was spoken: we heard not, we fell, were made mortal, were begotten mortal: the earth flowed down. Let them hear the Physician even now in order that they may rise, Him that came to the sick man, Him Whom they would not hear when whole in order that they might not fall, let them hear when lying down in order that they may rise. I have said to the unjust, Do not unjustly. How must we act? We have already done. And to the delinquents, Do not exalt your horn. What is this? If ye have done iniquity through lust, do not defend it by being lifted up: confess if ye have done it. For he that confesseth not and is unjust, doth exalt the horn. I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly; and to the delinquent, Do not exalt your horn. There shall be exalted in you the horn of Christ, if your horn be not exalted. Your horn is of iniquity, the horn of Christ is of majesty.

8. Ver. 5. Be not therefore lifted up: speak not iniquity against God. Hear ye now the voices of many, let each one hear, let him be pricked. What are men wont to say? Doth God truly judge concerning things human? And is this a judgment of God? Or doth He indeed care for what is being done on the earth? So many unjust men do overflow with prosperity, innocent men are weighed down with toils. For to one hath chanced something of ill, by God's reproof and admonition, and he knoweth his conscience, knoweth that for his sin's deserts he may suffer somewhat: whence doth he dispute against God? Because he is not able to say, A just man I am: what do we suppose that he saith? There are worse unrighteous men, and yet these things they suffer not. This is the iniquity which men speak against God. But observe how unjust it is: while he willeth himself to seem a just man, Him he maketh unjust. For he that saith, Unjustly I suffer that which I suffer; doth make Him unjust, by whose judgment he is suffering; but himself just, who is suffering unjustly. I ask you, brethren of mine, is this just, that God be believed to be unjust, thou just? But when thou art saying these words thou art speaking against God, iniquity.

9. What saith He in another Psalm? These things thou hast done, having enumerated certain sins. These things thou hast done, He saith, and was silent. What is, I was silent? He is never silent with commandment, but meanwhile He is silent with punishment: He is keeping still from vengeance, He doth not pronounce sentence against the condemned. But this man saith thus, I have done such and such things, and God hath not taken vengeance; behold I am whole, nought of ill hath befallen me. These things thou hast done, and I was silent: thou hast suspected iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee. What is, that I shall be like unto thee? Because thou art unjust, even Me thou hast deemed unjust; as though an approver of thy misdeeds, and no adversary, no avenger thereof. And what afterwards saith He to thee? I will convict thee, and will set thee before thine own face? What is this? Because now by sinning behind thy back thou settest thyself, seest not thyself, examinest not thyself; I will set thee before thyself, and will bring upon thee punishment from thyself. So also here, Speak not iniquity against God. Attend. Many men speak this iniquity; but dare not openly, lest as blasphemers they be abhorred by godly men: in their heart they gnaw upon these things, within they feed upon such impious food; it

delighteth them to speak against God, and if they break not out with tongue, in heart they are not silent. Whence in another Psalm is said, The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. The fool hath said, but he hath feared men: he would not say it where men might hear; and he said it in that place where He might Himself hear concerning Whom he said it. Therefore here also in this Psalm, (dearly beloved attend,) whereas that which He said, Do not speak iniquity against God, this He saw many men do in heart, He hath also added, (ver. 6.) for neither from East, nor from West, nor from the deserts of the mountains, (ver. 7.) for God is Judge. Of thine iniquities God is Judge. If God He is, every where He is present. Whither wilt thou take thyself away from the eyes of God, so that in some quarter thou mayest speak that which He may not hear? If from the East God judgeth, withdraw into the West, and say what thou wilt against God: if from the West, go into the East, and there speak: if from the deserts of the mountains He judgeth, go into the midst of the peoples, where thou mayest murmur to thyself. From no place judgeth He That every where is secret, every where open; whom it is allowed no one to know as He is, and whom no one is permitted not to know. Take heed what thou doest. Thou art speaking iniquity against God. The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the round world, (another Scripture saith this,) and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice: wherefore he that speaketh unjust things cannot be hid. Do not therefore think God to be in places: He is with thee such an one as thou shalt have been. What is, such an one as thou shalt have been? Good, if thou shalt have been good; and evil to thee He will seem, if evil thou shalt have been; but a Helper, if good thou shalt have been; an Avenger, if evil thou shalt have been. There thou hast a Judge in thy secret place. Willing to do something of evil, from the public thou retirest into thy house, where no enemy may see; from those places of thine house which are open and before the eyes of men, thou removest thyself into a chamber; thou fearest even in thy chamber some witness from some other quarter, thou retirest into thy heart, there thou meditatest: He is more inward than thy heart. Whithersoever therefore thou shalt have fled, there He is. From thyself whither wilt thou flee? Wilt thou not follow thyself whithersoever thou shalt flee? But since there is One more inward even than thyself, there is no place whither thou mayest flee from God angry, but to God reconciled. There is no place at all whither thou mayest flee. Wilt thou flee from Him?

Flee to Him. Therefore speak not iniquity against God, even there where ye speak. Iniquity, he saith, he hath meditated in his bed. What is, 'He hath meditated in his bed?' The bed, calling his heart; Sacrifice the sacrifice of justice, and hope in the Lord. But above he said, Say ye in your hearts, and in your beds be pricked. However many prickings of evil deeds thou hast there, so many prickings of confession have thou there. Where then thou speakest iniquity against God, there He judgeth thee: He doth not defer judgment, but punishment. Now He judgeth, now He knoweth, now He seeth: punishment remaineth; when it shall have been set before thee, thou wilt have the punishment also, when there shall have appeared the face of that Man, Who was here derided, Who was judged, Who was crucified, Who stood before a judge, when He shall have appeared judging in His own presence, then thou shalt have punishment, if thou shalt not have amended thyself. What then shall we do now? Let us come before His face, ἐν ἑξομολογήσει, come before in confession: He shall come gentle Whom thou hadst made angry. Neither from the deserts of the mountains, for God is Judge: not from the East, not from the West, not from the deserts of the mountains. Wherefore? For God is Judge. If in any place He were, He would not be God: but because God is Judge, not man, do not expect Him out of places. His place thou wilt be, if thou art good, if after having confessed thou shalt have invoked Him.

10. Ver. 7. One He humbleth, and another He exalteth. Whom humbleth, whom exalteth this Judge? Observe these two men in the temple, and ye see whom He humbleth and whom He exalteth. They went up into the Temple to pray, He saith, the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican: the Pharisee said, Thanks to Thee I render, that I am not like the rest of men, unjust, robbers, adulterers, as even this Publican: I fast twice in the week, tithes I give of all things whatsoever I possess. To the Physician he had gone up, and was shewing whole limbs, he was hiding the wounds. What therefore said He, Who knew best what he had to be healed of? But the Publican was standing afar off, and was smiting his breast. Ye see him standing afar off: to Him he was drawing near, Whom he was invoking. And he was smiting his breast, saying, O God, be Thou merciful to me a sinner. Verily I say unto you, that Publican went down justified more than that Pharisee: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself

shall be exalted. Thus hath been explained a verse of this Psalm. God the Judge doth what? One He humbleth, and another He exalteth: He humbleth the proud, He exalteth the humble.

11. Ver. 8. For the cup in the hand of the Lord of pure wine is full of mixed. Justly so. And He hath poured out of this upon this man; nevertheless, the dreg thereof hath not been emptied; there shall drink all the sinners of earth. Let us be somewhat recruited; there is here some obscurity, as we have heard in a very recent lesson in the Gospel; Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. But thou sayest, At what am I to knock, in order that it may be opened unto me? Neither from East nor from West, neither from the deserts of the mountains, for God is Judge. If present He is in this place and in that, and absent no where, where thou art standing, there knock: there only stand, for by standing thou dost knock. What then is this? The first question that meeteth us is this, of pure wine it is full of mixed. How of pure, if of mixed? But when he saith, the cup in the hand of the Lord, (to men instructed in the Church of Christ I am speaking,) ye ought not indeed to paint in your heart God as it were circumscribed with a human form, lest, though the temples are shut up, ye forge images in your hearts. This cup therefore doth signify something. We will find out this. But in the hand of the Lord, is, in the power of the Lord. For the hand of God is spoken of for the power of God. For even in reference to men oftentimes is said, in hand he hath it: that is, in his power he hath it, when he chooseth he doth it. Of pure wine it is full of mixed. In continuation he hath himself explained: He hath inclined, he saith, from this unto this man; nevertheless the dreg thereof hath not been emptied. Behold how it was full of mixed wine. Let it not therefore terrify you that it is both pure and mixed: pure because of the genuineness thereof, mixed because of the dreg. What then in that place is the wine, and what the dreg? And what is, He hath inclined from this unto this man, in such sort that the dreg thereof was not emptied?

12. Call ye to mind from whence he came to this: one He humbleth, and another He exalteth. That which was figured to us in the Gospel through two men, a Pharisee and a Publican, this let us, taking in a wider sense, understand of two peoples, of Jews and of Gentiles: the people of the Jews

that Pharisee was, the people of the Gentiles that Publican. The people of the Jews were boasting of their merits, the Gentiles were confessing their sins. He that knoweth in the holy writings both the Apostolical Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles, seeth there what I say: not to make it long, it is just as the Apostles were exhorting the Gentiles not to despair, because they had lain in great sins; and were restraining the Jews from exalting themselves by the justifications, as it were, of the Law, and from supposing themselves to be on this account just, but the Gentiles to be sinners, because the Jews had the Law, and had the Temple, and had the Priesthood. But all those worshippers of idols, venerators of demons, were set afar off, just as that Publican was standing at a distance. As those by being proud have withdrawn, so these by confessing have drawn near. The cup therefore full of pure wine in the hand of the Lord, as far as the Lord giveth me to understand, (for there may be some other who may give a better interpretation, because the obscurity of the Scriptures is such that it is a difficult thing for them to produce but one interpretation. Nevertheless, whatever interpretation shall have been disclosed, it must needs accord with the rule of faith: we neither envy our elders, nor, little as we are, do we despair. What seemeth good to us I am telling Your Love, not that I may stop up your ears against others, who will perchance say something better:)—the cup of pure wine full of the mixed, seemeth to me to be the Law, which was given to the Jews, and all that Scripture of the Old Testament, as it is called; there are the weights of all manner of sentences. For therein the New Testament lieth concealed, as though in the dreg of corporal Sacraments. The circumcision of the flesh is a thing of great mystery, and there is understood from thence the circumcision of the heart. The Temple of Jerusalem is a thing of great mystery, and there is understood from it the Body of the Lord. The land of promise is understood to be the Kingdom of Heaven. The sacrifice of victims and of beasts hath a great mystery: but in all those kinds of sacrifices is understood that one Sacrifice and only victim of the Cross, the Lord, instead of all which sacrifices we have one; because even those figured these, that is, with those these were figured. That people received the Law, they received commandments just and good. What is so just as, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not speak false testimony, honour thy father and mother, thou shalt not covet the property of thy neighbour, one God thou shalt

adore, and Him alone thou shalt serve, all these things belong to the wine. But those things carnal have as it were sunk down in order that they might remain with them, and there might be poured forth from thence all the spiritual understanding. But the cup in the hand of the Lord, that is, in the power of the Lord: of pure wine, that is, of the mere Law: is full of mixed, that is is together with the dreg of corporal Sacraments. And because the one He humbleth, the proud Jew, and the other He exalteth, the confessing Gentile; He hath inclined from this unto this, that is, from the Jewish people unto the Gentile people. Hath inclined what? The Law. There hath distilled from thence a spiritual sense. Nevertheless, the dreg thereof hath not been emptied, for all the carnal Sacraments have remained with the Jews. There shall drink all the sinners of the earth. Who shall drink? All the sinners of the earth. Who are the sinners of the earth? The Jews were indeed sinners, but proud: again, the Gentiles were sinners, but humble. All sinners shall drink, but see, who the dreg, who the wine. For those by drinking the dreg have come to nought: these by drinking the wine have been justified. I would dare to speak of them even as inebriated, and I shall not fear: and O that all ye were thus inebriated. Call to mind, Thy cup inebriating, how passing beautiful! But why? Do ye think, my brethren, that all those who by confessing Christ even willed to die, were sober? So drunk they were, that they knew not their friends. All their kindred, who strove to divert them from the hope of Heavenly rewards by earthly allurements, were not acknowledged, were not heard by them drunken. Were they not drunken, whose heart had been changed? Were they not drunken, whose mind had been alienated from this world? There shall drink, he saith, all the sinners of the earth. But who shall drink the wine? Sinners shall drink, but in order that they may not remain sinners; in order that they may be justified, in order that they may not be punished.

13. Ver. 9. But I, for all drink, but separately I, that is, Christ with His Body, for ever will rejoice, I will Psalm to the God of Jacob: in that promise to be at the end, whereof is said, corrupt not. But I for ever will rejoice.

14. Ver. 10. And all the horns of sinners I will break, and there shall be exalted the horns of the Just. This is, the one He humbleth, the other He exalteth. Sinners would not have their horns to be broken, which without

doubt will be broken at the end. Thou wilt not have Him then break them, do thou to-day break them. For thou hast heard above, do not despise it: I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly, and to the delinquents, Do not exalt the horn. When thou hast heard, do not exalt the horn, thou hast despised and hast exalted the horn: thou shalt come to the end, where there shall come to pass, All the horns of sinners I will break, and there shall be exalted the horns of the Just. The horns of sinners are the dignities of proud men: the horns of the Just are the gifts of Christ. For by horns exultations are understood. Thou hatest on earth earthly exultation, in order that thou mayest have the heavenly. Thou lovest the earthly, He doth not admit thee to the Heavenly: and unto confusion will belong thy horn which is broken, just as unto glory it will belong, if thy horn is exalted. Now therefore there is time for making choice, then there will not be. Thou wilt not say, I will be let go and will make choice. For there have preceded the words, I have said to the unjust. If I have not said, make ready an excuse, make ready a defence: but if I have said, seize first upon confession, lest thou come unto damnation; for then confession will be too late, and there will be no defence.

The present Volume is carried to the end of Psalm 101. or Psalm 100. in the Latin, where the MSS. of the 'Second Part' usually close. The latter part of the Volume is translated by the Rev. H. M. Wilkins, M.A. Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. The last Volumes of St. Chrysostom on St. Matthew, and on St. John, are in the Press, and likewise St. Chrysostom on the Acts, the Original of which is also preparing for Publication. The Greek Text of St. Chrysostom on the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians, and of Theodoret on the Romans, &c. may be expected in the course of next year.

C. M.

Advent, 1850.

PSALM 76

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty, wherein he disputeth against the Donatists, and treateth of vows.

1. The enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ, known unto all men, the Jews, are wont to glory in this Psalm which we have sung, saying, Known in Judæa is God, in Israel great is the name of Him: and to revile the Gentiles to whom God is not known, and to say that to themselves alone God is known; seeing that the Prophet saith, Known in Judæa is God: in other places therefore He is unknown. But God is known in very deed in Judæa, if they understand what is Judæa. For indeed God is not known except in Judæa. Behold even we say this, that except a person shall have been in Judæa, known to him God cannot be. But what saith the Apostle? He that in secret is a Jew, he that is so in circumcision of the heart, not in letter but in spirit. There are therefore Jews in circumcision of the flesh, and there are Jews in circumcision of the heart. Many of our holy fathers had both the circumcision of the flesh, for a seal of the faith, and circumcision of the heart, for the faith itself. From these fathers these men degenerating, who now in the name do glory, and have lost their deeds; from these fathers, I say, degenerating, they have remained in flesh Jews, in heart Heathens. For these are Jews, who are out of Abraham, from whom Isaac was born, and out of him Jacob, and out of Jacob the twelve Patriarchs, and out of the twelve Patriarchs the whole people of the Jews. But they were generally called Jews for this reason, that Judas was one of the twelve sons of Jacob, a Patriarch among the twelve, and from his stock the Royalty came among the Jews. For all this people after the number of the twelve sons of Jacob, had twelve tribes. What we call tribes are as it were distinct houses and congregations of people. That people, I say, had twelve tribes, out of which twelve tribes one tribe was Judah, out of which were the kings; and there

was another tribe, Levi, out of which were the priests. But because to the priests serving the temple no land was allotted, but it was necessary that among twelve tribes all the Land of promise should be shared: there having been therefore taken out one tribe of higher dignity, the tribe of Levi, which was of the priests, there would have remained eleven, unless by the adoption of the two sons of Joseph the number twelve were completed.

What this is, observe. One of the twelve sons of Jacob was Joseph. It is that Joseph whom his brethren sold into Egypt, and who there on account of his chastity was raised to an exalted station, and God was with him in all his work; and he received his brethren, by whom he had been sold, and his father, weighed down with famine and for the sake of bread going down into Egypt. This Joseph had two sons, Ephraim and Manasse. Jacob, dying, as though by will, received those his grandsons into the number of sons, and said to his son Joseph, The rest that are born shall be to thee; but these to me, and they shall divide the land with their brethren. As yet there had not been given nor divided the land of promise, but he was speaking in the Spirit prophesying. The two sons therefore of Joseph being added, there were made up nevertheless twelve tribes, since now there are thirteen. For instead of one tribe of Joseph, two were added, and there were made thirteen. There being taken out then the tribe of Levi, that tribe of priests which did serve the Temple, and lived by the tithes of all the rest unto whom the land was divided, there remain twelve. In these twelve was the tribe of Juda, whence the kings were. For at first from another tribe was given King Saul, and he was rejected as being an evil king; after there was given from the tribe of Judah King David, and out of him from the tribe of Judah were the Kings. But Jacob had spoken of this, when he blessed his sons, there shall not fail a prince out of Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until there come He to Whom the promise hath been made. But from the tribe of Judah there came Our Lord Jesus Christ. For He is, as the Scripture saith, and as ye have but now heard, out of the seed of David born of Mary. But as regardeth the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherein He is equal with the Father, He is not only before the Jews, but also before Abraham himself; nor only before Abraham, but also before Adam; nor only before Adam, but also before Heaven and earth and before ages: for all things by Himself were made, and without Him there was made nothing. Because

therefore in prophecy hath been said, there shall not fail a prince out of Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until there come He for Whom the promise hath been made: former times are examined, and we find that the Jews always had their kings of the tribe of Judah, and had no foreign king before that Herod who was king when the Lord was born. Thence began foreign kings, from Herod. Before Herod all were of the tribe of Judah, but only until there should come He to Whom the promise had been made. Therefore when the Lord Himself came, the kingdom of the Jews was overthrown, and removed from the Jews. Now they have no king; because they will not acknowledge the true King. See now whether they must be called Jews. Now ye do see that they must not be called Jews. They have themselves with their own voice resigned that name, so that they are not worthy to be called Jews, except only in the flesh. When did they sever themselves from that name? They said—(they were raging against Christ, that is, the race of Judah was raging against the seed of David. And Pilate saith to them, Your King shall I crucify?)—they said, I say, We have no king but Cæsar. O ye who are called Jews and are not, if ye have no king but Cæsar, there hath failed a Prince of Judah: there hath come then He to Whom the promise hath been made. They then are more truly Jews, who have been made Christians out of Jews: the rest of the Jews, who in Christ have not believed, have deserved to lose even the very name. The true Judæa, then, is the Church of Christ, believing in that King, Who hath come out of the tribe of Judah through the Virgin Mary; believing in Him of Whom the Apostle was just now speaking, in writing to Timothy, Be thou mindful that Jesus Christ hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David, after my Gospel. For of Judah is David, and out of David is the Lord Jesus Christ. We believing in Christ do belong to Judah: and we acknowledge Christ. We, that with eyes have not seen, in faith do keep Him. Let not therefore the Jews revile, who are no longer Jews. They said themselves, We have no king but Cæsar. For better were it for them that their king should be Christ, of the seed of David, of the tribe of Judah. Nevertheless because Christ Himself is of the seed of David after the flesh, but God above all things blessed for ever, He is Himself our King and our God; our King, inasmuch as born of the tribe of Judah, after the flesh, was Christ the Lord, the Saviour; but our God, Who is before Judah, and before Heaven and earth, by Whom were made all things, both spiritual and corporal. For

if all things by Himself were made; even Mary herself, out of whom He was born, by Himself was made. How then could He have been born like the rest of mankind, who made unto Himself a mother out of whom He might be born? Therefore He is Himself the Lord: the Apostle saying, when he was speaking of the Jews, of whom are the fathers, and out of whom is Christ after the flesh; Who is over all things, God blessed for ever. Because then the Jews saw Christ and crucified Him, they saw not God: but the Gentiles because they saw not and believed, have perceived God. Therefore if there appeared to them God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and they crucified Him because they perceived not God hidden in flesh: begone that which is called Judæa and is not; and let there draw near the true Judæa, to whom is said, Draw ye near to Him and be ye enlightened, and your faces shall not blush. The faces of the true Judæa shall not be put to confusion. For they have heard and have believed, and the Church hath become the true Judæa, where Christ is known, Who being Man of the seed of David, is God above David.

2. Known in Judæa is God, in Israel great is the Name of Him. Concerning Israel also we ought so to take it as we have concerning Judæa: as they were not the true Jews, so neither was that the true Israel. For what is Israel said to be? One seeing God. And how have they seen God, among whom He walked in the flesh; and while they supposed Him to be man, they slew Him? Rising again He appeared as God to all to whom He willed to manifest Himself. They then are worthy to be called Israel, who merited to perceive Christ, as God clothed in flesh, so that they despised not that which they saw, but adored that which they saw not. For though not seen to the eyes, the Gentiles with humble mind have perceived Him Whom they saw not, and in faith have retained Him. Again, they that in hands held Him, slew Him; they that in faith held Him, adored. In Israel great is His Name. Wilt thou be Israel? Observe that man concerning whom the Lord saith, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. If a true Israelite is he in whom guile is not, the guileful and lying are not true Israelites. Let them not say then, that with them is God, and great is His name in Israel. Let them prove themselves Israelites, and I grant that in Israel great is His Name.

3. Ver. 2. And there hath been made in peace a place for Him, and His habitation is in Sion. Again, Sion is as it were the country of the Jews; the true Sion is the Church of Christians. But the interpretation of the Hebrew names is thus handed down to us: Judæa is interpreted confession, Israel, one seeing God. After Judæa is Israel: so it hath been placed here, Known in Judæa is God, in Israel great is His Name. Wilt thou see God? First do thou confess, and then in thyself there is made a place for God; because there hath been made in peace a place for Him. So long as then thou confessest not thy sins, in a manner thou art quarrelling with God. For how art thou not disputing with Him, who art praising that which displeaseth Him? He punisheth a thief, thou dost praise theft: He doth punish a drunken man, thou dost praise drunkenness. Thou art disputing with God, thou hast not made for Him a place in thy heart: because in peace is His place. And how dost thou begin to have peace with God? Thou beginnest with Him in confession. There is a voice of a Psalm, saying, Begin ye to the Lord in confession. What is, Begin ye to the Lord in confession? Begin ye to be joined to the Lord. In what manner? So that the same thing may displease you as displeaseth Him. There displeaseth Him thy evil life; if it please thyself, thou art disunited from Him; if it displease thee, through confession to Him thou art united. See in how great measure thou art unlike Him, since indeed on account of that very unlikeness thou art displeasing to Him. Thou hast been made, O man, after the image of God: but through thy life being perverse and evil thou hast disturbed in thee and hast banished in thee the image of thy Creator. Having become unlike, thou lookest unto thyself and thou displeasest thyself: now from this time thou beginnest to become like, because the same thing is displeasing to thee as is displeasing to God also.

4. But how am I like, sayest thou, when I am still displeasing to myself? Therefore there hath been said, begin. Begin thou to the Lord in confession: thou wilt be made perfect in peace. For as yet thou hast war against thee. There is enjoined then a war, not only against the suggestions of the devil, against the prince of the power of this air, who worketh in the sons of unbelief, against the devil and his angels, the spiritual things of naughtiness; not only therefore against them war is enjoined thee, but against thyself. How against thyself? Against thy evil habit, against the oldness of thy evil life, which draweth thee to thy wonted life, and withholdeth thee from the

new. For there is enjoined upon thee a kind of new life, and thou art old. By the joy of that newness thou art held aloft, by the burden of the oldness thou art weighed down: there beginneth to be war for thee against thyself. But by the part wherein thou art displeased with thyself thou art being united to God; and by that part whereby thou art now being joined to God, thou wilt be meet to conquer thyself; because He is with thee Who overcometh all things. Observe what the Apostle saith: With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. How with mind? Because thy evil life is displeasing to thee. How with flesh? Because there are not wanting evil suggestions and affections of pleasure; but in that with mind thou art united with God, thou art conquering in thyself that which in thyself is not willing to follow. For thou hast gone before in part, and in part thou art held back. Draw thyself to Him, Who is raising thee upward. With a sort of weight of oldness thou art being weighed down: cry out and say, Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Who shall deliver me from that wherewith I am being weighed down? For the body which is corrupted doth weigh down the soul. Who, I say, shall deliver me? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But why doth He suffer thee long time to contend with thyself, until there be swallowed up all evil desires? In order that thou mayest perceive in thyself thy penance. In thee from thyself is thy rod: let thy strife be with thyself. Thus vengeance is taken upon a rebel against God, in such sort that he is himself a war unto himself, who would not have peace with God. But keep thy members against thy evil desires. There hath sprung up wrath, refrain thy hand, taking part with God. It might have arisen, but it hath found no weapons. In thy wrath is the onset, in thyself are the weapons: be the onset without weapons, and it learneth no longer to rise, which hath risen in vain.

5. But this I say, dearly beloved, lest perchance because we have said, But with flesh to the law of sin, ye may think that ye ought to consent to your carnal desires. Though there cannot now but be carnal desires, we must not consent to them. Therefore the Apostle hath not said, Be there not sin in your mortal body. For he knoweth that so long as it is mortal, there is there sin. But he saith what? Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. What is, Let it not reign? He hath himself explained: to obey, he saith, the desires thereof. There are desires, there arise desires, thou dost not obey thy

desires, dost not follow the same desires, dost not consent to them: there is in thee sin, but it hath lost its reign, now that in thee there reigneth not sin, hereafter the last enemy shall be destroyed, death. But what is promised to us? For it hath been said, With mind I serve the law of God, but with flesh the law of sin. Hear the promise, that there will not always be in the flesh unlawful desires. For it will rise again, and it will be changed: and when this mortal flesh shall have been changed into a spiritual body, then no more with any earthly delights shall it allure the soul, nor shall divert it from the contemplation of God. There is then done in her that whereof the Apostle speaketh, The body indeed is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if He that hath raised up Jesus from the dead doth dwell in you; He that hath raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall bring to life also your mortal bodies, because of His Spirit Which dwelleth in you. When our bodies then have been brought to life, there will be true peace, where there is a place for God: but let confession go before. Known in Judæa is God: confess thou therefore first. In Israel great is His Name: not yet thou seest in form, see thou by faith; and there shall be made in thee that which followeth: and there hath been made in peace a place for Him, and His dwelling is in Sion. Sion is interpreted contemplation. What is contemplation? For we shall contemplate God face to face. He is promised to us, in Whom now not seeing we believe. How shall we rejoice when we shall have seen Him! Brethren, if now so great joy the promise doth work in us, how great joy will the performance work? For there will be rendered to us that which He hath promised? And what hath He promised? Himself, so that in His face and in the contemplation of Him we may rejoice: and not any other object will delight us, because nothing is better than He that hath made all things which delight. There hath been made in peace a place for Him, and His dwelling is in Sion: that is, in a kind of contemplation and speculation, there hath been made a dwelling for Him, in Sion.

6. Ver. 3. There He hath broken the strength of bows, and the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Where hath He broken? In that eternal peace, in that perfect peace. And now, my brethren, they that have rightly believed see that they ought not to rely on themselves: and all the might of their own menaces, and whatsoever is in them whetted for mischief, this they break in pieces; and whatsoever they deem of great virtue wherewith to proteet

themselves temporally, and the war which they were waging against God by defending their sins, all these things He hath broken there.

7. Ver. 4. Thou enlightening marvellously from the eternal mountains. What are the eternal mountains? Those which He hath Himself made eternal; which are the great mountains, the preachers of truth. Thou dost enlighten, but from the eternal mountains: the great mountains are first to receive Thy light, and from Thy light which the mountains receive, the earth also is clothed. But those great mountains the Apostles have received, the Apostles have received as it were the first streaks of the rising light. Did they by any means keep to themselves that which they received? No. Lest there should be said to them, Servant naughty and slothful, thou shouldest have given my money to the usurers. Since then that which they received they kept not to themselves, but they preached it to all the round world; Thou enlightening marvellously from the eternal mountains. By those which Thou hast made eternal, by the same Thou hast promised life eternal to the rest also. Thou enlightening marvellously from the eternal mountains. Admirably with force hath been said Thou: that no one may suppose that the mountains enlighten him. For many thinking that they were enlightened by the mere mountains, made to themselves parties from the mountains; and the very mountains have fallen down, and they have been themselves broken in pieces. Some have made for themselves a Donatus, some have made for themselves a Maximianus, some have made for themselves this or that teacher. Why do they count their salvation to be in men, not in God? O man, there hath come to thee light through the mountains: but God doth enlighten thee, not the mountains. Thou enlightening, he saith: Thou, not the mountains. Thou enlightening: from the eternal mountains indeed; but, Thou enlightening. Wherefore also, in another place, a Psalm saith what? I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, whence there shall come help to me. What then, in the mountains is thy hope, and from thence to thee shall there come help? Hast thou stayed at the mountains? Take heed what thou doest. There is something above the mountains: above the mountains is He at Whom the mountains tremble. I have lifted up, he saith, mine eyes unto the mountains, whence there shall come help to me. But what followeth? My help, he saith, is from the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth. Unto the mountains indeed I have lifted up eyes, because through the

mountains to me the Scriptures were displayed: but I have my heart in Him that doth enlighten all mountains.

8. Therefore, brethren, for this purpose it hath been said, that no one of you should will to set his hope on man. Man is something, so long as he adhereth to Him by Whom man was made. For departing from Him, man is nothing, even when he adhereth to those (mountains). Do thou so take counsel through man, as that thou mayest consider Him that doth enlighten man. For even thou art able to draw near to Him, that doth speak to thee through man: for it is not so, that He hath made him to draw near unto Himself, and rejecteth thee. And he that hath truly so drawn near unto God, that God dwelleth in him, is displeased with all those that do not set their hope on Him. Therefore there hath been given a sort of example. When men divided among themselves the very Apostles, and they fell unto schisms who were saying, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, that is, of Peter—over these the Apostle doth mourn, and he saith to them, Is Christ divided? and he singled out himself to make light of among them; Hath Paul been crucified for you, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? Behold a good mountain, seeking glory, not for himself, but for Him by Whom the mountains are enlightened. He was not willing to rely on himself; but upon Him on Whom he had over himself relied. Whosoever therefore shall have willed so to recommend himself to the people, as that if there shall have chanced for him any tumult, he breaketh up the people to follow after him, and divideth the Church Catholic for his own sake, is not of those mountains which the Most High doth enlighten. But what is such an one? One darkened by himself, not enlightened by the Lord. But how are these mountains proved? If there shall perchance have fallen out any tumult against the mountains in the Church, either by means of the popular seditions of carnal men, or by means of any false suspicions of men, a good mountain doth drive away from itself all them that for its own sake will to withdraw from unity. For thus it will remain in unity, if for its own sake unity herself shall not have been divided. But they have been divided; when the people withdrew from the whole world and followed after their name, they rejoiced, were elated, and were thrown down. They should have been humbled, and they would have been exalted: in like manner as the Apostle was humbled, saying, Hath Paul been crucified for you? And in another

place, I planted, Apollos watered, but God hath given the increase. Therefore, neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Such mountains in themselves were humble, in God were exalted. But they that in themselves are exalted, by God are humbled. For he that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Therefore such men as regard their own pride are bitterly hostile to peaceful men in the Church. These are willing to cement peace, those stir up dissension among themselves. And what saith another Psalm regarding them? They that are bitter shall not be exalted in themselves. Thou enlightening, (observe this,) Thou marvellously from the eternal mountains.

9. Ver. 5. There have been troubled all the unwise in heart. There hath been preached the truth, there hath been declared life eternal; it hath been declared that there is another life, which is not of this earth: men have despised the present life, and have loved the future life when enlightened by the enlightened mountains. But the unwise in heart have been troubled. How have they been troubled? When the Gospel is preached. And what is life eternal? And who is He that hath risen from the dead? The Athenians wondered, when the Apostle Paul spake of the resurrection of the dead, and thought that he spake but fables. But because he said that there was another life which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it gone up into the heart of man, therefore the unwise in heart were troubled. But what hath befallen them? They have slept their sleep, and all men of riches have found nothing in their hands. They have loved things present, and have gone to sleep in the midst of things present: and so these very present things have become to them delightful: just as he that seeth in a dream himself to have found treasure, is so long rich as he waketh not. The dream hath made him rich, waking hath made him poor. Sleep perchance hath held him slumbering on the earth, and lying on the hard ground, poor and perchance a beggar; in sleep he hath seen himself to lie on an ivory or golden bed, and on feathers heaped up; so long as he is sleeping, he is sleeping well, waking he hath found himself on the hard ground, whereon sleep had taken him. Such men also are these too: they have come into this life, and through temporal desires, they have as it were slumbered here; and them riches, and vain pomps that fly away, have taken, and they have passed away: they

have not understood how much of good might be done therewith. For if they had known of another life, there they would have laid up unto themselves the treasure which here was doomed to perish: like as Zacchæus, the chief of the Publicans, saw that good when he received the Lord Jesus in his house, and he saith, The half of my goods I give to the poor, and if to any man I have done any wrong, fourfold I restore. This man was not in the emptiness of men dreaming, but in the faith of men awake. Therefore because the Lord had come in as a Physician to a sick man, He hath proclaimed his salvation, and saith, To-day salvation to this house hath come, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. In order that ye might know how we by imitating his faith are the sons of Abraham: but the Jews who glory because of the flesh from the faith have degenerated. Therefore the men of riches have slept their sleep, and they have found nothing in their hands. They have slept in their desires, there delighteth them and passeth away that sleep, there passeth away this life, and they find nothing in their hands, because they have put nothing in the hand of Christ. Wilt thou find any thing in thy hands hereafter? Despise not now the hand of the poor man; and have regard to empty hands, if thou wilt have full hands. For the Lord hath said, I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in, and the like. And they, When saw we Thee hungry, thirsty, or a stranger? And He saith to them, Inasmuch as to one of My least ones ye have done it, to Me ye have done it. To hunger in the poor He hath willed, That is rich in Heaven; and thou a man to man dost hesitate to give, although thou knowest that thou art giving to Christ that which thou givest, from Whom thou hast received whatever thou givest? But they have slept their sleep, and all men of riches have found nothing in their hands.

10. Ver. 6. By Thy chiding, O God of Jacob, there have slept all men that have mounted horses. Who are they that have mounted horses? They that would not be humble. To sit on horseback is no sin; but it is a sin to lift up the neck of power against God, and to deem one's self to be in some distinction. Because thou art rich, thou hast mounted; God doth chide, and thou sleepest. Great is the anger of Him chiding, great the anger. Let your Love observe the terrible thing. Chiding hath noise, the noise is wont to make men wake. So great is the force of God chiding, that he said, By Thy

chiding, O God of Jacob, there have slept all men that have mounted horses. Behold what a sleep that Pharaoh slept who mounted horses. For he was not awake in heart, because against chiding he had his heart hardened. For hardness of heart is slumber. I ask you, my brethren, how they sleep, who, while the Gospel is sounding, and the Amen, and the Hallelujah, throughout the whole world, yet will not condemn their old life, and wake up unto a new life. There was the Scripture of God in Judæa only, now throughout the whole world it is sung. In that one nation one God Who made all things was spoken of, as to be adored and worshipped; now where is He unsaid? Christ hath risen again, though derided on the Cross; that very Cross whereon He was derided, He hath now imprinted on the brows of kings: and men yet sleep. Better have we heard Him that saith, Arise thou that art sleeping, and rise up from the dead, and there shall enlighten thee Christ. But who do hear Him? They that do not mount horses. Who are they that do not mount horses? They that do not boast and exalt themselves, as if on their honours and powers. By Thy chiding, O God of Jacob, there have slumbered they that have mounted horses.

11. Ver. 7. Thou art terrible, and who shall withstand Thee at that time by Thine anger? Now they sleep, and perceive not Thee angry; but for cause that they should sleep, He was angry. Now that which sleeping they perceived not, at the end they shall perceive. For there shall appear the Judge of quick and dead. And who shall withstand Thee at that time by Thine anger? For now they speak that which they will, and they dispute against God and say, who are the Christians? or who is Christ? or what fools are they that believe that which they see not, and relinquish the pleasures which they see, and follow the faith of things which are not displayed to their eyes! Ye sleep and snore, ye speak against God, as much as ye are able. How long shall sinners, O Lord, how long shall sinners glory, they answer and will speak iniquity? But when doth no one answer and no one speak, except when he turneth himself against himself? When shall they turn their teeth against themselves, wherewith now they bite us, wherewith now they tear us by deriding Christians, and by censuring the life of holy men? They shall turn themselves against themselves at that time, when there shall happen to them that which is spoken of in the Book of Wisdom; they shall say within themselves, doing penance, and through

anguish of spirit groaning: when they shall have seen the glory of holy men, then they shall say, These are they whom sometime we had in derision. O ye that slumbered much, now indeed ye are awake, and in your own hands ye find nothing. Ye see how they have hands full of the glory of God, whom as if poor ye derided. Speak then to yourselves, inasmuch as ye do not withstand the anger of God, neither with hand, nor with tongue, nor with word, nor with thought. For He shall appear manifest to you, Whom ye thought worthy to be derided, when He was being proclaimed to you as to come. And what shall they say? Therefore we have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun hath not risen upon us. How should the Sun of righteousness have risen to them sleeping? But by His anger and chiding they sleep. This perchance one will say, and 'I would not have mounted horse:' and then they shall themselves blame their horses. Hear them blaming their horses, whereon they have slept: therefore we have erred, saith the Scripture, from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun hath not risen upon us. What hath pride profited us, and the boasting of riches hath bestowed upon us what? All things have passed away like a shadow. Therefore thou hast awoke at length. But better were it that thou hadst not mounted horse, when thou oughtest to have been awake; and thou wouldest have heard the voice of Christ, and Christ would have enlightened thee. Thou art terrible, and who shall withstand Thee at that time, by Thine anger? For what shall there be at that time?

12. Ver. 8. From Heaven Thou hast hurled judgment: the earth hath trembled, and hath rested. She which now doth trouble herself, she which now speaketh, hath to fear at the end and to rest. Better had she now rested, that at the end she might have rejoiced.

13. The earth hath trembled and hath rested. When? (Ver. 9.) When God arose unto judgment, that He might save all the meek in heart. Who are the meek in heart? They that on snorting horses have not mounted, but in their humility have confessed their own sins. That He might save all the meek in heart.

14. Ver. 10. For the thought of a man shall confess to Thee, and the remnants of the thought shall celebrate solemnities to Thee. The first is the

thought, the latter are the remnants of the thought. What is the first thought? That from whence we begin, that good thought whence thou wilt begin to confess. Confession uniteth us to Christ. But now the confession itself, that is, the first thought, doth produce in us the remnants of the thought: and those very remnants of thought shall celebrate solemnities to Thee. The thought of a man shall confess to Thee, and the remnants of the thought shall celebrate solemnities to Thee. What is the thought which shall confess? That which condemneth the former life, that whereunto that which it was is displeasing, in order that it may be that which it was not, is itself the first thought. But because thus thou oughtest to withdraw from sins, with the first thought after having confessed to God, that it may not escape thy memory that thou hast been a sinner; in that thou hast been a sinner, thou dost celebrate solemnities to God. Furthermore it is to be understood as followeth. The first thought hath confession, and departure from the old life. But if thou shalt have forgotten from what sins thou hast been delivered, thou dost not render thanks to the Deliverer, and dost not celebrate solemnities to thy God. Behold the first confessing thought of Saul the Apostle, now Paul, who at first was Saul, when he heard a voice from Heaven! While he was persecuting Christ, and was frantic against the Christians, and was willing to bring them to be slaughtered wheresoever he might find them, he heard a voice from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And being shined upon round about with the light, blindness having smitten his eyes, that he might inwardly see, he put forth the first thought of obedience: when he heard, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest," "O Lord," he saith, "what dost Thou bid me to do?" This is a thought confessing: now he is calling upon the Lord Whom he persecuted. In what manner the remnants of the thought shall celebrate solemnities, in the case of Paul ye have heard, when the Apostle himself was being read; Be thou mindful that Christ Jesus hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David, after my Gospel. What is, be thou mindful?? Though effaced from thy memory be the thought, whereby at first thou hast confessed: be the remnant of the thought in the memory. And see after what sort the same Apostle Paul doth repeat in another place that which was bestowed upon him. I that before, he saith, have been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. He that saith, before I have been a blasphemer, is he yet a blasphemer? In order that he might not be a blasphemer was the first

thought confessing: but in order that he might commemorate what was forgiven him, there were the remnants of the thought, and through those same remnants of the thought he was celebrating solemnities.

15. For, my brethren, behold Christ hath renewed us, hath forgiven us all sins, and we have been converted: if we forget what hath been forgiven us, and by Whom it hath been forgiven, we forget the gift of the Saviour: but when we do not forget the gift of the Saviour, is not Christ daily sacrificed for us? Even once was Christ sacrificed for us, when we believed; then was thought; but now there are the remnants of thought, when we remember Who hath come to us, and what He hath forgiven us; by means of those very remnants of thought, that is, by means of the memory herself, He is daily so sacrificed for us, as if He were daily renewing us, That hath renewed us by His first grace. For now the Lord hath renewed us in Baptism, and we have become new men, in hope indeed rejoicing, in order that in tribulation we may be patient: nevertheless, there ought not to escape from our memory that which hath been bestowed upon us. And if now thy thought is not what it was: (for the first thought was to depart from sin: but now thou dost not depart, but at that time didst depart:) be there remnants of thought, lest He escape from memory Who hath made whole. If thou shalt have forgotten that thou hast had a wound, thou wilt have no remnants of thought. For what think ye that David said? Behold, he speaketh in the person of all! Holy David sinned grievously, Nathan the Prophet was sent to him, and rebuked him; and he confessed and said, I have sinned. This was the first thought of him confessing. The thought of a man shall confess to Thee. What were the remnants of thought? When he saith, And my sin is before me ever. What then was the first thought? That he should depart from sin. And if he hath already departed from sin, how is the sin of him before him ever, except that that thought passed away, but the remnants of thought do celebrate solemnities? Let us remember therefore, most dearly beloved brethren, we ask you: let whosoever shall have been delivered from sin, remember what he was; be there in him the remnants of thought. For then he beareth another man to be healed, if he shall remember that himself was healed. Therefore let each call to mind what he was, and whether he is no longer so: and then he will succour him that still is what he is no longer. But if he vaunteth himself as it were of his own merits, and driveth from

him sinners as though they were unworthy, and rageth without mercy; he hath mounted a horse, let him look that he sleep not. For, they have slept that have mounted horses. At that time he relinquished his horse, he humbled himself: let him not again mount a horse, that is, let him not again lift himself up unto pride. How is this to be done by him? Provided that the remnants of thought celebrate solemnities to God.

16. Ver. 11. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. Let each man vow what he is able, and pay it. Do not vow and not pay: but let every man vow, and pay what he can. Be ye not slow to vow: for ye will accomplish the vows by powers not your own. Ye will fail, if on yourselves ye rely: but if on Him to Whom ye vow ye rely, ye will be safe to pay. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. What ought we all in common to vow? To believe in Him, to hope from Him for life eternal, to live godly according to a measure common to all. For there is a certain measure common to all men. To commit no theft is not a thing enjoined upon one devoted to continence, and not enjoined upon the married woman: to commit no adultery is enjoined upon all men: not to love wine-bibbing, whereby the soul is swallowed up, and doth corrupt in herself the Temple of God, is enjoined to all alike: not to be proud, is enjoined to all men alike: not to slay man, not to hate a brother, not to lay a plot to destroy any one, is enjoined to all in common. The whole of this we all ought to vow. There are also vows proper for individuals: one voweth to God conjugal chastity, that he will know no other woman besides his wife: so also the woman, that she will know no other man besides her husband. Other men also vow, even though they have used such a marriage, that beyond this they will have no such thing, that they will neither desire nor admit the like: and these men have vowed a greater vow than the former. Others vow even virginity from the beginning of life, that they will even know no such thing as those who having experienced have relinquished: and these men have vowed the greatest vow. Others vow that their house shall be a place of entertainment for all the Saints that may come: a great vow they vow. Another voweth to relinquish all his goods to be distributed to the poor, and go into a community, into a society of the Saints: a great vow he doth vow. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. Let each one vow what he shall have willed to vow; let him give heed to this, that he pay what he hath vowed. If any man doth look back with regard to what he hath

vowed to God, it is an evil. Some woman or other devoted to continence hath willed to marry: what hath she willed? The same as any virgin. What hath she willed? The same as her own mother. Hath she willed any evil thing? Evil certainly. Why? Because already she had vowed to the Lord her God. For what hath the Apostle Paul said concerning such? Though he saith that young widows may marry if they will: nevertheless he saith in a certain passage, but more blessed she will be, if so she shall have remained, after my judgment. He sheweth that she is more blessed, if so she shall have remained; but nevertheless that she is not to be condemned, if she shall have willed to marry. But what saith he concerning certain who have vowed and have not paid? Having, he saith, damnation, because the first faith they have made void. What is, the first faith they have made void? They have vowed, and have not paid. Let no brother therefore, when placed in a monastery, say, I shall depart from the monastery: for neither are they alone that are in a monastery to attain unto the kingdom of Heaven, nor do those that are not there not belong unto God. We answer him, but they have not vowed; thou hast vowed, thou hast looked back. When the Lord was threatening them with the day of judgment, He saith what? Remember Lot's wife. To all men He spake. For what did Lot's wife? She was delivered from Sodom, and being in the way she looked back. In the place where she looked back, there she remained. For she became a statue of salt, in order that by considering her men might be seasoned, might have sense, might not be infatuated, might not look back, lest by giving a bad example they should themselves remain and season others. For even now we are saying this to certain of our brethren, whom perchance we may have seen as it were weak in the good they have purposed. And wilt thou be such an one as he was? We put before them certain who have looked back. They are savourless in themselves, but they season others, inasmuch as they are mentioned, in order that fearing their example they may not look back. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. For that wife of Lot to all doth belong. A married woman hath had the will to commit adultery; from her place whither she had arrived she looked back. A widow who had vowed so to remain hath willed to marry, she hath willed the thing which was lawful to her who hath married, but to herself was not lawful, because from her place she hath looked back. There is a virgin devoted to continence, already dedicated to God; let her have also the other gifts which truly do adorn

virginity itself, and without which that virginity is unclean. For what if she be uncorrupt in body and corrupt in mind? What is it that he hath said? What if no one hath touched the body, but if perchance she be drunken, be proud, be contentious, be talkative? All these things God doth condemn. If before she had vowed, she had married, she would not have been condemned: she hath chosen something better, hath overcome that which was lawful for her; she is proud, and doth commit so many things unlawful. This I say, it is lawful for her to marry before that she voweth, to be proud is never lawful. O thou virgin of God, thou hast willed not to marry, which is lawful: thou dost exalt thyself, which is not lawful. Better is a virgin humble, than a married woman humble: but better is a married woman humble, than a virgin proud. But she that looked back upon marriage is condemned, not because she hath willed to marry; but because she had already gone before, and is become the wife of Lot by looking back. Be ye not slow, that are able, whom God doth inspire to seize upon higher callings: for we do not say these things in order that ye may not vow, but in order that ye may vow and may pay: Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. Now because we have treated of these matters, thou perchance wast willing to vow, and now art not willing to vow. But observe what the Psalm hath said to thee. It hath not said, Vow not; but, Vow and pay. Because thou hast heard, pay, wilt thou not vow? Therefore wast thou willing to vow, and not to pay? Nay, do both. One thing is done by thy profession, another thing will be perfected by the aid of God. Look to Him Who doth guide thee, and thou wilt not look back to the place whence He is leading thee forth. He that guideth thee is walking before thee; the place from whence He is guiding thee is behind thee. Love Him guiding, and He doth not condemn thee looking back: Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God.

17. All they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts. Who are in the circuit of Him? For where is He that He saith, All they that are in the circuit of Him? If of God the Father thou think, where is He not That is every where present? If of the Son thou think after the form of the Divinity, He too with the Father is every where: for He is Himself the Wisdom of God, whereof hath been said, But she reacheth every where because of her own pureness. But if the Son ye understand, in that He took upon Himself flesh, and was seen among men, and was crucified, and rose again, we know that

He hath ascended into Heaven. Who are in the circuit of Him? Angels. Therefore do not we offer gifts? For all they that are in the circuit of Him, he hath said, shall offer gifts. If our Lord were buried here upon earth, and His body were lying, like that of any Martyr or Apostle, we might observe in them that should be in the circuit of Him, either whatever nations might be about the very spot on all sides, or men resorting to the burial place with gifts: but now He hath ascended, He is above. What is this, All they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts? Meanwhile I will say to you what God doth admonish, what he may Himself have deigned to inspire in me out of these words: if any thing better shall have hereafter appeared, this also is yours; for the truth is common to all. It is neither mine, nor thine: it is not of this man or of that man: to all it is common. And perchance it is in the midst, in such sort that in the circuit thereof may be all they that love the truth. For whatever is common to all is in the midst. Why is it said to be in the midst? Because it is at the same distance from all, and at the same proximity to all. That which is not in the middle, is as it were private. That which is public is set in the middle, in order that all they that come may use the same, may be enlightened. Let no one say, it is mine: lest he should be wanting to make his own share of that which is in the midst for all. What then is, All they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts? All they that understand truth to be common to all, and who do not make it as it were their own by being proud concerning it, they shall offer gifts; because they have humility: but they that make as it were their own that which is common to all, as though it were set in the middle, are endeavouring to lead men astray to a party, these shall not offer gifts; for, all they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts, to Him terrible: they shall offer gifts to Him terrible. Let therefore all men fear that are in the circuit of Him. For therefore they shall fear, and with trembling they shall praise; because they are in the circuit of Him, to the end that all men may attain unto Him, and He may openly meet all, and openly enlighten all. This is, to stand in awe with others. When thou hast made Him as it were thine own, and no longer common, thou art exalted unto pride; though it is written, Serve ye the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. Therefore they shall offer gifts, who are in the circuit of Him. For they are humble who know truth to be common to all.

18. To whom shall they offer gifts? (Ver. 12.) To Him terrible, and to Him that taketh away the spirit of princes. For the spirits of princes are proud spirits. They then are not His Spirits; for if they know any thing, their own they will it to be, not public; but, that Which setteth Himself forth as equal toward all men, that setteth Himself in the midst, in order that all men may take as much as they can, whatever they can; not of what is any man's, but of what is God's, and therefore of their own because they have become His. Therefore they must needs be humble: they have lost their own spirit, and they have the Spirit of God. By whom have they lost their spirit? By Him that doth take away the spirit of princes. Inasmuch as to Him is said in another place, Thou shalt take away the spirit of them, and they shall fail, and shall be turned into their dust. Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Some one hath understood something, his own he willeth it to be, as yet he hath his own spirit; it is good for him that he lose his spirit, and have the Spirit of God: as yet among the princes he is proud; it is good that he return to his dust, and say, Remember, O Lord, that dust we are. For if thou shalt have confessed thyself dust, God out of dust doth make man. All they that are in the circuit of Him do offer gifts. All humble men do confess to Him, and do adore Him. To Him terrible they offer gifts. Whence to Him terrible exult ye with trembling: and to Him that taketh away the spirit of princes: that is, that taketh away the haughtiness of proud men. To Him terrible among the kings of the earth. Terrible are the kings of the earth, but He is above all, that doth terrify the kings of the earth. Be thou a king of the earth, and God will be to thee terrible. How, wilt thou say, shall I be a king of the earth? Rule the earth, and thou wilt be a king of the earth. Do not therefore with desire of empire set before thine eyes exceeding wide provinces, where thou mayest spread abroad thy kingdoms; rule thou the earth which thou bearest. Hear the Apostle ruling the earth: I do not so fight as if beating air, but I chasten my body, and bring it into captivity, lest perchance preaching to other men, I myself become a reprobate. Therefore, my brethren, be ye in the circuit of Him, so that by whomsoever the truth shall have sounded to you, ye may not ascribe it to him through whom it soundeth; but it may be in the midst for all, because it is equally present to all. And be ye humble, lest even ye yourselves take unto your own use whatever of His good ye shall have understood. For as for us too, that which we have understood the

better is yours; and that which ye have understood the better is ours: in order that in the circuit of Him we may be, and may be humble. And so losing our own spirit, let us offer gifts to Him terrible above all the kings of the earth, that is, above all men ruling their flesh, but subject to their Creator.

PSALM 77

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. This Psalm's lintel is thus inscribed: Unto the end, for Idithun, a Psalm to Asaph himself. What, Unto the end, is, ye know. For the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness to every man that believeth. Idithun is interpreted leaping over those men, Asaph is interpreted a congregation. Here therefore there is speaking a congregation, that leapeth over, in order that it may reach the End, which is Christ Jesus. What things therefore must be leaped over, in order that we may be able to reach that End, where no longer we shall have any thing to leap over, the very text of the Psalm doth point out. For it is our duty to be alway leaping over whatever doth impede us, whatsoever doth entangle us, whatsoever doth bind us as it were with birdlime, and weigh us down with a load, until we reach unto that which is sufficient, beyond which there is nothing, beneath which are all things, and out of which are all things. For Philip was desiring to behold the Father Himself, and he said to the Lord Jesus Christ, Shew to us the Father, and it sufficeth us: as though he must leap over every other thing, until he should have reached the Father, where at length he would securely stand, and would have nothing else to desire. For this is the meaning of, it sufficeth. But He that had most truly said, I and the Father are One, admonished and taught Philip, how every man that did discern Christ, even in Him had an end: for that He and the Father are one. So long a time, He saith, am I with you, and have ye not seen Me? Philip, he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also. Whosoever therefore would perceive, imitate, hold the mind of this Psalm, let him leap over all carnal desires, and let him trample on this world's pomp and seduction, and propose to himself no other thing whereat to stay, but Him, out of Whom are all things. In all which things he doth

himself toil until he attain unto the End. What then doth this man that leapeth over intimate to us?

2. Ver. 1. With my voice, he saith, to the Lord I have cried. But many men cry unto the Lord for the sake of getting riches and avoiding losses, for the safety of their friends, for the security of their house, for temporal felicity, for secular dignity, lastly, even for mere soundness of body, which is the inheritance of the poor man. For such and such like things many men do cry unto the Lord; scarce one for the sake of the Lord Himself. For an easy thing it is for a man to desire any thing of the Lord, and not to desire the Lord Himself; as if forsooth that which He giveth could be sweeter than Himself that giveth. Whosoever therefore doth cry unto the Lord for the sake of any other thing, is not yet one that leapeth over. But here the leaper over saith what? With my voice unto the Lord I have cried. And in order that thou mayest not determine that the voice of the same wherewith he hath cried unto the Lord hath been sent forth for the sake of any thing else but the Lord Himself, he continueth and saith, And my voice is unto God. For there is being sent forth a voice wherewith we may cry unto God, and that same voice is unto another thing, not unto God. For the voice is unto that thing for the sake of which it is uttered. But this man that did love God gratis, who did sacrifice to God voluntarily, who had leaped over whatever is below, and had seen no other thing above him, whereunto he might pour forth his soul, save Him out of Whom and through Whom and in Whom he had been created, had made that same voice of his to be unto Him unto Whom he had cried with his voice: My voice, he saith, is unto God. And is it without cause? See what followeth: and He doth hearken to me. He doth indeed hearken to thee at the time when thou dost seek Himself, not when through Himself thou dost seek any other thing. It hath been said of some men, They cried, and there was no one to save them; to the Lord, and He hearkened not unto them. For why? Because the voice of them was not unto the Lord. This the Scripture doth express in another place, where it saith of such men, On the Lord they have not called. Unto Him they have not ceased to cry, and yet upon the Lord they have not called. What is, upon the Lord they have not called? They have not called the Lord unto themselves: they have not invited the Lord to their heart, they would not have themselves inhabited by the Lord. And therefore what hath befallen them?

They have trembled with fear where fear was not. They have trembled about the loss of things present, for the reason that they were not full of Him, upon Whom they have not called. They have not loved gratis, so that after the loss of temporal things they could say, As it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done, be the name of the Lord blessed. Therefore this man saith, My voice is unto the Lord, and He doth hearken unto me. Let him shew us how this cometh to pass.

3. Ver. 2. In the day of tribulation I have sought out God. Who art thou that doest this thing? In the day of thy tribulation take heed what thou seekest out. If a jail be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest to get forth from jail: if fever be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest health: if hunger be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest fulness: if losses be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest gain: if expatriation be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest the home of thy flesh. And why should I name all things, or when could I name all things? Dost thou wish to be one leaping over? In the day of thy tribulation seek out God: not through God some other thing, but out of tribulation God, that to this end God may take away tribulation, that thou mayest without anxiety cleave unto God. In the day of my tribulation I have sought out God: not any other thing, but God I have sought out. And how hast thou sought out? With my hands in the night before Him. Declare this thing again: let us see, perceive, imitate, if we can. In the day of thy tribulation thou hast sought out what? God. How hast thou sought out? With my hands. When hast thou sought out? By night. Where hast thou sought out? Before Him. And with what profit hast thou sought out? And I have not been deceived. Let us therefore view all, my brethren, examine all, question all: both what is the tribulation wherein this man hath sought out God, and what is it 'with hands' to seek God, and what is 'by night,' and what is 'before Him:' and then there followeth that which all men do understand, and I have not been deceived. For what is, and I have not been deceived? I have found that which I was seeking.

4. Tribulation must not be thought to be this or that in particular. For every individual that doth not yet leap over, thinketh that as yet to be no tribulation, unless it be a thing which may have befallen this life of some sad occasion: but this man, that leapeth over, doth count this whole life to

be his tribulation. For so much he doth love his supernal country, that the earthly pilgrimage is of itself the greatest tribulation. For how can this life be otherwise than a tribulation, I pray you? how can that not be a tribulation, the whole whereof hath been called a temptation? Thou hast it written in the book of Job, is not human life a temptation upon earth? Hath he said, human life is tempted upon earth? Nay, but life itself is a temptation. If therefore temptation, it must surely be a tribulation. In this tribulation therefore, that is to say in this life, this man that leapeth over hath sought out God. How? With my hands, he saith. What is, with my hands? With my works. For he was not seeking any thing corporeal, so that he might find and handle something which he had lost, so that he might seek with hands coin, gold, silver, vesture, in short every thing which can be held in the hands. Howbeit, even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself willed Himself to be sought after with hands, when to His doubting disciple He shewed the scars. But when He had cried out touching the scars of His wounds, My Lord and my God: did he not hear, Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed? If then he seeking Christ with hands, earned to hear, that it was a reproach to him so to have sought Him; we that have been called blessed, that have not seen and have believed, shall we seek with hands? What then, to us belongeth not the seeking with hands? It belongeth to us, as I have said, to seek with works. When so? In the night. What is, in the night? In this age. For it is night until there shine forth day in the glorified advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. For would ye see how it is night? Unless we had here had a lantern, we should have remained in darkness. For Peter saith, We too have more sure the prophetic discourse, whereunto ye do well to give heed, as to a lantern shining in a dark place, until day shine, and the day-star arise in your hearts. There is therefore to come day after this night, meanwhile in this night a lantern is not wanting. And this is perchance what we are now doing: by explaining these passages, we are bringing in a lantern, in order that we may rejoice in this night. Which indeed ought alway to be burning in your houses. For to such men is said, The Spirit quench ye not. And as though explaining what he was saying, he continueth and saith, Prophecy despise ye not: that is, let the lantern alway shine in you. And even this light by comparison with a sort of ineffable day is called night. For the very life of believers by comparison with the life of unbelievers is day. But how it is

night we have already said, and have shewn it by the testimony of Peter the Apostle: who indeed hath also called it night, and concerning that same light hath admonished us to give heed thereto, that is, to the Prophetic discourse, until day shine, and the day-star arise in our hearts. But how now the life of the faithful is day in comparison to the life of the ungodly, Paul sheweth: Let us cast away, he saith, the works of darkness, and put on armour of light; as in the day let us walk honestly. Therefore living honestly, in comparison of the life of ungodly men, we are in day. But this day of the life of the faithful doth not suffice for this Idithun: he would leap over even this day; until he come to that day, where he may fear no more temptation of night. For here although the life of believers be day, yet human life is a temptation upon earth. Night and day—day in comparison with unbelievers, night in comparison with the Angels. For the Angels have a day, which we have not yet. Already we have one that unbelievers have not: but not yet have believers that which Angels have: but they will have, at the time when they will be equal to the Angels of God, that which hath been promised to them in the Resurrection. In this then which is now day and yet night; night in comparison with the future day for which we yearn, day in comparison with the past night which we have renounced: in this night then, I say, let us seek God with our hands. Let not works cease, let us seek God, be there no idle yearning. If we are in the way, let us expend our means in order that we may be able to reach the end. With hands let us seek God. Even though in night we are seeking Him Whom with hands we are seeking, we are not being deceived, because before Himself we are seeking. What is, before Himself? Do not your righteousness before men, that ye may be seen of them: otherwise ye will have no reward in your Father's House. When then thou doest an almsdeed, He saith, (these are the hands seeking God,) sound not trumpet before thee, as hypocrites do: but let thy almsdeed be in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee. Therefore, with my hands in the night before Him, and I have not been deceived.

5. How great things, however, this Idithun hath endured in this earth and in this night, and how he hath need, in a manner, to leap over from tribulations assailing and stinging him from below—how needful it was to leap over, let us hear most earnestly. (Ver. 2.) My soul hath refused to be comforted. So

great weariness did here possess me, that my soul did close the door against all comfort. Whence such weariness to him? It may be that his vineyard hath been hailed on, or his olive hath yielded no fruit, or the vintage hath been interrupted by rain. Whence the weariness to him? Hear this out of another Psalm. For therein is the voice of the same: weariness hath bowed me down, because of sinners forsaking Thy law. He saith then that he was overcome with so great weariness because of this sort of evil thing; so as that his soul refused to be comforted. Weariness had well nigh swallowed him up, and sorrow had ingulfed him altogether beyond remedy, he refuseth to be comforted. What then remained?

6. In the first place, see whence he is comforted. Had he not waited for one who might condole with him, and had not found? For whither should he turn him for comfort, whom weariness had possessed because of sinners forsaking the law of God? Whither should he turn him? To any man of God? Already perchance he had found in many men great tribulation, the more he had relied on any delight from them. For sometimes men seem to be just, and we rejoice because of them: and we must needs rejoice: inasmuch as love cannot be without joy at such an one: but in these things wherein man hath rejoiced, if perchance any thing perverse shall have fallen out, as is often the case, in proportion as the joy was great therein before, so the sorrow which ariseth is great, so that henceforth man feareth to give rein to his joys, feareth to trust himself to gladness, lest it may be that the more he hath joyed, the more he may pine, if any mischance shall have arisen. Smitten therefore with abundant scandals, like as it were with many wounds, he hath closed his door against human comfort, and his soul hath refused to be comforted. And whence life? Whence respite? I have been mindful of God, and I have been delighted. My hands had not wrought in vain, they had found a great comforter. While not being idle, I have been mindful of God, and I have been delighted. God must therefore be praised, of Whom this man being mindful, hath been delighted, and hath been comforted in sorrowful case, and refreshed when safety was in a manner despaired of: God must therefore be praised. In fine, because he hath been comforted, in continuation he saith, I have babbled. In that same comfort being made mindful of God, I have been delighted, and have babbled. What is, I have babbled? I have rejoiced, I have exulted in speaking. For babblers

they are properly called, that by the common people are named talkative, who at the approach of joy are neither able nor willing to be silent. This man hath become such an one. And again he saith what? And my spirit hath fainted.

7. With weariness he had pined away; by calling to mind God, he had been delighted, again in babbling he had fainted: what followeth? (Ver. 4.) All mine enemies have anticipated watches. All mine enemies have kept watch over me; they have exceeded in keeping watch over me; in watching they have been beforehand with me. Where do they not lay traps? Have not mine enemies anticipated all watches? For who are these enemies, but they of whom the Apostle saith, Ye have not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and rulers of the world of this darkness, against spiritual things of naughtiness in heavenly places? Therefore against the devil and his angels we are waging hostilities. Rulers of the world he hath called them, because they do themselves rule the lovers of the world. For they do not rule the world, as if they were rulers of heaven and earth: but he is calling sinners the world. And the world knew Him not. Such a world do they rule that know not Christ. Against such men we have perpetual hostilities. In a word, whatsoever enmities thou hast against man, thou thinkest to bring them to an end, either by his giving thee satisfaction, if he hath injured thee; or by thy giving it to him, if thou hast injured him; or by both, if ye have mutually injured one another; thou strivest to give satisfaction and to be at one: but with the devil and his angels there is no concord. They do themselves begrudge us the kingdom of Heaven. They cannot at all be appeased towards us: because all mine enemies have anticipated watches. They have watched more to deceive than I to guard myself. For how can they have done otherwise than anticipate watches, that have set every where scandals, every where traps? Weariness doth invest the heart, we have to fear lest sorrow swallow us up: in joy to fear lest the spirit faint in babbling: all mine enemies have anticipated watches. In fine, in the midst of that same babbling, whiles thou are speaking, and art speaking without fear, how much is oftentimes found which enemies would lay hold of and censure, whereon they would even found accusation and slander—"he said so, he thought so, he spake so!" What should man do, save that which followeth? I have been troubled, and I spake not. Therefore

when he was troubled, lest in his babbling enemies anticipating watches should seek and find slanders, he spake not. Never however would this leaper over be still in himself: and if perchance he left off babbling, wherein there had stolen over him the desire of pleasing men with his very talking, yet he hath not desisted, hath not ceased to endeavour to transcend even this very feeling. And he saith what?

8. Ver. 5. I have thought on ancient days. Now he, as if he were one who had been beaten out of doors, hath taken refuge within: he is conversing in the secret place of his own heart. And let him declare to us what he is doing there: I have thought on ancient days. It is well with him. Observe what things he is thinking of, I pray you. He is within, in his own house he is thinking of ancient days. No one saith to him, thou hast spoken ill: no one saith to him, thou hast spoken much: no one saith to him, thou hast thought perversely. Thus may it be well with him, may God aid him: let him think of the ancient days, and let him tell us what he hath done in his very inner chamber, whereunto he hath arrived, over what he hath leaped, where he hath abode. I have thought on ancient days; and of eternal years I have been mindful. What are eternal years? It is a mighty thought. See whether this thought requireth any thing but great silence. Apart from all noise without, from all tumult of things human let him remain quiet within, that would think of those eternal years. Are the years wherein we are eternal, or those wherein our ancestors have been, or those wherein our posterity are to be? Far be it that they should be esteemed eternal. For what part of these years doth remain? Behold we speak and say, in this year: and what have we got of this year, save the one day wherein we are. For the former days of this year have already gone by, and are not to be had; but the future days have not yet come. In one day we are, and we say, in this year: nay rather say thou, to-day, if thou desirest to speak of any thing present. For of the whole year what hast thou got that is present? Whatsoever thereof is past, is no longer; whatsoever thereof is future, is not yet: how then, "this year?" Amend the expression: say, to-day. Thou speakest truth, henceforth I will say, "to-day." Again observe this too, how to-day the morning hours have already past, the future hours have not yet come. This too therefore amend: say, in this hour. And of this hour what hast thou got? Some moments thereof have already gone by, those that are future have not yet come. Say,

in this moment. In what moment? While I am uttering syllables, if I shall speak two syllables, the latter doth not sound until the former hath gone by: in a word, in that same one syllable, if it chance to have two letters, the latter letter doth not sound, until the former hath gone by. What then have we got of these years? These years are changeable: the eternal years must be thought on, years that stand, that are not made up of days that come and depart; years whereof in another place the Scripture saith to God, But Thou art the Self-same, and Thy years shall not fail. On these years this man that leapeth over, not in babbling without, but in silence hath thought. And of the eternal years I have been mindful.

9. Ver. 6. And I have meditated in the night with my heart. No slanderous person seeketh for snares in his words, in his heart he hath meditated. I babbled. Behold there is the former babbling. Watch again, that thy spirit faint not. I did not, he saith, I did not so babble as if it were abroad: in another way now. How now? I did babble, and did search out my spirit. If he were searching the earth to find veins of gold, no one would say that he was foolish; nay, many men would call him wise, for desiring to come at gold: how great treasures hath a man within, and he diggeth not! This man was examining his spirit, and was speaking with that same his spirit, and in the very speaking he was babbling. He was questioning himself, was examining himself, was judge over himself. And he continueth; I did search my spirit. He had to fear lest he should stay within his own spirit: for he had babbled without; and because all his enemies had anticipated watches, he found there sorrow, and his spirit fainted. He that did babble without, lo, now doth begin to babble within in safety, where being alone in secret, he is thinking on eternal years. And I did search out, he saith, my spirit. And here he has to fear lest he should stay within his own spirit, and so should not be one leaping over. Now however he is doing better than he did without. He is overpassing somewhat: and hence let us see whereunto. This leaper over doth not cease until he cometh unto the end, wherefrom the Psalm hath the title, I did babble, he saith, and did search my spirit.

10. And thou hast found what? (Ver. 7.) God will not repel for everlasting. Weariness he had found in this life; in no place a trustworthy, in no place a fearless comfort. Unto whatsoever men he betook himself, in them he found

scandal, or feared it. In no place therefore was he free from care. An evil thing it was for him to hold his peace, lest perchance he should keep silence from good words; to speak and babble without was painful to him, lest all his enemies, anticipating watches, should seek slanders in his words. Being exceedingly straitened in this life, he thought much of another life, where there is not this trial. And when is he to arrive thither? For it cannot but be evident that our suffering here is the anger of God. This thing is spoken of in Isaiah, I will not be an avenger unto you for everlasting, nor will I be angry with you at all times. And He saith why: for the spirit shall go forth from Me, and I have made every breath. Because of sin for a little space I have made him sorrowful and have smitten him, and I have turned away My face from him, and he went away sorrowful, and walked in his own ways. What then? Will this anger of God alway abide? This man hath not found this in silence. For he saith what? God will not repel for everlasting, and He will not add any more that it should be well-pleasing to Him still. That is, that it should be well-pleasing to Him still to repel, and He will not add the repelling for everlasting. He must needs recal to Himself His servants, He must needs receive fugitives returning to the Lord, He must needs hearken to the voice of them that are in fetters. God will not repel for everlasting; and He will not add any more that it should be well-pleasing to Him.

11. Ver. 8. Or unto the end will He cut off mercy from generation to generation? (Ver. 9.) Or will God forget to be merciful? In thee, from thee unto another there is no mercy unless God bestow it on thee: and shall God Himself forget mercy? The stream runneth: shall the spring itself be dried up? Or shall God forget to be merciful: or shall He keep back in anger His mercies? That is, shall He be so angry, as that He will not have mercy? He will more easily keep back anger than mercy. Of this also by Isaiah He hath spoken: I will not be an avenger unto you for everlasting, nor will I at all times be angry with you. After He had said this and, he went away sorrowful, and walked in his own ways: then He saith, his ways I have seen, and have made him whole. When he perceived this he did overpass even himself, delighting in God, in order that he might be there, and might babble rather in His works; not in his spirit, not in that which he was, but in Him by Whom he had been made. And hence therefore leaping over he

doth transcend. See ye him leaping over, see if he stayeth in any place until he reacheth unto God.

12. Ver. 10. And I said. Now leaping over himself he hath said what? Now I have begun: when I had gone out even from myself. Now I have begun. Here henceforth there is no danger: for even to remain in myself, was danger. And I said, Now I have begun: this is the changing of the right hand of the Lofty One. Now the Lofty One hath begun to change me: now I have begun something wherein I am secure: now I have entered a certain palace of joys, wherein no enemy is to be feared: now I have begun to be in that region, where all mine enemies do not anticipate watches. Now I have begun: this is the changing of the right hand of the Lofty One.

13. Ver. 11. I have been mindful of the works of the Lord. Now behold him roaming among the works of the Lord. For he was babbling without, and being made sorrowful thereby his spirit fainted: he babbled within with his own heart, and with his spirit, and having searched out that same spirit he was mindful of the eternal years, was mindful of the mercy of the Lord, how God will not repel him for everlasting; and he began now fearlessly to rejoice in His works, fearlessly to exult in the same. Let us hear now those very works, and let us too exult. But let even us leap over in our affections, and not rejoice in things temporal. For we too have our bed. Why do we not enter therein? Why do we not abide in silence? Why do we not search out our spirit? Why do we not think on the eternal years? Why do we not rejoice in the works of God? In such sort now let us hear, and let us take delight in Himself speaking, in order that when we shall have departed hence, we may do that which we used to do while He spake; if only we are making the beginning of Him whereof he spake in, Now I have begun. To rejoice in the works of God, is to forget even thyself, if thou canst delight in Him alone. For what is a better thing than He? Dost thou not see that, when thou returnest to thyself, thou returnest to a worse thing? I have been mindful of the works of the Lord: for I shall be mindful from the beginning of Thy wonderful works.

14. Ver. 12. And I will meditate on all Thy works, and on Thy affections I will babble. Behold the third babbling! He babbled without, when he fainted; he babbled in his spirit within, when he advanced; he babbled on

the works of God, when he arrived at the place toward which he advanced. And on Thy affections I will babble: not on my affections. What man doth live without affections? And do ye suppose, brethren, that they who fear God, worship God, love God, have not any affections? Wilt thou indeed suppose and dare to suppose, that painting, the theatre, hunting, hawking, fishing, engage the affections, and the meditation on God doth not engage certain interior affections of its own, while we contemplate the universe, and place before our eyes the spectacle of the natural world, and therein labour to discover the Maker, and find Him no where unpleasing, but pleasing above all things?

15. Ver. 13. O God, Thy way is in the Holy One. He is contemplating now the works of the mercy of God around us, out of these he is babbling, and in these affections he is exulting. At first he is beginning from thence, Thy way is in the Holy One? What is that way of Thine which is in the Holy One? I am, He saith, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Return therefore, ye men, from your affections. Whither are ye going, whither running? Whither not only from God but from yourselves are ye fleeing? Return ye transgressors to the heart: search ye your spirit, recollect the eternal years, find out the mercy of God around you, give heed to the works of His mercy: in the Holy One is His Way. "Sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart?" What are ye seeking in your affections? Why do ye love emptiness, and seek lying? And know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One?

Thy Way is in the Holy One: let us observe, let us observe Christ, there is His Way; O God, Thy way is in the Holy One. Who is a great God, like our God? Gentiles have their affections regarding their gods, they adore idols, they have eyes and they see not; ears they have and they hear not; feet they have and they walk not. Why dost thou walk to a God that walketh not? I do not, he saith, worship such things, and what dost thou worship? The divinity which is there. Thou dost then worship that whereof hath been said elsewhere, for the Gods of the nations are demons. Thou dost either worship idols, or devils. Neither idols, nor devils, he saith. And what dost thou worship? The stars, sun, moon, those things celestial. How much better Him that hath made both things earthly and things celestial. Who is a great God like our God?

16. Ver. 14. Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. Thou art indeed a great God, doing wonderful things in body, in soul; alone doing them. The deaf have heard, the blind have seen, the feeble have recovered, the dead have risen, the paralytic have been strengthened. But these miracles were at that time performed on bodies, let us see those wrought on the soul. Sober are those that were a little before drunken, believers are those that were a little before worshippers of idols: their goods they bestow on the poor that did rob before those of others. Who is a great God like our God? Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. Moses too did them, but not alone: Elias too did them, even Eliseus did them, the Apostles too did them, but no one of them alone. That they might have power to do them, Thou wast with them: when Thou didst them they were not with Thee. For they were not with Thee when Thou didst them, inasmuch as Thou didst make even these very men. Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. How alone? Is it perchance the Father, and not the Son? Or the Son, and not the Father? Nay, but Father and Son and Holy Ghost. Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. For it is not three Gods but one God that doeth wonderful things alone, and even in this very leaper-over. For even his leaping over and arriving at these thiugs was a miracle of God: when he was babbling within with his own spirit, in order that he might leap over even that same spirit of his, and might delight in the works of God, he then did wonderful things himself. But God hath done what? Thou hast made known unto the people Thy virtue. Thence this congregation of Asaph leaping over; because He hath made known in the peoples His virtue. What virtue of His hath He made known in the peoples? But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews indeed a scandal, but to the Gentiles folly: but to them that are called, Jews and Greeks, Christ the virtue of God and the wisdom of God. If then the virtue of God is Christ, He hath made known Christ in the peoples. Do we not yet perceive so much as this; and are we so unwise, are we lying so much below, do we so leap over nothing, as that we see not this? Thou hast made known in the peoples Thy virtue.

17. Ver. 15. Thou hast redeemed in Thine arm Thy people. With Thine arm, that is, with Thy virtue. And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Thou hast redeemed in Thine arm Thy people, the sons of Israel

and of Joseph. How as if two peoples, the sons of Israel and of Joseph? Are not the sons of Joseph among the sons of Israel? They are evidently. We know it, we read it, the Scripture declareth it, the truth sheweth it, for Israel is the same as Jacob: he had twelve sons, among whom Joseph was one, and out of the twelve sons of Israel all that were born do belong to the people Israel. How then saith he, sons of Israel and of Joseph? He hath admonished us of some distinction to be made. Let us search out our spirit, perchance God hath placed there something—God Whom we ought even by night to seek with our hands, in order that we may not be deceived—perchance we shall discover even ourselves in this distinction of sons of Israel and of Joseph. By Joseph He hath willed another people to be understood, hath willed that the people of the Gentiles be understood. Why the people of the Gentiles by Joseph? Because Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brethren. That Joseph whom the brethren envied, and sold him into Egypt, when sold into Egypt, toiled, was humbled; when made known and exalted, flourished, reigned. And by all these things he hath signified what? What but Christ sold by His brethren, banished from His own land, as it were into the Egypt of the Gentiles? There at first humbled, when the Martyrs were suffering persecutions: now exalted, as we see; inasmuch as there hath been fulfilled in Him, There shall adore Him all kinds of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. Therefore Joseph is the people of the Gentiles, but Israel the people of the Hebrew nation. God hath redeemed His people, the sons of Israel and of Joseph. By means of what? By means of the corner stone, wherein the two walls have been joined together.

18. And he continueth how? (Ver. 16.) The waters have seen Thee, O God. What are the waters? The peoples. What are these waters hath been asked in the Apocalypse, the answer was, the peoples. There we find most clearly waters put by a figure for peoples. But above he had said, Thou hast made known in the peoples Thy virtue. With reason therefore, the waters have seen Thee, O God: the waters have seen Thee, and they have feared. They have been changed because they have feared, The waters have seen Thee, O God, and they have feared: and the abysses have been troubled. What are the abysses? The depths of waters. What man among the peoples is not troubled, when the conscience is smitten? Thou seekest the depth of the sea, what is deeper than human conscience? That is the depth which was

troubled, when God redeemed with His arm His people. In what manner were the abysses troubled? When all men poured forth their consciences in confession. And the abysses were troubled.

19. Ver. 17. There is a multitude of the sound of waters. In praises of God, in confessions of sins, in hymns and in songs, in prayers, there is a multitude of the sound of waters. The clouds have uttered a voice. Thence that sound of waters, thence the troubling of the abysses, because the clouds have uttered a voice. What clouds? The preachers of the word of truth. What clouds? Those concerning which God doth menace a certain vineyard, which instead of grape had brought forth thorns, and He saith, I will command My clouds, that they rain no rain upon it. In a word, the Apostles forsaking the Jews, went to the Gentiles: among all nations, the clouds have uttered a voice: in preaching Christ, the clouds have uttered a voice.

20. For Thine arrows have gone through. Those same voices of the clouds He hath again called arrows. For the words of the Evangelists were arrows. For these things are allegories. For properly neither an arrow is rain, nor rain is an arrow: but yet the word of God is both an arrow because it doth smite; and rain because it doth water. Let no one therefore any longer wonder at the troubling of the abysses, when Thine arrows have gone through. What is, have gone through? They have not stopped in the ears, but they have pierced the heart. (Ver. 18.) The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel. What is this? How are we to understand it? May the Lord give aid. The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel. When boys we were wont to imagine, whenever we heard thunderings from Heaven, that carriages were going forth as it were from the stables. For thunder doth make a sort of rolling like carriages. Must we return to these boyish thoughts, in order to understand, the voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel, as though God hath certain carriages in the clouds, and the passing along of the carriages doth raise that sound? Far be it. This is boyish, vain, trifling. What is then, The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel? Thy voice rolleth. Not even this do I understand. What shall we do? Let us question Idithun himself, to see whether perchance he may himself explain what he hath said: The voice, he saith, of Thy thunder is in the wheel. I do not understand. I will hear what thou sayest: Thy lightnings have appeared to the round world. Say then, I

had no understanding. The round world is a wheel. For the circuit of the round world is with reason called also an 'orb:' whence also a small wheel is called an 'orbiculus.' The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel: Thy lightnings have appeared to the round world. Those clouds in a wheel have gone about the round world, have gone about with thundering and with lightning, they have shaken the abyss, with commandments they have thundered, with miracles they have lightened. Unto every land hath gone forth the sound of them, and unto the ends of the globe the words of them. The land hath been moved and made to tremble: that is, all men that dwell in the land. But by a figure the land itself is sea. Why? Because all nations are called by the name of sea, inasmuch as human life is bitter, and exposed to storms and tempests. Moreover if thou observe this, how men devour one another like fishes, how the stronger doth swallow up the weaker—it is then a sea, unto it the Evangelists went.

21. (Ver. 19.) Thy way is in the sea. But now Thy way was in the Holy One, now Thy way is in the sea: because the Holy One Himself is in the sea, and with reason even did walk upon the waters of the sea. Thy way is in the sea, that is, Thy Christ is preached among the Gentiles. For in another Psalm it is thus said: God have mercy upon us, and bless us, enlighten His countenance upon us, in order that we may know Thy way on the earth. Where on the earth? In all nations Thy saving health: this is, Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in many waters, that is, in many peoples. And Thy footsteps will not be known. He hath touched certain, and wonder were it if it be not those same Jews. Behold now the mercy of Christ hath been so published to the Gentiles, that Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in many waters, and Thy footsteps will not be known. How so, by whom will they not be known, save by those who still say, Christ hath not yet come? Why do they say, Christ hath not yet come? Because they do not yet recognise Him walking on the sea.

22. (Ver. 20.) Thou hast led home Thy people like sheep in the hand of Moses and of Aaron. Why He hath added this is somewhat difficult to discover. Aid ye therefore us with your attention: for after the above two verses there will be an end both of the Psalm and of the Sermon: lest perchance while ye think that a good part remaineth, for fear of the labour

ye pay less attention to the present. When he had said, Thy way is in the sea, which we understand of the Gentiles; and Thy paths are in many waters, which we understand of many peoples: he added, and Thy footsteps will not be known. And we were enquiring by whom they were not known, and he added immediately, Thou hast led home Thy people like sheep by the hand of Moses and Aaron: that is, by that people of Thine which was led home by the hand of Moses and Aaron, Thy footsteps will not be known. Why then hath there been written, save for the sake of rebuking and reproaching, Thy way is in the sea? Why is Thy way in the sea, except because it was thrust out from Thy land? They banished Christ, sick as they were, they would not have Him for their Saviour; but He began to be among the Gentiles, and among all nations, among many peoples. Nevertheless, a remnant of that people hath been saved. The ungrateful multitude hath remained without, even the halting breadth of Jacob's thigh. For the breadth of the thigh is understood of the multitude of lineage, and among the greater part of the Israelites a certain multitude became vain and foolish, so as not to know the steps of Christ on the waters. Thou hast led home Thy people like sheep, and they have not known Thee. Though Thou hast done such great benefits unto them, hast divided sea, hast made them pass over dry land between waters, hast drowned in the waves pursuing enemies, in the desert hast rained manna for their hunger, leading them home by the hand of Moses and Aaron: still they thrust Thee from them, so that in the sea was Thy Way, and Thy steps they knew not.

PSALM 78

1. This Psalm doth contain the things which are said to have been done among the old people: but the new and latter people is being admonished, to beware that it be not ungrateful regarding the blessings of God, and provoke His anger against it, whereas it ought to receive His grace obediently and trustfully, lest they become, he saith, like their fathers, a crooked and embittering generation, a generation which hath not guided its heart, and the spirit of it hath not been trusted with God. This then is the aim of this Psalm, this the use, this the most abundant fruit. But while all things seem to be perspicuously and clearly spoken and narrated, the Title thereof doth first move and engage our attention. For it is not without reason inscribed, Understanding of Asaph: but it is perchance because these words require a reader who doth perceive not the voice which the surface uttereth, but some inward sense. Secondly, when about to narrate and mention all these things, which seem to need a hearer more than an expounder: I will open, he saith, in parables my mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. Who would not herein be awakened out of sleep? Who would dare to hurry over the parables and propositions, reading them as if self-evident, while by their very names they signify that they ought to be sought out with deeper view? For a parable hath on the surface thereof the similitude of some thing: and though it be a Greek word, it is now used as a Latin word. And it is observable, that in parables, those which are called the similitudes of things are compared with things with which we have to do. But propositions which in Greek are called προβλήματα, are questions having something therein which is to be solved by disputation. What man then would read parables and propositions cursorily? What man would not attend while hearing these words with watchful mind, in order that by understanding he may come by the fruit thereof?

2. Ver. 1. Hearken ye, He saith, My people, to My law, Whom may we suppose to be here speaking, but God? For it was Himself that gave a law to His people, whom when delivered out of Egypt He gathered together, the which gathering together is properly named a Synagogue, which the word Asaph is interpreted to signify. Hath it then been said, Understanding of Asaph, in the sense that Asaph himself hath understood; or must it be figuratively understood, in the sense that the same Synagogue, that is, the same people, hath understood, unto whom is said, Hearken, My people, unto My law? Why is it then that He is rebuking the same people by the mouth of the Prophet, saying, But Israel hath not known Me, and My people hath not understood? But, in fact, there were even in that people they that understood, having the faith which was afterwards revealed, not pertaining to the letter of the law, but the grace of the Spirit. For they cannot have been without the same faith, who were able to foresee and foretel the revelation thereof that should be in Christ, inasmuch as even those old Sacraments were significant of those that should be. Had the prophets alone this faith, and not the people too? Nay indeed, but even they that faithfully heard the Prophets, were aided by the same grace in order that they might understand what they heard. But without doubt the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven was veiled in the Old Testament, which in the fulness of time should be unveiled in the New. For, I would not have you, saith the Apostle, to be ignorant, brethren, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized by Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all did eat the same spiritual meat, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they did drink of the Spiritual Rock following them, but the Rock was Christ. In a mystery therefore theirs was the same meat and drink as ours, but in signification the same, not in form; because the same Christ was Himself figured to them in a Rock, manifested to us in the Flesh. But, he saith, not in all of them God was well pleased. All indeed ate the same spiritual meat and drank the same spiritual drink, that is to say, signifying something spiritual: but not in all of them was God well pleased. When, he saith, not in all: there were evidently there some in whom God was well pleased; and although all the Sacraments were common, grace, which is the virtue of the Sacraments, was not common to all. Just as in our times, now that the faith hath been revealed, which then was veiled, to all men that have been baptized in the name of the Father and

of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the Laver of regeneration is common, but the very grace whereof these same are the Sacraments, whereby the members of the Body of Christ are to reign together with their Head, is not common to all. For even heretics have the same Baptism, and false brethren too, in the communion of the Catholic name. Therefore here too hath been rightly said, but not in all of them was God well pleased.

3. Nevertheless, neither then nor now without profit is the voice of him, saying, Hearken ye, My people, to My law. Which expression is remarkable in all the Scriptures, how he saith not, hearken thou, but, hearken ye. For of many men a people doth consist: to which many that which followeth is spoken in the plural number. Incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth. Hearken ye, is the same as, Incline your ear: and what He saith there, My law, this He saith here in, the words of My mouth. For that man doth godly hearken to the law of God, and the words of His mouth, whose ear humility doth incline: not he whose neck pride doth lift up. For whatever is poured in is received on the concave surface of humility, is shaken off from the convexity of swelling. Whence in another place, Incline, he saith, thine ear, and receive the words of understanding. We have been therefore sufficiently admonished to receive even this Psalm of this understanding of Asaph, (for the word on the Title is put in the genitive case—‘hujus intellectûs,’ not ‘hic intellectus,’) to receive, I say, with inclined ear, that is, with humble piety. And it hath not been spoken of as being of Asaph himself, but to Asaph himself. Which thing is evident by the Greek article, and is found in certain Latin copies. These words therefore are of understanding, that is, of intelligence, which hath been given to Asaph himself: which we had better understand not as to one man, but as to the congregation of the people of God; whence we ought by no means to alienate ourselves. For although properly we say ‘Synagogue’ of Jews, but ‘Church’ of Christians, because a ‘congregation’ is wont to be understood as rather of beasts, but a ‘convocation’ as rather of men: yet that too we find called a Church, and it perhaps is more suitable for us to say, Save us, O Lord, our God, and congregate us from the nations, in order that we may confess to Thy Holy Name. Neither ought we to disdain to be, nay we ought to render ineffable thanks, for that we are, the sheep of His hands, which He foresaw when He was saying, I have other sheep which are not of this fold,

them too I must lead in, that there may be one flock and one Shepherd: that is to say, by joining the faithful people of the Gentiles with the faithful people of the Israelites, concerning whom He had before said, I have not been sent but to the sheep which have strayed of the house of Israel. For also there shall be congregated before Him all nations, and He shall sever them as a shepherd the sheep from the goats. Thus then let us hear that which hath been spoken. Harken ye, My people, to My law, incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth: not as if addressed to Jews, but rather as if addressed to ourselves, or at least as if these words were said as well to ourselves (as to them.) For when the Apostle had said, But not in all them was God well pleased, thereby shewing that there there were those too in whom God was well pleased: he hath forthwith added, For they were overthrown in the desert: secondly he hath continued, but these things have been made our figures, in order that we be not covetous of evil things, as they too coveted. Nor serving idols, as some of them did, as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and they fell in one day twenty and three thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them tempted, and perished by serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. Now all these things did befall them in a figure: but they have been written for our reproof, upon whom the end of ages hath come. To us therefore more particularly these words have been sung. Whence in this Psalm among other things there hath been said, That another generation may know, sons who shall be born and shall arise. Moreover, if that death by serpents, and that destruction by the destroyer, and the slaying by the sword, were figures, as the Apostle evidently doth declare, inasmuch as it is manifest that all those things did happen: for he saith not, in a figure they were spoken, or, in a figure they were written, but, in a figure, he saith, they happened to them: with how much greater diligence of godliness must those punishments be shunned whereof those were the figures? For beyond a doubt as in good things there is much more of good in that which is signified by the figure, than in the figure itself: so also in evil things very far worse are the things which are signified by the figures, while so great are the evil things which as figures do signify. For as the land of promise, whereunto that people was being led, is nothing in comparison with the Kingdom of Heaven, whereunto the

Christian people is being led: so also those punishments which were figures, though they were so severe, are nothing in comparison with the punishments which they signify. But those which the Apostle hath called figures, the same this Psalm, as far as we are able to judge, calleth parables and propositions: not having their end in the fact of their having happened, but in those things whereunto they are referred by a reasonable comparison. Let us therefore hearken unto the law of God—us His people—and let us incline our ear unto the words of His mouth.

4. Ver. 2. I will open, he saith, in parables My mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. From what beginning he meaneth, is very evident in the words following. For it is not from the beginning, what time the Heaven and earth were made, nor what time mankind was created in the first man: but what time the congregation that was led out of Egypt; in order that the sense may belong to Asaph, which is interpreted a congregation. But O that He that hath said, I will open in parables My mouth, would also vouchsafe to open our understanding unto them! For if, as He hath opened His mouth in parables, He would in like sort open the parables themselves: and as He declareth ‘propositions,’ He would declare in like sort the expositions thereof, we should not be here toiling: but now so hidden and closed are all things, that even if we are able by His aid to arrive at any thing, whereon we may feed to our health, still we must eat the bread in the sweat of our face; and pay the penalty of the ancient sentence not with the labour of the body only, but also with that of the heart. Let him speak then, and let us hear the parables and propositions.

5. Ver. 3. How great things we have heard, and have known them, and our fathers have told them to us. The Lord was speaking higher up. For of what other person could these words be thought to be, Hearken ye, O My people, to My law? Why is it then that now on a sudden a man is speaking, for here we have the words of a man, What things we have heard, and known them, and our fathers have told them to us. Without doubt God, now about to speak by a man’s ministry, as the Apostle saith, Will ye to receive proof of Him that is speaking in me, Christ? in His own person at first willed the words to be uttered, lest a man speaking His words should be despised as a man. For it is thus with the sayings of God which make their way to us

through our bodily sense. The Creator moveth the subject creature by an invisible working; not so that the substance is changed into any thing corporal and temporal, when by means of corporal and temporal signs, whether belonging to the eyes or to the ears, as far as men are able to receive it, He would make His will to be known. For if an angel is able to use air, mist, cloud, fire, and any other natural substance or corporal species; and man to use face, tongue, hand, pen, letters, or any other significants, for the purpose of intimating the secret things of his own mind: in a word, if, though he is a man, he sendeth human messengers, and he saith to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to his servant, Do this, and he doeth it; with how much greater and more effectual power doth God, to Whom as Lord all things together are subject, use both the same angel and man, in order that He may declare whatsoever pleaseth Him? Although then now a man is saying, How great things we have heard and have known them, and our fathers have told them to us? yet let us hear them as though they were God's words, not as though they were human fables. For to this end there hath been premised, Hearken ye, My people, unto My law, incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth. I will open in parables My mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. Then, how great things we have heard, he saith, and have known them, and our fathers have told them to us. We have heard and have known, is the same as, hear thou, daughter, and see. For those things were heard in the Old Testament which are known in the New: heard when they were being prophesied, known when they were being fulfilled. Where a promise is performed, hearing is not deceived. And our fathers, Moses and the Prophets, have told unto us.

6. Ver. 4. They have not been hidden from their sons in another generation. This is our generation wherein there hath been given to us regeneration. Telling forth the praises of the Lord and His powers, and His wonderful works which He hath done. The order of the words is, and our fathers have told unto us, telling forth the praises of the Lord. The Lord is praised, in order that He may be loved. For what object can be loved more to our health?

7. Ver. 5. And He hath raised up a testimony in Jacob, and hath set a law in Jacob. This is the beginning whereof hath been spoken above, I will declare propositions from the beginning. So then the beginning is the Old Testament, the end is the New. For fear doth prevail in the law. But the end of the law is Christ for righteousness to every one believing: at Whose bestowing love is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Which hath been given to us: and love made perfect doth cast out fear, inasmuch as now without the Law the righteousness of God hath been made manifest. But inasmuch as He hath a testimony by the Law and the Prophets, therefore, He hath raised up a testimony in Jacob, and hath set a law in Israel. For even that Tabernacle which was set up with a work so remarkable and full of such wondrous meanings, is named the Tabernacle of Testimony, wherein was the veil over the Ark of the Law, like the veil over the face of the Minister of the Law; because in that dispensation there were 'parables and propositions.' For those things which were being preached and were coming to pass were hidden in veiled meanings, and were not seen in unveiled manifestations. But when thou shalt have passed over unto Christ, saith the Apostle, the veil shall be taken away. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, Amen. Whosoever therefore doth cleave to Christ, hath the whole of the good which even in the letters of the Law he perceiveth not: but whosoever is an alien from Christ, doth neither perceive, nor hath. He hath raised up, then, a testimony in Jacob, and hath set a law in Israel. After his usual custom he is making a repetition. For He hath raised up a testimony, is the same as, He hath set a law, and in Jacob, is the same as in Israel. For as these are two names of one man, so law and testimony are two names of one thing. Is there any difference, saith some one, between hath raised up and hath set? Yea indeed, the same difference as there is even between Jacob and Israel: not because they were two persons, but these same two names were bestowed upon one man for different reasons; Jacob because of supplanting, for that he grasped the foot of his brother at his birth: but Israel because of the vision of God. So raised up is one thing, set is another. For, He hath raised up a testimony, as far as I can judge, hath been said because by it something hath been raised up; For without the Law, saith the Apostle, sin was dead: but I lived sometime without the Law: but at the coming in of the commandment sin revived. Behold that which hath been raised up by the testimony, which is the Law,

so that what was lying hidden might appear, as he saith a little afterwards: But sin, that it might appear sin, through a good thing hath wrought in me death. But He hath set a law, hath been said, as though it were a yoke upon sinners, whence hath been said, For upon a just man law hath not been imposed. It is a testimony then, so far forth as it doth prove any thing; but a law so far forth as it doth command; though it is one and the same thing. Wherefore just as Christ is a stone, but to believers for the Head of the corner, while to unbelievers a stone of offence and a rock of scandal; so the testimony of the Law to them that use not the Law lawfully, is a testimony whereby sinners are to be convicted as deserving of punishment; but to them that use the same lawfully, is a testimony whereby sinners are shewn unto Whom they ought to flee in order to be delivered. For in His grace is the righteousness of God, having a testimony from the Law and the Prophets, whereby the ungodly man is justified: of which certain men being ignorant, and willing to establish their own righteousness, have not been made subject to the righteousness of God.

8. Ver. 5. How great things, he saith, He hath commanded our fathers, to make the same known to their sons? (Ver. 6.) That another generation may know, sons who shall be born and shall rise up, and they may tell to their sons. (Ver. 7.) That they may put their hope in God, and may not forget the works of God, and may seek out His commandments. (Ver. 8.) That they may not become, like their fathers, a crooked and embittering generation: a generation that hath not guided their heart, and the spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God. These words do point out two peoples as it were, the one belonging to the Old Testament, the other to the New: for in that he saith, How great things He hath commanded our fathers, to make the same known to their children, he hath implied that they received the commandments, to make them known to their sons, but that they did not know or do them: but they received them themselves, to the end that another generation might know, what the former knew not. Sons who shall be born and shall arise. For they that have been born have not arisen: because they had not their heart above, but rather on the earth. For the arising is with Christ: whence hath been said, If ye have arisen with Christ, savour ye the things which are above. And they may tell them, he saith, to their sons, in order that they may put their hope in God. For thus it is not

that being righteous they desire to set up their own righteousness, but they reveal to God their way, and they hope in Him, in order that He may Himself bring it to pass. And may not forget the works of God: that is to say, in magnifying and vaunting their own works, as though they did them themselves; while “God it is that worketh,” in them that work good things, “both to will and to work according to good will.”

And may search out His commandments. When they have already learned them, how should they search them out? For, How great things, he saith, He hath commanded to our fathers, to make the same known to their sons, that another generation may know? May know what? The commandments which He hath commanded. How then should they still search out, whereas they have already learned them, save that by putting their hope in God, they do then search out His commandments, in order that by them, with His aid, they may be fulfilled? That they may not become, like their fathers, a generation crooked and embittering, a generation which hath not guided its heart. And he saith why, by immediately subjoining, and its spirit hath not been trusted with God, that is, because it had no faith, which doth obtain what the Law doth enjoin. For when the spirit of man doth work together with the Spirit of God working, then there is fulfilled that which God hath commanded: and this doth not come to pass, except by believing in Him that doth justify an ungodly man. Which faith the generation crooked and embittering had not: and therefore concerning the same hath been said, The spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God. For this hath been said much more exactly to point out the grace of God, which doth work not only remission of sins, but also doth make the spirit of man to work together therewith in the work of good deeds, as though he were saying, his spirit hath not believed in God. For to have the spirit trusted with God, is, not to believe that his spirit is able to do righteousness without God, but with God. For this is to believe in God: which is surely more than to believe God. For oftentimes we must believe even a man, though in him we must not believe. To believe in God therefore is this, in believing to cleave unto God Who worketh good works, in order to work with Him well. For without Me, He saith, ye can do nothing. But what more on this head could the Apostle have said than what he saith, But he that cleaveth to the Lord is one spirit? Otherwise that law is a testimony whereby the party is condemned, not one

whereby he is acquitted. For it is the letter menacing, to convict transgressors; not the Spirit giving aid, to deliver and justify sinners. Therefore, that generation, the example whereof is to be shunned, was for this reason crooked and embittering, because the spirit thereof was not trusted with God: for although in some sort it believed God, yet it did not believe in God: by faith it did not cleave unto God, to the end that, being made whole by God, it might work well together with God working therein.

9. Lastly, (ver. 9.) The sons of Ephrem bending and shooting bows, have been turned back in the day of war. Following after the law of righteousness, unto the law of righteousness they have not attained. Why? Because they were not of faith. For they were that generation whereof the spirit hath not been trusted with God: but they were, so to speak, of works: because they did not, as they bended and shot their bows, (which are outward actions, as of the works of the law, so guide their heart also, wherein the just man doth live by faith, which worketh by love; whereby men cleave to God, Who worketh in man both to will and work according to good will. For what else is bending the bow and shooting, and turning back in the day of war, but heeding and purposing in the day of hearing, and deserting in the day of temptation; flourishing arms, so to speak, beforehand, and at the hour of the action refusing to fight? But whereas he saith, bending and shooting bows, when it would seem that he ought to have said, bending bows and shooting arrows, for the bow is not shot, but by the bow something is shot: it is either the same form of speech as that whereof we have treated above, where there was said, He hath raised up a testimony, because He hath raised up something by a testimony, so here too, shooting bows, because they have shot something with bows: or else the order of words is obscure, by the omission of a word, which though not expressed must be understood, so that the order is, sons of Ephrem bending bows and shooting, and there is understood arrows, and the more full expression is, bending bows and shooting arrows: for though he had said, bending and shooting arrows, we ought not certainly to understand thereby arrows bending: but having heard the expression bending, to understand rather a bow, though it might not have been said. Some Greek copies to be sure are said to have bending and shooting with bows, so that without doubt we ought to understand arrows. But whereas by the sons of Ephrem he hath

willed that there be understood the whole of that embittering generation, it is an expression signifying the whole by a part. And perhaps this part was chosen whereby to signify the whole, because from these men especially some good thing was to have been expected; because they were born of him whom being his own grandson, although set at the left hand by his father as being the younger, Jacob nevertheless blessed with his right hand, and preferred him before his elder brother with a benediction of hidden meaning; so that while this tribe is so much censured in this place, and that there hath not appeared therein what that blessing promised is clearly shewn, we may well perceive that even then by the words of the Patriarch Jacob something far different was being figured than the wisdom of the flesh doth expect. For there was being figured how they were to be last that were first, and first were to be they that were last, through the Saviour's coming, concerning Whom hath been said, He that is coming after me was made before me. In like manner righteous Abel was preferred before the elder brother; so to Ismael Isaac; so to Esau, though born before him, his twin brother Jacob; so also Phares himself preceded even in birth his twin brother, who had first thrust a hand out of the womb, and had begun to be born: so David was preferred before his elder brother: and as the reason why all these parables and others like them preceded, not only of words but also of deeds, in like manner to the people of the Jews was preferred the Christian people, for redeeming the which as Abel by Cain, so by the Jews was slain Christ. This thing was prefigured even when Jacob stretching out his hands cross-wise, with his right hand touched Ephrem standing on the left; and set him before Manasse standing on the right, whom he himself touched with the left hand. For after the flesh, the sons of Ephrem bending and shooting bows have been turned back in the day of war.

10. But what that is which he saith, they have been turned back in the day of war, the following words do teach, wherein he hath most clearly explained this: (ver. 10.) they have not kept, he saith, the testament of God, and in His law they would not walk. Behold what is, they have been turned back in the day of war: they have not kept the testament of God. When they were bending and shooting bows, they did also utter the words of most forward promise, saying, "Whatsoever things the Lord our God hath spoken we will do, and we will hear." They have been turned back in the day of

war: because the promise of obedience not hearing but temptation doth prove. But he whose spirit hath been trusted with God, keepeth hold on God, Who is faithful, and doth not suffer him to be tempted above that which he is able; but will make with the temptation a way of escape also, that he may be able to endure, and may not be turned back in the day of war. But he that glorieth in himself, not in God, howsoever he may vaunt the promise of his virtue, as if bending and shooting bows, is turned back in the day of war. For because his spirit hath not been trusted with God, with him also the Spirit of God is not: and, as it is written, because he hath not believed, therefore he shall not be protected. But inasmuch as when he had said, they have not kept the testament of God; he hath added and saith, and in His law they would not walk, it is a repetition of the former sentence, with a sort of exposition of it. For he hath called that His law, which he had called above the testament of God: so that what hath been said in they have not kept, may be perceived to be repeated in they would not walk. But seeing that it might have been expressed more briefly by, ‘and in His law they have not walked,’ it seemeth to me that he hath willed us to seek for some reason why he hath chosen to say, they would not walk, rather than, they have not walked. For the law of works might have been deemed sufficient for justification, when the precepts which are enjoined, are done externally by men who would rather not have precepts enjoined, the which they perform not from their hearts, and yet do perform them: and thereby they seem in a manner to walk in the law of God, but are unwilling to walk: for they do them not from the heart. But from the heart a thing can no wise be done which is done for fear of punishment, not for love of righteousness. For as far as regardeth acts which are done externally, both they that fear punishment and they that love righteousness do not steal; and therefore they are alike in hand, unlike in heart; alike in operation, unlike in will. Therefore these men have been thus branded: a generation, he saith, which hath not directed their heart. It hath not been said, works, but heart. For when the heart is directed, the works are right; but when the heart is not directed, the works are not right, even though they seem to be right. And how the crooked generation hath not directed the heart, hath sufficiently been shewn, when he saith, and the spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God. For God is right: and therefore by cleaving to the right, as to an immutable rule, the heart of a man can be made right, which in itself was

crooked. But in order that the heart may be with Him and thereby may be able to become right, we draw near to Him not with foot but with faith. Therefore also there is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning that same generation crooked and embittering: The hearing of the word profited not them that were not tempered with the faith of them that hearkened. The will therefore which is in a right heart, is prepared by the Lord, faith preceding, whereby it draweth near to God, Who is right, in order that the heart may be made right. The which faith, the mercy of God preventing and inviting, is raised up through obedience; and doth begin to apply the heart to God, in order that it may be directed, and the more and more it is directed, so much the more it seeth what it saw not, and can do what it could not do. This thing Simon had not done, to whom Peter the Apostle said, there is neither part nor lot to thee in this faith: for thy heart is not right with God. For there he is shewing how it cannot be right without God, so that men may begin, not like slaves fearing to walk under the law, but in the law like willing sons, wherein they willed not to walk, and under it remained guilty. For this will not fear but love doth embrace, which is shed abroad in the hearts of the faithful through the Holy Spirit. Unto whom is said, By grace we have been saved through faith: and this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not by works, lest perchance a man should be exalted. For of Him we are the workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, in good works, which God hath prepared, in order that we may walk therein. Not like those men, who willed not to walk in His law, either by believing in Him, or by discovering their way to Him, and by hoping in Him, in order that He might Himself do it.

11. Ver. 11. And they forgot His benefits, and the wonderful works of Him which He shewed to them; before their fathers the wonderful things which He did. What this is, is not a question to be negligently passed over. Concerning those very fathers he was speaking a little before, that they had been a generation crooked and embittering. Lest they should become, he saith, like their fathers: a generation crooked and embittering; a generation that hath not directed their heart, and the like, which are yet said of that same generation, the imitation whereof he hath enjoined to be shunned by another generation in this way, in order that they may put their hope in God, and may not forget the works of God, and may search out His

commandments: concerning which we have already discoursed as much as hath seemed sufficient. What meaneth he then, when he is speaking of that same crooked generation, how that they forgot the benefits of God, and the wonderful things of Him which He shewed to them, by adding and saying, before their fathers the wonderful things which He did? What fathers, inasmuch as these are the very fathers, whom he would not have posterity to be like? If we shall take them to be those out of whom the others had derived their being, for example, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, by this time they had long since fallen asleep, when God shewed wonderful things in Egypt. For there followeth, in the land of Egypt, in the plain of Thanis: where it is said that God shewed to them wonderful things before their fathers. Were they perchance present in spirit? For of the same the Lord saith in the Gospel, for all do live to Him. Or do we more suitably understand thereby the fathers Moses and Aaron, and the other elders who are related in the same Scripture also to have received the Spirit, of Which also Moses received, in order that they might aid him in ruling and bearing the same people? For why should they not have been called fathers? It is not in the same manner as God is the One Father, Who doth regenerate with His Spirit those whom He doth make sons for an everlasting inheritance; but it is for the sake of honour, because of their age and kindly carefulness: just as Paul the elder saith, Not to confound you I am writing these things, but as my dearly beloved sons I am admonishing you: though he knew of a truth that it had been said by the Lord, Call ye no man your father on earth, for One is your Father, even God. And this was not said in order that this term of human honour should be erased from our usual way of speaking: but lest the grace of God whereby we are regenerated unto eternal life, should be ascribed either to the power or even sanctity of any man. Therefore when he said, I have begotten you; he first said, in Christ, and through the Gospel; lest that might be thought to be of him, which is of God.

12. Therefore that generation, crooked and embittering, have forgotten the benefits of God, and His wonderful works which He shewed to them before their fathers, (ver. 12.) the wonderful works which He did in the land of Egypt, in the plain of Thanis. And he beginneth to recount in his narrative the same wonderful works. Which if they are ‘parables and propositions,’ they must certainly be referred to some thing by comparison. Nor ought we

to take off the eye of attention from that which the Psalm itself doth intend to shew; how that this is the fruit of all things which are therein spoken of, and why we have been admonished to hear these words most attentively, God saying, Hearken ye, My people, unto My law, incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth; in order that we may put our hope in God, and may not forget the works of God, and may search out His commandments: lest we become, like those fathers, a generation crooked and embittering, a generation which guided not the heart, and the spirit thereof was not trusted with God. Unto this therefore all things must be referred; and therefore whatsoever these things do signify in a figurative action, so they may come to pass spiritually in a man, either by the grace of God, if they are good things, or by the judgment of God, if they are evil things; just as the former good things were done unto the Israelites, or evil things both unto themselves and unto their enemies. The which if we forget not, but put our hope in God, and are not ungrateful for His grace; and fear Him, not with servile fear, wherewith corporal evil things alone are feared, but with chaste fear abiding for everlasting, which fear doth deem it great punishment to be deprived of the light of righteousness; we shall not be made, like those fathers, a generation crooked and embittering. Accordingly, the land of Egypt must be understood for a figure of this world. The plain of Thanis is the smooth surface of lowly commandment. For lowly commandment is the interpretation of Thanis. In this world therefore let us receive the commandment of humility, in order that in another world we may merit to receive the exaltation which He hath promised, Who for our sake here became lowly.

13. Ver. 13. For He that did burst asunder the sea and made them go through, did confine the waters as it were in bottles, in order that the water might stand up first as if it were shut in, is able by His grace to restrain the flowing and ebbing tides of carnal desires, when we renounce this world, so that all sins having been thoroughly washed away, as if they were enemies, the people of the faithful may be made to pass through by means of the Sacrament of Baptism. He that led them home in the cloud of the day, and in the whole night in the illumination of fire, is able also spiritually to direct goings if faith crieth to Him, Direct Thou my goings after Thy word. Of Whom in another place is said, For Himself shall make thy courses right,

and shall prolong thy goings in peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, Whose Sacrament in this world, as it were in the day, is manifest in the flesh, as if in a cloud; but in the Judgment, it will be manifest like as in a terror by night; for then there will be a great tribulation of the world like as it were fire, and it shall shine for the just and shall burn for the unjust. (Ver. 15.) He that burst asunder the rock in the desert, and gave them water as in a great deep; (Ver. 16.) and brought out water from the rock, and brought down waters like rivers, is surely able upon thirsty faith to pour the gift of the Holy Spirit, (the which gift the performance of that thing did spiritually signify,) to pour, I say, from the Spiritual Rock that followed, which is Christ: Who did stand and cry, If any is athirst, let him come to Me: and, he that shall have drunk of the water which I shall give, rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly. For this He spake, as is read in the Gospel, of the Spirit, Which they were to receive that believed in Him, unto Whom like the rod drew near the wood of the Passion, in order that there might flow forth grace for believers.

14. And yet, (ver. 17.) they, like a generation crooked and embittering, added yet to sin against Him: that is, not to believe. For this is the sin, whereof the Spirit doth convict the world, as the Lord saith, “Of sin indeed because they have not believed on Me.” And they exasperated the Most High in drought, which other copies have, in a place without water, which is a more exact translation from the Greek, and doth signify no other thing than drought. Was it in that drought of the desert, or rather in their own? For although they had drunk of the rock, they had not their bellies but their minds dry, freshening with no fruitfulness of righteousness. In that drought they ought the more faithfully to have been suppliant unto God, in order that He Who had given fulness unto their jaws, might give also equity to their manners. For unto Him the faithful soul doth cry, Let mine eyes see equity.

15. Ver. 18. And they tempted God in their hearts, in order that they might seek morsels for their souls. It is one thing to ask in believing, another thing in tempting. Lastly there followeth, (Ver. 19.) And they slandered God, and said, Shall God be able to prepare a table in the desert? (Ver. 20.) For He smote the rock, and the waters flowed, and torrents gushed forth: will He be

able to give bread also, or to Prepare a table for His people? Not believing therefore, they sought morsels for their souls. Not so the Apostle James doth enjoin a morsel to be asked for the mind, but doth admonish that it be sought by believers, not by such as tempt and slander God. But if any one of you, he saith, doth lack wisdom, let him ask of God, Who doth give to all men abundantly, and doth not upbraid, and it shall be given to him: but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. This faith had not that generation which 'had not directed their heart, and the spirit thereof had not been trusted with God.'

16. Ver. 21. Wherefore the Lord heard, and He delayed, and fire was lighted in Jacob, and wrath went up into Israel. He hath explained what he hath called fire. He hath called anger fire: although in strict propriety fire did also burn up many men. What is therefore this that he saith, The Lord heard, and He delayed? Did He delay to conduct them into the land of promise, whither they were being led: which might have been done in the space of a few days, but on account of sins they must needs be wasted in the desert, where also they were wasted during forty years? And if this be so, He did then delay the people, not those very persons who tempted and slandered God: for they all perished in the desert, and their children journeyed into the land of promise. Or did He delay punishment, in order that He might first satisfy unbelieving concupiscence, lest He might be supposed to be angry, because they were asking of Him what He was not able to do? He heard then, and He delayed to avenge: and after He had done what they supposed He was not able to do, then anger went up upon Israel.

17. Lastly, when both these things have been briefly touched, afterwards he is evidently following out the order of the narrative. (Ver. 22.) Because they believed not in God, nor hoped in His saving health. For when he had told why fire was lighted in Jacob, and anger went up upon Israel, that is to say, because they believed not in God, nor hoped in His saving health: immediately subjoining the evident blessings for which they were ungrateful, he saith, (Ver. 23.) and He commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of Heaven. (Ver. 24.) And He rained upon them manna to eat, and gave them bread of Heaven. (Ver. 25.) Bread of angels man did eat: dainties He sent them in abundance. (Ver. 26.) He brought over the South

Wind from Heaven, and in His virtue He led in the South West Wind. (Ver. 27.) And He rained upon them flesh like dust, and winged fowls like the sand of the sea. (Ver. 28.) And they fell in the midst of their camp, around their tabernacles. (Ver. 29.) And they ate and were filled exceedingly; and their desire He brought to them: they were not deprived of their desire. Behold why He had delayed. But what He had delayed let us hear. (Ver. 30.) Yet the morsel was in their mouths, and the anger of God came down upon them. Behold what He had delayed. For before He delayed: and afterwards, fire was lighted in Jacob and anger went up upon Israel. He had delayed therefore in order that He might first do what they had believed that He could not do, and then might bring upon them what they deserved to suffer. For if they placed their hope in God, not only would their desires of the flesh but also those of the spirit have been fulfilled. For He that commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of Heaven, and rained upon them manna to eat, and gave them the bread of Heaven, so that man did eat Angels' food, He that sent dainties upon them in abundance, that He might fill the unbelieving, is not without power to give to believers Himself the true Bread from Heaven, which the manna did signify: which is indeed the food of Angels, whom being incorruptible the Word of God doth incorruptibly feed: the which in order that man might eat, He became flesh, and dwelled in us. For Himself the Bread by means of the Evangelical clouds is being rained over the whole world, and, the hearts of preachers, like heavenly doors, being opened, is being preached not to a murmuring and tempting synagogue, but to a Church believing and putting hope in Him. He that brought over the South West Wind, and led in His might the South Wind, and rained upon them flesh like dust, and winged fowls like the sand of the sea: and they fell in the midst of their camp, around their tabernacles: and they ate and were filled exceedingly, and their desire He brought to them, and they were deprived of their desire: is able also to feed the feeble faith of such as tempt not, but believe, with the signs of words uttered by the flesh and speeding through the air, as though it were fowls: not however with such as come from the north, where cold and mist do prevail, that is to say, eloquence which is pleasing to this world, but by bringing over the South Wind from Heaven; (whither, except to the earth? In order that they who are feeble in faith, by hearing things earthly may be nourished up to receive things heavenly. For if, He saith, I have told you of

things earthly, and ye believe not; how shall ye believe if I shall tell you of things heavenly? For that one had been translated from Heaven in a manner, where in mind he had departed to God; in order that he might be forbearing to those men unto whom he was saying, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. For there he had heard ineffable words, which on earth it was not lawful for him to speak by means of words that sound, like winged fowls;) and by bringing in by His might the South West Wind, that is, by means of South Winds, the fervent and flowing spirits of preachers; and this by His virtue, lest the South Wind should ascribe unto itself that which it hath of God. But these winds of their own selves come unto men, and they bear unto them words divinely sent; in order that in their own places and round about their tabernacles they may gather together fowls of such sort, and all the isles of the nations may adore the Lord, each man from his place.

18. But as to unbelievers, being a crooked and embittering generation, as it were, while the morsel was yet in their mouths, (ver. 31.) the anger of God went up upon them, and it slew among the most of them: that is, the most of them, or as some copies have it, the fat ones of them, which however in the Greek copies which we had, we did not find. But if this be the truer reading, what else must be understood by the fat ones of them, than men mighty in pride, concerning whom is said, their iniquity shall come forth as if out of fat? And the elect of Israel He fettered. Even there there were elect, with whose faith the generation crooked and embittering was not mixed. But they were fettered, so that they might in no sort profit them for whom they desired that they might provide from a fatherly affection. For what is conferred by human mercy, on those with whom God is angry? Or rather hath He willed it to be understood, how that even the elect were fettered at the same time with them, in order that they who were diverse both in mind and in life, might endure sufferings with them for an example not only of righteousness, but also of patience? For we have learned that holy men were even led captive with sinners for no other reason; since in the Greek copies we read not ἐνεπόδισεν, which is fettered; but συνεπόδισεν, which is rather fettered together with.

19. But the generation crooked and embittering, (ver. 32.) in all these things sinned yet more, and they believed not in His wonderful works. (Ver. 33.) And their days failed in vanity. Though they might, if they had believed, have had days in truth without failing, with Him to Whom hath been said, Thy years shall not fail. Therefore their days failed in vanity, and their years with haste. For the whole life of mortal men is hastening, and that which seemeth to be longer is but a vapour of somewhat longer duration.

20. Nevertheless, when he slew them they sought Him: not for the sake of eternal life, but fearing to end the vapour too soon. There sought Him then, not indeed those whom He had slain, but they that were afraid of being slain according to the example of them. But the Scripture hath so spoken of them as if they sought God who were slain; because they were one people, and it is spoken as if of one body: (ver. 34.) and they returned, and at dawn they came to God. (Ver. 35.) And they remembered that God is their Helper, and the High God is their Redeemer. But all this is for the sake of acquiring temporal good things, and for avoiding temporal evil things. For they that did seek God for the sake of temporal blessings, sought not God indeed, but things. Thus God is worshipped with slavish fear, not with those free love. Thus then God is not worshipped: for that thing is worshipped which is loved. Whence because God is found to be greater and better than all things, He must be loved more than all things, in order that He may be worshipped.

21. Lastly, here let us see the words following: (ver. 36.) And they loved Him, he saith, in their mouth, and in their tongue they lied unto Him. (Ver. 37.) But their heart was not right with Him, and they were not counted faithful in His Testament. One thing on their tongue, another thing in their heart He found, unto Whom the secret things of men are naked, and without any impediment He saw what they loved rather. Therefore the heart is right with God, when it doth seek God for the sake of God. For one thing he desired of the Lord, the same he will require, that he may dwell always in the House of the Lord, and may meditate on the pleasantness of Him. Unto Whom saith the heart of the faithful, I will be filled, not with the flesh-pots of the Egyptians, nor with melons and gourds, and garlick and onions, which a generation crooked and embittering did prefer even to bread celestial, nor with visible manna, and those same winged fowls; but, I will

be filled, when Thy glory shall be made manifest. For this is the inheritance of the New Testament, wherein they were not counted faithful; whereof however the faith even at that time, when it was veiled, was in the elect, and now, when it hath already been revealed, it is not in many that are called. For many have been called, but few are elect. Of such sort therefore was the generation crooked and embittering, even when they were seeming to seek God, loving in mouth, and in tongue lying; but in heart not right with God, while they loved rather those things, for the sake of which they required the help of God.

22. Ver. 38. But He is Himself merciful, and will become propitious to their sins, and He will not destroy them. And He will abound to turn away His anger, and He will not kindle all his anger. (Ver. 39.) And he took it to heart that they are flesh, a breath going and not returning. By these words many men promise to themselves impunity for their iniquity from the Divine Mercy, even if they shall have persevered in being such, as that generation is described, crooked and embittering; which hath not directed their heart, and the spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God: with whom it is not profitable to agree. For if, to speak in their words, God will perchance not destroy no not even bad men, without doubt He will not destroy good men. Why then do we not rather choose that wherein there is no doubt? For they that lie to Him in their tongue, though their heart doth hold some other thing, do think indeed, and will, even God to be a liar, when He doth menace upon such men eternal punishment. But whilst they do not deceive Him with their lying, He doth not deceive them with speaking the truth. These words therefore of divine sayings, concerning which the crooked generation doth cajole itself, let it not make crooked like its own heart: for even when it is made crooked, they continue right. For at first they may be understood according to that which is written in the Gospel, that ye may be like your Father Who is in the Heavens, Who maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. For who could not see, how great is the long-suffering of mercy with which He is sparing evil men? But before the Judgment, He spared then that nation in such sort, that He kindled not all His anger, utterly to root it up and bring it to an end: which thing in His words and in the intercession for their sins of His servant Moses doth evidently appear, where God saith, Let Me blot

them out, and make thee into a great nation: he intercedeth, being more ready to be blotted out for them than that they should be; knowing that he is doing this before One Merciful, Who inasmuch as by no means He would blot out him, would even spare them for his sake. For let us see how greatly He spared, and doth still spare. For He led into the land of promise, and kept that nation, until by slaying Christ they bound themselves with the guilt greatest of all; and in that He scattered them, rooted out from that kingdom, throughout all the kingdoms of the nations, still He did not blot them out: but there remaineth the same people preserved by a succession of offspring, like Cain who received a mark, that no one should slay him, that is, utterly destroy him. Behold after what manner there is fulfilled that which hath been spoken, But He is Himself merciful, and will be propitious to their sins, and will not destroy them: and will abound to turn away His anger, and He will not kindle all His anger. For if all His anger, that is, as much as they deserve, should be kindled against them, that nation would not be left at all. Thus God, unto Whom is sung mercy and judgment, and Who in this world through mercy maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, in the end of the world also through judgment doth punish evil men with eternal darkness, severed from His eternal light.

23. In the second place, that we may not seem to do violence to divine words, and lest in the place where there was said, He will not destroy them, we should say, “But hereafter He will destroy them:” concerning this very present Psalm let us turn to a very common phrase of the Scripture, whereby this question may be more diligently and more truly solved. Certes speaking of these same persons a little lower down, when He had made mention of the things which the Egyptians because of them had endured, making mention of the last plague, He saith, And He smote every first born thing in the land of Egypt, the first fruits of their labour in the tabernacles of Cham. And He took away like sheep His people, and He led them through like a flock in the desert. And He led them forth in hope, and they feared not: and their enemies the sea overwhelmed. And He led them unto the mount of His sanctification, the mount which His right hand won. And He cast out from their face the nations, and by lot distributed to them the land in the cord of distribution. If any one at these words should press a question upon us and should say, How doth he make mention of all these things as

having been bestowed upon them, when the same persons were not led into the land of promise, as were delivered from Egypt, inasmuch as they were dead? What shall we reply but that they were spoken of, because they were the self-same people by means of a succession of sons? So then when we hear, (especially because the words are of the future tense,) And He shall become propitious to their sins, and He shall not destroy them; and He shall abound to turn away His anger, and He shall not kindle all His anger: let us perceive how in them was fulfilled that whereof the Apostle speaketh, So then even at this time a remnant were saved through the election of grace. Whence also He saith, Hath God by any means rejected His people? Far be it. For I also am an Israelite, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. Those men therefore the Scripture did foresee, who were to believe in Christ out of that people, and to receive the remission of sins, yea even unto that very greatest one, wherein frantic they slew the Physician Himself. Hence doubtless hath been said, But He is Himself merciful, and He will be propitious to their sins, and He will not destroy them; and He will abound to turn away His anger; for He hath remitted even that sin, wherewith His only Son was slain: and He will not kindle all His anger; for a remnant have been saved.

24. Ver. 39. And He remembered that they are flesh, a spirit going and not returning. Therefore calling them and pitying them through His grace, He called them back Himself, because of themselves they could not return. For how doth flesh return, 'a spirit walking and not turning back,' while a weight of evil deserts doth weigh it down unto the lowest and far places of evil, save through the election of grace? The which is not rendered like a recompense to merits, but as a gift is given gratis: in order that the ungodly may be justified, and the lost sheep may return; not however in its own strength, but borne on the shoulders of the shepherd, which was able to lose itself while it was straying of its own will, but was not able to find itself, nor ever had been found, if it had not been sought by the mercy of the Shepherd. For even that son cannot but be fitted to this sheep, who coming to himself said, I will arise, and I will go to my Father. Though the calling then and the inspiration was hidden, even he was sought and raised again, not except by Him Who doth make alive all things: and he was found, by whom, save by Him Who went to save and to seek that which had been

lost? For he had been dead and was alive again, had been lost and was found. For thus also is solved this no unimportant question, how it is written in the Proverbs, when the Scripture was speaking of the way of iniquity, all they that walk in her shall not return. For it hath been so spoken as if all ungodly men were to be despaired of: but the Scripture did only commend grace; for of himself man is able to walk in that way, but is not able of himself to return, except when called back by grace.

25. I say then of these crooked and embittering persons, (ver. 40.) How often they exasperated Him in the desert, and provoked Him to wrath in the waterless place? (Ver. 41.) And they turned themselves and tempted God, and exasperated the Holy One of Israel. He is repeating that same unbelief of theirs, of which He had made mention above. But the reason of the repetition is, in order that there may be mentioned also the plagues, which He inflicted on the Egyptians for their sakes: all which things they certainly ought to have remembered, and not to be ungrateful. Lastly, there followeth what? (Ver. 42.) They remembered not His hands, in the day when He redeemed them from the hand of the troubler. And he beginneth to speak of what things He did to the Egyptians; (Ver. 43.) He set in Egypt His signs, and His prodigies in the plain of Thanis: (Ver. 44.) and He turned their rivers into blood, and their showers lest they should drink: or rather, the flowings of waters, as some do better understand by what is written in Greek, τὰ ὀμβρήματα, which in Latin we call scaturigines, waters bubbling from beneath. (Ver. 45.) He sent upon them the dog-fly, and it ate them up; and the frog, and it destroyed them. (Ver. 46.) And He gave their fruit to the mildew, and their labours to the locust. (Ver. 47.) And He slew with hail their vineyards, and their mulberry trees with frost. (Ver. 48.) And He gave over to the hail their beasts of burden, and their possessions to the fire. (Ver. 49.) He sent upon them the anger of His indignation, indignation and anger and tribulation, a visitation through evil angels. (Ver. 50.) He made a way to the course of His anger, and their beasts of burden He shut up in death. (Ver. 51.) And He smote every first-born thing in the land of Egypt, the first-fruits of their labours in the tabernacles of Cham.

26. All these punishments of the Egyptians may be explained by an allegorical interpretation, according as one shall have chosen to understand

them, and to compare them to the things whereunto they must be referred. Which we too will endeavour to do; and shall do it the more properly, the more we shall have been divinely aided. For to do this, those words of this Psalm do constrain us, wherein it was said, I will open in parables my mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. For for this cause even some things have been here spoken of, which that they befel the Egyptians at all we read not, although all their plagues are most carefully related in Exodus according to their order; so that while that which is not there mentioned we are sure hath not been mentioned in the Psalm to no purpose, and we can interpret the same only figuratively, we may at the same time understand that even the rest of the things which it is evident did happen, were done or described for the sake of some figurative meaning. For the Scripture doth so do in many passages of the prophetic sayings. It speaketh of something which in the doing of that thing, whereof it seemeth to make mention, is not found, nay even is found to have been differently done; in order that hence it may be perceived not to have spoken of that which might have been supposed, but of that rather which ought to be more attended to: like this passage is, He shall have dominion from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the earth. Which thing it is evident was not fulfilled in the kingdom of Solomon, whereof this Psalm might be thought to speak, inasmuch as it was speaking of Christ the Lord. In the plagues therefore of the Egyptians, which are in the book which is called Exodus, where the Scripture hath been especially careful, that those things whereby they were afflicted should be all related in order, there is not found what this Psalm hath, and He gave to the mildew their fruits. This also wherein, when he had said, and He gave over to the hail their beasts, he hath added, and their possession to the fire: of the beasts slain with hail is read in Exodus; but how their possession was burned with fire, is not read at all. Although voices and fires do come together with hail, just as thunderings do commonly accompany lightnings; nevertheless, it is not written that any thing was given over to the fire that it should be burned. Lastly, the soft things which the hail could not hurt, are said not to have been smitten, that is, hurt with hard blows; which things the locust devoured afterwards. Also that which is here spoken of, and their mulberry trees with hoar-frost, is not in Exodus. For hoar-frost doth differ much from hail; for in the clear winter nights the earth is made white with hoar-frost.

27. What then those things do signify, let the interpreter say as he can, let reader and hearer judge as is just. The water turned into blood seemeth to me to signify a carnal view of the causes of things. Dog-fly, are the manners of dogs, who see not even their parents when first they are born. The frog is very talkative vanity. Mildew doth hurt secretly, which also some have interpreted by rust, others black mould: which evil thing to what vice is it more appropriately compared, than to what doth shew itself least readily, like the trusting much in one's self? For it is a blighting air which doth work this secretly among fruits: just like in morals, secret pride, when a man thinketh himself to be something, though he is nothing. The locust is malice hurting with the mouth, that is, with unfaithful testimony. The hail is iniquity taking away the goods of others; whence theft, robberies, and depredations do spring: but more by his wickedness the plunderer himself is plundered. The hoar-frost doth signify the fault wherein the love of one's neighbour by the darkness of foolishness, like as it were by the cold of night, is frozen up. But the fire, if here it is not that which is mentioned which was in the hail out of the lightning clouds, forasmuch as he hath said here, He gave over their possession to the fire, where he implieth that a thing was burned, which by that fire we read not to have been done,—it seemeth to me, I say, to signify the savageness of wrath, whereby even man-slaying may be committed. But by the death of beasts was figured, as far as I judge, the loss of chastity. For concupiscence, whereby offspring do arise, we have in common with beasts. To have this therefore tamed and ordered, is the virtue of chastity. The death of the first-born things, is the putting off of the very justice whereby a man doth associate with mankind. But whether the figurative significations of these things be so, or whether they are better understood in another way, whom would it not move, that with ten plagues the Egyptians are smitten, and with ten commandments the tables are inscribed, that thereby the people of God should be ruled? Concerning the comparing of which one with the other, inasmuch as we have spoken elsewhere, there is no need to load the exposition of this Psalm therewith: thus much we remind you, that here too, though not in the same order, yet ten plagues of the Egyptians are commemorated, forasmuch as in the place of three which are in Exodus and are not here, to wit, lice, boils, darkness; other three are commemorated, which are not there, that is to say,

mildew, hoar-frost, and fire; not of lightning, but that whereunto their possession was given over, which is not read of in that place.

28. But it hath been clearly enough intimated, that by the judgment of God these things befel them through the instrumentality of evil angels, in this wicked world, as though it were in Egypt and in the plain of Thanis, where we ought to be humble, until there come that world, wherein we may earn to be exalted out of this humiliation. For even Egypt in the Hebrew tongue doth signify darkness or tribulations, in which tongue, Thanis, as I have observed, is understood to be humble commandment. Concerning the evil angels therefore in this Psalm, while he was speaking of those very plagues, there hath been something inserted, which must not be passed over cursorily: (ver. 49.) He sent upon them, he saith, the anger of His indignation, indignation and anger and tribulation, an infliction through evil angels. Now that the devil and his angels are so very evil, that for them everlasting fire is prepared, no believer is ignorant: but that there should be sent by means of them an infliction from the Lord God upon certain whom He judgeth to be deserving of this punishment, seemeth to be a hard thing to those who are little prone to consider, how the perfect justice of God doth use well even evil things. For these indeed, as far as regardeth their substance, what other person but Himself hath made? But evil He hath not made them: yet He doth use them, inasmuch as He is good, well, that is, conveniently and justly: just as on the other hand unrighteous men do use His good creatures in evil manner. God therefore doth use evil angels not only to punish evil men, as in the case of all those concerning whom the Psalm doth speak, as in the case of king Achab, whom a spirit of lying by the will of God did beguile, in order that he might fall in war: but also to prove and make manifest good men, as He did in the case of Job. But as far as regardeth that corporal matter of visible elements, I suppose that thereof angels both good and evil are able to make use, according to the power given to each: just as also men good and evil do use such things, as far as they are able, according to the measure of human infirmity. For we use both earth and water, and air, and fire, not only in things necessary for our support, but also in many operations superfluous and playful, and marvellously artificial. For countless things, which are called μηχανήματα, are moulded out of these elements scientifically employed. But over these

things angels have a far more extended power, both the good and the evil, though greater is that which the good have; but only so far as is commanded or permitted by the will and providence of God; on which terms also we have it. For not even in these cases are we able to do all that we will. But in a book the most unerring we read that the devil was able even to send fire from Heaven, to burn up with wonderful and awful fierceness so great a number of the cattle of a holy man: which thing no one of the faithful would dare perchance to ascribe to the devil, except it were read on the authority of Holy Scripture. But that man, being by the gift of God just and firm, and of godly knowledge, saith not, The Lord hath given, the devil hath taken away: but, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away: very well knowing that even what the devil was able to do with these elements, he would still not have done to a servant of God, except at his Lord's will and permission; he did confound the malice of the devil, forasmuch as he knew who it was that was making use thereof to prove him. In the sons then of unbelief like as it were in his own slaves, he doth work, like men with their beasts, and even therewith only so far as is permitted by the just judgment of God. But it is one thing when his power is restrained from treating even his own as he pleases, by a greater power; another thing when to him power is given even over those who are alien from him. Just as a man with his beast, as men understand it, doeth what he will, and yet doth not indeed, if he be restrained by a greater power: but with another man's beast to do something, he doth wait until power be given from him unto whom it belongeth. In the former case the power which there was is restrained, in the latter that which there was not is conceded.

29. And if such be the case, if through evil angels God did inflict those plagues upon the Egyptians, shall we dare to say that the water also was turned into blood by means of those same angels, and that frogs were created by means of the same, the like whereunto even the magicians of Pharaoh were able to make by their enchantments; so as that evil angels stood on both sides, on the one side afflicting them, on the other side deceiving them, according to the judgment and dispensation of the most just and most omnipotent God, Who doth justly make use of even the naughtiness of unrighteous men? I dare not to say so. For whence was it that the magicians of Pharaoh could by no means make lice? Was it not

because even these same evil angels were not suffered to do this? Or, to speak more truly, is not the cause hidden, and it doth exceed our powers of inquiry? For if we shall have supposed that God wrought those things by means of evil angels, because punishments were being inflicted, and not blessings being bestowed, as though God doth inflict punishments upon no one by means of good angels, but by means of those executioners as it were of the heavenly wrath; the consequence will be that we must believe that even Sodom was overthrown by means of evil angels, and that Abraham and Lot would seem to have entertained under their roof evil angels; the which, as being contrary to the most evident Scriptures, far be it that we should think. It is clear then that these things might have been done to men by means of good and evil angels. What should be done or when it should be done doth escape me: but Him that doeth it, it escapeth not, and him unto whom He shall have willed to reveal it. Nevertheless, as far as divine Scripture doth yield to our application thereto, on evil men that punishments are inflicted both by means of good angels, as upon the Sodomites, and by means of evil angels, as upon the Egyptians, we read: but that just men with corporal penances by means of good angels are tried and proved, doth not occur to me.

30. But as far as regardeth the present passage of this Psalm, if those things which were marvellously formed out of creatures, to evil angels we dare not ascribe; we have a thing which without doubt we can ascribe to them; the dyings of the beasts, the dyings of the first-born, and this especially whence all these things proceeded, namely, the hardening of heart, so that they would not let go the people of God. For when God is said to make this most iniquitous and malignant obstinacy, He maketh it not by suggesting and inspiring, but by forsaking, so that they work in the sons of unbelief that which God doth duly and justly permit. For this also which Isaias the prophet saith, O Lord, behold Thou hast been angry, and we have sinned; therefore we have gone astray, and we have become as it were unclean, all of us, must be understood in that manner. For there had gone before something, whence God being most justly wroth took away His light from them, so that into sins, which can not be shewn not to be sins by any cunning excuses, the blindness of the human mind fell, by erring and straying from the path of righteousness. And with regard to what is written

in another Psalm concerning those very Egyptians, how God turned their heart so that they hated His people, and wrought deceit unto His servants, God may well be believed to have done it by means of those evil angels, so that the already corrupt minds of the sons of unbelief should by means of those angels, unto whom the same vices are pleasing, be stirred up unto the hating of the people of God, and that those wonderful things should follow to terrify and amend good men. Moreover, those evil manners which we said were signified by these corporal plagues, on account of that which was said before, I will open in parables my mouth, are most appropriately believed by means of evil angels to have been wrought in those that are made subject to them by Divine justice. For neither when that cometh to pass of which the apostle speaketh, God gave them over unto the lusts of their heart, that they should do things which are not convenient, can it be but that those evil angels dwell and rejoice therein, as in the matter of their own work: unto whom most justly is human naughtiness made subject, in all save those whom grace doth deliver. And for these things who is sufficient? Whence when he had said, He sent unto them the anger of His indignation, indignation and anger and tribulation, an infliction through evil angels; for this which he hath added, (ver. 50.) a way He hath made for the path of His anger, whose eye, I pray, is sufficient to penetrate, so that it may understand and take in the sense lying hidden in so great a profundity? For the path of the anger of God was that whereby He punished the ungodliness of the Egyptians with hidden justice: but for that same path He made a way, so that drawing them forth as it were from secret places by means of evil angels unto manifest offences, He most evidently inflicted punishment upon those that were most evidently ungodly. From this power of evil angels nothing doth deliver man but the grace of God, whereof the Apostle speaketh, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love: of which things that people did bear the figure, when they were delivered from the power of the Egyptians, and translated into the kingdom of the land of promise flowing with milk and honey, which doth signify the sweetness of grace.

31. The Psalm proceedeth then after the commemoration of the plagues of the Egyptians, and saith, (ver. 52.) And He took away like sheep His people, and He led them through like a flock in the desert. (Ver. 53.) And

He led them down in hope, and they feared not, and their enemies the sea covered. This cometh to pass to so much the greater good, as it is a more inward thing, wherein being delivered from the power of darkness, we are in mind translated into the Kingdom of God, and with respect to spiritual pastures we are made to become sheep of God, walking in this world as it were in a desert, inasmuch as to no one is our faith observable: whence saith the Apostle, Your life is hidden with Christ in God. But we are being led home in hope, For by hope we are saved. Nor ought we to fear. For, If God be for us, who can be against us? And our enemies the sea hath covered, He hath effaced them in baptism by the remission of sins.

32. In the next place there followeth, (ver. 54.) And He led them into the mountain of His sanctification. How much better into Holy Church! The mountain which His right hand hath gotten. How much higher is the Church which Christ hath gotten, concerning Whom has been said, “And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Ver. 55.) And He cast forth from the face of them the nations. And from the face of His faithful. For nations in a manner are the evil spirits of Gentile errors. And by lot He divided unto them the land in the cord of distribution. And in us all things one and the same Spirit doth work, dividing severally to every one as He willeth.

33. And He made to dwell in their tabernacles the tribes of Israel. In the tabernacles, he saith, of the Gentiles He made the tribes of Israel to dwell, which I think can better be explained spiritually, inasmuch as unto celestial glory, whence sinning angels have been cast forth and cast down, by Christ’s grace we are being uplifted. For that generation crooked and embittering, inasmuch as for these corporal blessings they put not off the coat of oldness, (ver. 56.) Did tempt yet, and provoked the high God, and His testimonies they kept not: (Ver. 57.) and they turned them away, and they kept not the covenant, like their fathers. For under a sort of covenant and decree they said, All things which our Lord God hath spoken we will do, and we will hear. It is a remarkable thing indeed which he saith, like their fathers: while throughout the whole text of the Psalm he was seeming to speak of the same men as it were, yet now it appeareth that the words did concern those who were already in the land of promise, and that the fathers spoken of were of those who did provoke in the desert.

34. Ver. 57. They were turned, he saith, into a crooked, or, as some copies have it, into a perverse bow. But what this is doth better appear in that which followeth, where he saith, (Ver. 58.) And unto wrath they provoked Him with their hills. It doth signify that they leaped into idolatry. The bow then was perverted, not for the name of the Lord, but against the name of the Lord: Who said to the same people, Thou shalt have none other Gods but Me. But by the bow He doth signify the mind's intention. This same idea, lastly, more clearly working out, And in their graven idols, he saith, they provoked Him to indignation.

35. Ver. 59. God heard, and He despised: that is, He gave heed and took vengeance. And unto nothing He brought Israel exceedingly. For when God despised, what were they who by God's help were what they were? But doubtless he is commemorating the doing of that thing, when they were conquered by the Philistines in the time of Heli the priest, and the Ark of the Lord was taken, and with great slaughter they were laid low. This it is that he speaketh of in ver. 60. And He rejected the tabernacle of Selom, His tabernacle, where He dwelled among men. He hath elegantly explained why He rejected His tabernacle, when he saith, where He dwelled among men. When therefore they were not worthy for Him to dwell among, why should He not reject the tabernacle, which indeed not for Himself He had established, but for their sakes, whom now He judged unworthy for Him to dwell among.

36. Ver. 61. And He gave over unto captivity their virtue, and their beauty unto the hands of the enemy. The very Ark whereby they thought themselves invincible, and whereon they plumed themselves, he calleth their 'virtue' and 'beauty.' Lastly, also afterward, when they were living ill, and boasting of the temple of the Lord, He doth terrify them by a Prophet, saying, See ye what I have done to Selom, where was My tabernacle.

37. Ver. 62. And He ended with the sword His people, and His inheritance He despised. Their young men the fire devoured: that is, wrath. (Ver. 63.) And their virgins mourned not. For not even for this was there leisure, in fear of the foe.

38. Ver. 64. Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows were not lamented. For there fell by the sword the sons of Heli, of one of whom the wife being widowed, and presently dying in child-birth, because of the same confusion could not be mourned with the distinction of a funeral.

39. Ver. 65. And the Lord was awakened as one sleeping. For He seemeth to sleep, when He giveth His people into the hands of those whom He hateth, when there is said to them, "Where is thy God." He was awakened, then, like one sleeping, like a mighty man drunken with wine. No one would dare to say this of God, save His Spirit. For he hath spoken, as it seemeth to ungodly men reviling; as if like a drunken man He sleepeth long, when He succoureth not so speedily as men think.

40. Ver. 66. And He smote His enemies in the hinder parts: those, to wit, who were rejoicing that they were able to take His Ark: for they were smitten in their back-parts. Which seemeth to me to be a sign of that punishment, wherewith a man will be tortured, if he shall have looked back upon things behind; which, as saith the Apostle, he ought to value as dung. For they that do so receive the Testament of God, as that they put not off from them the old vanity, are like the hostile nations, who did place the captured Ark of the Testament beside their own idols. And yet those old things even though these be unwilling do fall: for all flesh is hay, and the glory of man as the flower of hay. The hay hath dried up, and the flower hath fallen off: but the Ark of the Lord abideth for everlasting, to wit, the secret testament of the kingdom of Heaven, where is the eternal Word of God. But they that have loved things behind, because of these very things most justly shall be tormented. For everlasting reproach He hath given to them.

41. Ver. 67. And He rejected, he saith, the tabernacle of Joseph, and the tribe of Ephræm He chose not. (Ver. 68.) And He chose the tribe of Juda. He hath not said, He rejected the tabernacle of Reuben, who was the first-born son of Jacob; nor them that follow, and precede Juda in order of birth; so that they being rejected and not chosen, the tribe of Juda was chosen. For it might have been said that they were deservedly rejected; because even in the blessing of Jacob wherewith he blessed his sons, he mentioneth their sins, and deeply abhorreth them; though among them the tribe of Levi

merited to be the priestly tribe, whence also Moses was. Nor hath he said, He rejected the tabernacle of Benjamin, or the tribe of Benjamin He chose not, out of which a king already had begun to be; for thence there had been chosen Saul; whence because of the very proximity of the time, when he had been rejected and refused, and David chosen, this might conveniently have been said; but yet was not said: but he hath named those especially who seemed to excel for more surpassing merits. For Joseph fed in Egypt his father and his brethren, and having been impiously sold, because of his piety, chastity, wisdom, he was most justly exalted; and Ephræm by the blessing of his grandfather Jacob was preferred before his elder brother: and yet God rejected the tabernacle of Joseph, and the tribe of Ephræm He chose not. In which place by these names of renowned merit, what else do we understand but that whole people with old cupidity requiring of the Lord earthly rewards, rejected and refused, but the tribe of Juda chosen not for the sake of the merits of that same Juda? For far greater are the merits of Joseph, but by the tribe of Juda, inasmuch as thence arose Christ according to the flesh, the Scripture doth testify of the new people of Christ preferred before that old people, the Lord opening in parables His mouth. Moreover, thence also in that which followeth, the Mount Sion which He chose, we do better understand the Church of Christ, not worshipping God for the sake of the carnal blessings of the present time, but from afar looking for future and eternal rewards with the eyes of faith: for Sion too is interpreted a 'looking out.'

42. Lastly there followeth, (ver. 69.) and He builded like as of unicorns His sanctification: or, as some interpreters have made thereof a new word, His sanctifying. The unicorns are rightly understood to be those, whose firm hope is uplifted unto that one thing, concerning which another Psalm saith, One thing I have sought of the Lord, this I will require. But the sanctifying of God, according to the Apostle Peter, is understood to be a holy people and a royal priesthood. But that which followeth, in the land which He founded for everlasting: which the Greek copies have εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, whether it be called by us for everlasting, or for an age, is at the pleasure of the Latin translators; forasmuch as it doth signify either: and therefore the latter is found in some Latin copies, the former in others. Some also have it in the plural, that is, for ages: which in the Greek copies which we have had

we have not found. But which of the faithful would doubt, that the Church, even though, some going, others coming, she doth pass out of this life in mortal manner, is yet founded for everlasting?

43. Ver. 70. And He chose David His servant. The tribe, I say, of Juda, for the sake of David: but David for the sake of Christ: the tribe then of Juda for the sake of Christ. At whose passing by blind men cried out, Have pity on us, Son of David: and forthwith by His pity they received light, because true was the thing which they cried out. This then the Apostle doth not cursorily speak of, but doth heedfully notice, writing to Timothy, Be thou mindful, that Christ Jesus hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my Gospel, wherein I suffer even unto bonds as an evil doer; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore the Saviour Himself, made according to the flesh of the seed of David, is figured in this passage under the name of David, the Lord opening in parables His mouth. And let it not move us, that when he had said, and He chose David, under which name he signified Christ, he hath added, His servant, not His Son. Yea even hence we may perceive, that not the substance of the Only-Begotten coeternal with the Father, but the 'form of a servant' was taken of the seed of David.

44. Ver. 71. And He took him from the flocks of sheep, from behind the teeming sheep He received him: to feed Jacob His servant, and Israel His inheritance. This David indeed, of whose seed the flesh of Christ is, from the pastoral care of cattle was translated to the kingdom of men: but our David, Jesus Himself, from men to men, from Jews to Gentiles, was yet according to the parable from sheep to sheep taken away and translated. For there are not now in that land Churches of Judæa in Christ, which belonged to them of the circumcision after the recent Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, of whom saith the Apostle, But I was unknown by face to the Churches of Judæa, which are in Christ, but thus much they heard, that he who sometime did persecute us, doth now preach the faith whereof sometime he made havoc, and in me they magnified the Lord. Already from hence those Churches of the circumcised people have passed away: and thus in Judæa, which now doth exist on the earth, there is not now Christ: He hath been removed thence, now He doth feed flocks of Gentiles. Truly from behind teeming sheep He hath been taken thence. For those former

Churches were of such sort, as that of them it is said in the Song of Songs to the one Church which doth consist of many, that is, to the one flock, whereof the members are many flocks—of such, I say, it is said, Thy teeth—that is, those whereby thou speakest, or by means whereof into Thy Body, like as it were by eating, Thou dost make others to pass; this then being signified by Thy teeth—are like a flock of shorn ewes going up from the washing, all of which do bear twins, and a barren one is not among them. For they then laid aside like as it were fleeces the burdens of the world, when before the feet of the Apostles they laid the prices of their sold goods, going up from that Laver, concerning which the apostle Peter doth admonish them, when they were troubled because they had shed the blood of Christ, and he saith, Do ye penance, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be forgiven you. But twins they begat, the works, to wit, of the two commandments of twin love, love of God, and love of one's neighbour: whence a barren one there was not among them. From behind these teeming sheep our David having been taken, doth now feed other flocks among the Gentiles, and those too 'Jacob' and 'Israel.' For thus hath been said, to feed Jacob His servant, and Israel His inheritance. For not, because out of the Gentiles are these sheep, have they therefore been made alien from that seed, which is Jacob and Israel. For the seed of Abraham is the seed of the promise, concerning which the Lord said to him, In Isaac thy seed shall be called. Which the Apostle expounding saith, Not the sons of the flesh, but the sons of promise are reckoned for a seed. For out of the Gentiles were believers, to whom he said, but if ye are of Christ, then Abraham's seed ye are, according to the promise heirs. But in this which he saith, Jacob His servant and Israel His inheritance, in its usual manner the Scripture hath repeated the same sentiment. Unless perchance any one be willing to make such a distinction as this; viz. that in this time Jacob serveth; but he will be the eternal inheritance of God, at that time when he shall see God face to face, whence he hath received the name Israel.

45. Ver. 72. And He fed them, he saith, in the innocence of His heart. What can be more innocent than He, Who not only had not any sin whereby to be conquered, but even not any to conquer? And in the understanding of His hands He led them home: or, as some copies have it, in the understandings

of His hands. Any other man might suppose that it would have been better had it been said thus, “in innocence of hands and understanding of heart;” but He Who knew better than others what He spake, preferred to join with the heart innocence, and with the hands understanding. It is for this reason, as far as I judge; because many men think themselves innocent, who do not evil things because they fear lest they should suffer if they shall have done them; but they have the will to do them, if they could with impunity. Such men may seem to have innocence of hands, but yet not that of heart. And what, I pray, or of what sort is that innocence, if of heart it is not, where man was made after the image of God? But in this which he saith, in understanding (or intelligence) of His hands He led them home, he seemeth to me to have spoken of that intelligence which He doth Himself make in believers: and so of His hands: for making doth belong to the hands, but in the sense wherein the hands of God may be understood; for even Christ was a Man in such sort, that He was also God. This indeed that David, of whose seed He was, could not make in the people over whom he reigned as a man: but He doth make it, unto Whom rightly the faithful soul is able to say, Make me to understand, and I will search out Thy law. Henceforth that we may not stray from Him, while we confide in our own intelligence as if it were of ourselves; to His hands let us subject ourselves by believing. May He make the same in us, in order that in the intelligence of His hands He may lead us home delivered from error, and bring us unto that place where we shall no longer be able to err! This is the fruit of the people of God, who give heed to the law of God, and incline their ear unto the words of His mouth, in order that they may guide in Him their heart, and their spirit may be trusted with Him, lest they should be changed into a generation crooked and provoking. But all these things having been proclaimed to them, let them put their hope in God, not only for the present life, but also for life eternal, and not only to receive the rewards of good works, but also for doing the good works themselves.

PSALM 79

Exposition

1 Over the title of this Psalm, being so short and so simple, I think we need not tarry. But the prophecy which here we read sent before, we know to be evidently fulfilled. For when these things were being sung in the times of King David, nothing of such sort, by the hostility of the Gentiles, as yet had befallen the city Jerusalem, nor the Temple of God, which as yet was not even builded. For that after the death of David his son Salomon made a temple to God, who is ignorant? That is spoken of therefore as though past, which in the Spirit was seen to be future.

Ver. 1. O God, the Gentiles have come into Thine inheritance. Under which form of expression this also was prophesied of the Lord's Passion, They gave for My morsel gall, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink; and other things which in the same Psalm, though having to come to pass, are spoken of as having been done. Nor must this be wondered at, that these words are being spoken to God. For they are not being represented to Him not knowing, by Whose revelation they are foreknown; but the soul is speaking with God with that affection of godliness, of which God knoweth. For even the things which Angels proclaim to men, they proclaim to them that know them not; but the things which they proclaim to God, they proclaim to Him knowing, when they offer our prayers, and in ineffable manner consult the eternal Truth respecting their actions, as an immutable law. And therefore this man of God is saying to God that which he is to learn of God, like a scholar to a master, not ignorant but judging; and so either approving what he hath taught, or censuring what he hath not taught: especially because under the appearance of one praying, the Prophet is transforming into himself those who should be at the time when these things were to come to pass. But in praying it is customary to declare those things to God which He hath done in taking vengeance, and for a petition to

be added, that henceforth He should pity and spare. In this way here also by him the judgments are spoken of by whom they are foretold, as if they were being spoken of by those whom they befel, and the very lamentation and prayer is a prophecy.

2. Ver. 1. O God, there have come the nations into Thine inheritance: they have defiled Thy holy Temple, they have made Jerusalem for a keeping of apples. (Ver. 2.) They have made the dead bodies of Thy servants morsels for the fowls of heaven, the fleshs of Thy saints for the beasts of the earth. (Ver. 3.) They have poured forth their blood like water in the circuit of Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them. If in this prophecy any one of us shall have thought that there must be understood that laying waste of Jerusalem, which was made by Titus the Roman Emperor, when already the Lord Jesus Christ, after His Resurrection and Ascension, was being preached among the Gentiles, it doth not occur to me how that people could now have been called the inheritance of God, as not holding to Christ, Whom having rejected and slain, that people became reprobate, which not even after His Resurrection would believe in Him, and even killed His Martyrs. For out of that people Israel whosoever have believed in Christ; to whom the offer of Christ was made, and in a manner the healthful and fruitful fulfilment of the promise; concerning whom even the Lord Himself saith, I am not sent but to the sheep which have been lost of the house of Israel, the same are they that out of them are the sons of promise; the same are counted for a seed; the same do belong to the inheritance of God. From hence are Joseph that just man, and the Virgin Mary who bore Christ: hence John Baptist the friend of the Bridegroom, and his parents Zacharias and Elizabeth: hence Symeon the old, and Anna the widow, who heard not Christ speaking by the sense of the body; but while yet an infant not speaking, by the Spirit perceived Him: hence the blessed Apostles: hence Nathanael, in whom guile was not: hence the other Joseph, who himself too looked for the kingdom of God: hence that so great multitude who went before and followed after His beast, saying, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: among whom was also that company of children, in whom He declared to have been fulfilled, Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise. Hence also were those after His resurrection, of whom on one day three and on another five thousand were

baptized, welded into one soul and one heart by the fire of love; of whom no one spoke of any thing as his own, but to them all things were common. Hence the holy deacons, of whom Stephen was crowned with martyrdom before the Apostles. Hence so many Churches of Judæa, which were in Christ, unto whom Paul was unknown by face, but known for an infamous ferocity, and more known for Christ's most merciful grace. Hence even he, according to the prophecy sent before concerning him, a wolf ravening, in the morning carrying off, and in the evening dividing morsels; that is, first as persecutor carrying off unto death, afterwards as a preacher feeding unto life. These are they that are out of that people the inheritance of God. Whence also saith the same, the head of the Apostles, the teacher of the Gentiles: I say then, hath God cast off His people? Far be it. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast off His people, whom He hath foreknown. This people, which out of that nation was added to the Body of Christ, is the inheritance of God. For that which the Apostle saith, God hath not cast off His people whom He hath foreknown, doth really correspond with that Psalm, wherein it is written, For the Lord shall not cast off His people. But in that place there followeth, and His inheritance He shall not forsake: where it evidently appeareth that such a people is the inheritance of God. For when the Apostle was to say this, above he had quoted the prophetic testimony concerning the foretold future unbelief of the people of Israel: All day long I have spread out my hands to a people not believing and gainsaying. In this place then, lest any one, wrongly understanding it, should judge the whole of that people to have been found guilty of the charge of unbelief and gainsaying, he hath immediately added, Hath God cast off His people? Far be it. For I also am an Israelite, of the tribe of Benjamin. Here he is shewing what people he spake of, to wit, belonging to the former people, the whole whereof if God had refused and condemned, he indeed would not himself have been Christ's Apostle, being an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. But he applieth a very necessary testimony, saying, Know ye not in Elias what saith the Scripture, how he intercedeth with God against Israel? O Lord, Thy prophets they have slain, Thy altars they have digged down, and I am left alone, and they are seeking my life. But what saith the answer of God to him? I have left unto Me seven thousand men, who have not bowed their knees before Baal. So then even at this time a remnant

through election of Grace have been saved. This remnant out of that nation doth belong to the inheritance of God: not those concerning whom a little below he saith, But the rest have been blinded. For thus he saith. What then? That which Israel sought, this he hath not obtained: but the election hath obtained it: but the rest have been blinded. This election then, this remnant, that people of God, which God hath not cast off, is called His inheritance. But in that Israel, which hath not obtained this, in the rest that were blinded, there was no longer an inheritance of God, in reference to whom it is possible that there should be spoken, after the glorification of Christ in the Heavens, in the time of Titus the Emperor, O God, there have come the Gentiles unto Thine inheritance, and the other things which in this Psalm seem to have been foretold concerning the destruction of both the temple and city belonging to that people.

3. Furthermore herein we ought either to perceive those things which were done by other enemies, before Christ had come in the flesh: (for not different was the inheritance of God, at that time when there were even the holy prophets, when the carrying away into Babylon took place, and that nation was grievously afflicted, and at the time when under Antiochus also the Maccabees, having endured horrible sufferings, most gloriously were crowned. For such things have been described in this Psalm, as are also wont to happen in the wasting of wars:) or certainly if after the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord the inheritance of God must be understood to be here spoken of; such things must be understood herein, as at the hands of worshippers of idols, and enemies of the name of Christ, His Church, in such a multitude of martyrs, endured. For although Asaph is interpreted Synagogue, which is congregation, and that name hath more usually been attached to the nation of the Jews: nevertheless that this Church also may be called a congregation, and that that old people hath been called a Church, already in another Psalm, we have clearly enough shewn. This Church then, this inheritance of God, out of circumcision and uncircumcision hath been congregated, that is, out of the people of Israel, and out of the rest of the nations, by means of the Stone which the builders rejected, and which hath become for the Head of the corner, in which corner as it were two walls coming from different quarters were united. For Himself is our peace, Who hath made both one, that He might build two into Himself making peace,

and might unite together both in one Body unto God: in which Body we are sons of God, crying, Abba Father. Abba, on account of their language, Father, on account of ours. For Abba is the same as Father. Whence the Lord, Who hath said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel, shewing to that nation the fulfilment of that promise of His presence, saith nevertheless in another place, I have other sheep, which are not of this fold, I must needs also bring them, in order that there may be one flock and one Shepherd: intimating the Gentiles whom He was going to bring, not indeed by means of His own corporal presence, in order that this might be true, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel; but yet by means of His Gospel, which was to be disseminated by the beautiful feet of them that proclaim peace, that proclaim good things. For, into every land there hath gone out the sound of them, and unto the ends of the round world the words of them. Hence also the Apostle saith, I say therefore that Christ Jesus was a minister of the Circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promise to the fathers. Behold what is, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Secondly, the Apostle subjoineth, But that the Gentiles do glorify God for His mercy. Behold what is, I have other sheep, which are not of this fold, I must needs also bring them, that there may be one flock and one Shepherd. Both which things have been briefly declared in that which the same Apostle quoteth from the Prophet; Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people. These then, being the one flock under the one Shepherd, are the inheritance of God, not only of the Father, but also of the Son. For the Son's voice is, the lines have fallen unto Me in goodly places, for My inheritance is goodly to Me. And of that same inheritance the voice in the Prophet is, O Lord our God, possess us. This inheritance the Father hath not by dying left to the Son: but the Son Himself hath wonderfully by His own death acquired it; and hath possessed it by His Resurrection.

4. If then as relating to this must be understood what is sung in the prophecy of this Psalm, O God, there have come the Gentiles into Thine inheritance, so that we should understand that the Gentiles have come into the Church, not as believing but as persecuting; that is, that they invaded Her with the will to efface and utterly to destroy Her, as the examples of so many persecutions have shewn: it must needs be that what followeth, they have defiled Thy holy Temple, must be found not in beams and stones, but

in men themselves, of whom, as of living stones, the Apostle Peter affirmeth the House of God to be builded. Whence also the Apostle Paul most plainly declareth, the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. This Temple then persecutors have indeed defiled in those whom they have constrained to deny Christ by threat or torment, and have made to worship idols by violently insisting; of whom many penitence hath restored, and hath purged from that stain. For a penitent's voice is that, And from mine offending purge Thou me: and, A clean heart create in me, O God, and a right spirit renew in my bowels. But now in that which followeth, they have made Jerusalem for a keeping of apples; even the Church herself is rightly understood under this name, even the free Jerusalem our mother, concerning whom hath been written, Rejoice, thou barren that dost not bear; break forth and cry out, thou that dost not travail: for many more are the sons of the forsaken, than of her that hath the husband. The expression, for a keeping of apples, I think must be understood of the desertion which the wasting of persecution hath effected: that is, like a keeping of apples; for the keeping of apples is abandoned, when the apples have passed away. And certes when through the persecuting Gentiles the Church seemed to be forsaken, unto the celestial table, like as it were many and exceeding sweet apples from the garden of the Lord, the spirits of the martyrs did pass away.

5. Ver. 2. They have made, he saith, the dead bodies of Thy servants morsels for the fowls of heaven, the fleshes of Thy saints for the beasts of the earth. The expression, dead bodies, hath been repeated in flesh: and the expression, of Thy servants, hath been repeated in, of Thy saints. This only hath been varied, to the fowls of heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. Better have they interpreted who have written dead, than as some have it, mortal. For dead is only said of those that have died; but mortal is a term applied even to living bodies. When then, as I have said, to their Husbandman the spirits of martyrs like apples had passed away, their dead bodies and their flesh: they set before the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth: as if any part of them could be lost to the resurrection, whereas out of the hidden recesses of the natural world He will renew the whole, by Whom even our hairs have been numbered.

6. Ver. 3. They have poured forth their blood like water, that is, abundantly and wantonly, in the circuit of Jerusalem. If we herein understand the earthly city Jerusalem, we perceive the shedding of their blood in the circuit thereof, whom the enemy could find outside the walls. But if we understand it of that Jerusalem, concerning whom hath been said, many more are the sons of her that was forsaken, than of her that hath the husband, the circuit thereof is throughout the universal earth. For in that lesson of the Prophet, wherein is written, many more are the sons of her that was forsaken, than of her that hath the husband: a little after unto the same is said, and He that hath delivered thee, shall be called the God of Israel of the universal earth. The circuit then of this Jerusalem in this Psalm must be understood as followeth: so far as at that time the Church had been expanded, bearing fruit, and growing in the universal world, when in every part thereof persecution was raging, and was making havoc of the Martyrs, whose blood was being shed like water, to the great gain of the celestial treasures. But as to that which hath been added, and there was no one to bury: it either ought not to seem to be an incredible thing that there should have been so great a panic in some places, that not any buriers at all of holy bodies came forward: or certes that unburied corpses in many places might lie long time, until being by the religious in a manner stolen they were buried.

7. Ver. 4. We have become, he saith, a reproach to our neighbours. Therefore precious not in the sight of men, from whom this reproach was, but “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” A scoffing and derision: or, as some have interpreted it, a mockery to them that are in our circuit. It is a repetition of the former sentence. For that which above hath been called, a reproach, the same hath been repeated in, a scoffing and derision: and that which above hath been said in, to our neighbours, the same hath been repeated in, to them that are in our circuit. Moreover, in reference to the earthly Jerusalem, the neighbours, and those in the circuit of that nation, are certainly understood to be other nations. But in reference to the free Jerusalem our mother, there are neighbours even in the circuit of her, among whom, being her enemies, the Church dwelleth in the circuit of the round world.

8. In the second place now giving utterance to an evident prayer, whence it may be perceived that the calling to remembrance of former affliction is not by way of information but prayer; (ver. 5.) How long, he saith, O Lord, wilt Thou be angry, unto the end? shall Thy jealousy burn like fire? He is evidently asking God not to be angry unto the end, that is, that this so great oppression and tribulation and devastation may not continue even unto the end; but that He moderate His chastening, according to that which is said in another Psalm, Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears, and Thou shalt give us to drink of tears in measure. For the, how long, O Lord, wilt Thou be angry, unto the end? hath been spoken in the same sense as if it had been said, Be not, O Lord, angry unto the end. And in that which followeth, shall Thy jealousy burn like fire? both words must be understood, both, how long, and, unto the end: just as if there had been said, how long shall there burn like fire Thy jealousy unto the end? For these two words must be understood in the same manner as that word which was used a little higher up, namely, they-have-made. For while the former sentence hath, they have made the dead bodies of Thy servants morsels for the fowls of heaven: this word the latter sentence hath not, wherein is said, the flesh of Thy saints for the beasts of the earth; but there is surely understood what the former hath, namely, they have made.

Moreover, the anger and jealousy of God are not emotions of God; as some do charge upon the Scriptures which they do not understand: but under the name of anger is to be understood the avenging of iniquity; under the name of jealousy, the exaction of chastity; that the soul may not despise the law of her Lord, and perish by departing in fornication from the Lord. These then in their actual operation in men's affliction are violent; but in the disposal of God they are calm, unto Whom hath been said, But Thou, O Lord of virtues, with calmness dost judge. But it is clearly enough shewn by these words, that for sins these tribulations do befall men, though they be faithful: although hence may bloom the Martyrs' glory by occasion of their patience, and the yoke of discipline godly endured as the scourge of the Lord. Of this the Maccabees amid sharp tortures, of this the three men amid flames innocuous, of this the holy Prophets in captivity, do testify. For although paternal correction most bravely and most godly they endure, yet they do not hide the fact, that these things have befallen them for the deservings of

their sins. For their voice is that too in the Psalms, Chastening the Lord hath chastened me, and unto death He hath not delivered me. For, He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And what son is there unto whom his father would not give discipline?

9. But that which he addeth, (ver. 6.) Pour forth Thine anger upon the nations which have not known Thee, and upon the kingdoms which have not called upon Thy name; this too is a prophecy, not a wish. Not in the imprecation of malevolence are these words spoken, but foreseen by the Spirit they are predicted: just as in the case of Judas the traitor, the evil things which were to befall him have been so prophesied as if they were wished. For in like manner as the prophet doth not command Christ, though in the imperative mood he giveth utterance to what he saith, Gird Thou Thy sword about Thy thigh, O Most Mighty: in Thy beauty and in Thy goodness, both go on, and prosperously proceed, and reign: so he doth not wish, but doth prophesy, who saith, Pour forth Thine anger upon the nations which have not known Thee. Which in his usual way he repeateth, saying, And upon the kingdoms which have not called upon Thy name. For nations have been repeated in kingdoms: and that they have not known Him, hath been repeated in this, that they have not called upon His name. How then must be understood, what the Lord saith in the Gospel, The servant who knoweth not the will of his Lord, and doth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with a few; but the servant who knoweth the will of his Lord, and doeth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with many: if greater the anger of God is against the nations, which have not known the Lord? For in this which he saith, Pour forth Thine anger, with this word he hath clearly enough pointed out, how great anger he hath willed that there should be understood. Whence afterwards he saith, Render to our neighbours seven times as much. Is it not that there is a great difference between servants, who, though they know not the will of their Lord, do yet call upon His name, and those that are aliens from the family of so great a Master, who are so ignorant of God, as that they do not even call upon God? For in place of Him they call upon either idols or demons, or any creature they choose; not the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. For those persons, concerning whom he is prophesying this, he doth not even intimate to be so ignorant of the will of their God, as that still they fear the Lord Himself; but so ignorant

of the Lord Himself, that they do not even call upon Him, and that they stand forth as enemies of His name. There is a great difference then between servants not knowing the will of their God, and yet living in His family and in His house, and enemies not only setting the will against knowing the Lord Himself, but also not calling upon His name, and even in His servants fighting against it.

10. Ver. 7. Lastly, there followeth, For they have eaten up Jacob, and his place they have made desolate. For Jacob did hear the figure of the Church, as Esau did of the old Synagogue. Whence hath been said; And the elder shall serve the younger. It is possible that under this name there should be understood that inheritance of God, whereof we were speaking, to invade and lay waste which, after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, the Gentiles came with persecution. But how we should view the place of Jacob, must be understood. For rather the place of Jacob may be supposed to be that city, wherein was also the Temple, whither-unto the whole of that nation for the purpose of sacrifice and worship, and to celebrate the Passover, the Lord had commanded to assemble. For if the assemblies of Christians, letted and suppressed by persecutors, has been what the Prophet would have to be understood, it would seem that he should have said, places made desolate, not place. Still we may take the singular number as put for the plural number; as dress for clothes, soldiery for soldiers, cattle for beasts: for many words are usually spoken in this manner, and not only in the mouths of vulgar speakers, but even in the eloquence of the most approved authorities. Nor to divine Scripture herself is this form of speech foreign. For even she hath put frog for frogs, locust for locusts, and countless expressions of the like kind. But that which hath been said, They have eaten up Jacob, the same is well understood, in that many men into their own evil-minded body, that is, into their own society, they have constrained to pass.

11. He remembereth, however, that although to them on account of their most perverse will by the anger of God a worthy retribution was to be rendered, yet that they could not prevail any thing against His inheritance, unless He had Himself willed, for her sins, by scourging to amend the same. Whence he subjoineth, Remember not our iniquities of old. He saith not by-

gone, which might have even been recent; but of old, that is, coming from parents. For to such iniquities damnation, not correction, is owing. Speedily let Thy mercies anticipate us. Anticipate, that is, at Thy judgment. For mercy exalteth above in judgment. Now there is judgment without mercy, but to him that hath not shewed mercy. But whereas he addeth, for we have become exceeding poor: unto this end he willeth that the mercies of God should be understood to anticipate us; that our own poverty, that is, weakness, by Him having mercy, should be aided to do His commandments, that we may not come to His judgment to be condemned.

12. Therefore there followeth, (ver. 9.) Help us, O God, our healing One. By this word which he saith, our healing One, he doth sufficiently explain what sort of poverty he hath willed to be understood, in that which he had said, for we have become exceeding poor. For it is that very sickness, to which a healer is necessary. But while he would have us to be aided, he is neither ungrateful to grace, nor doth he take away free-will. For he that is aided, doth also of himself something. He hath added also, for the glory of Thy Name, O Lord, deliver us: in order that he who glorieth, not in himself, but in the Lord may glory. And merciful be Thou, he saith, to our sins for Thy Name's sake: not for our sake. For what else do our sins deserve, but due and condign punishments? But merciful be Thou to our sins, for Thy Name's sake. Thus then Thou dost deliver us, that is, dost rescue us from evil things, while Thou dost both aid us to do justice, and art merciful to our sins, without which in this life we are not. For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. But sin is iniquity. And if Thou shalt have marked iniquities, who shall stand?

13. Ver. 10. But that which he addeth, lest at any time they should say among the Gentiles, Where is their God? must be taken as rather for the Gentiles themselves. For to a bad end they come that have despaired of the true God, thinking that either He is not, or doth not help His own, and is not merciful to them. But this which followeth, and that there may be known among the nations before our eyes the vengeance of the blood of Thy servants which hath been shed: is either to be understood as of the time, when they believe in the true God that used to persecute His inheritance; because even that is vengeance, whereby is slain the fierce iniquity of them

by the sword of the Word of God, concerning which hath been said, Gird Thou Thy sword: or when obstinate enemies at the last are punished. For the corporal ills which they suffer in this world, they may have in common with good men. There is also another kind of vengeance; that wherein the Church's enlargement and fruitfulness in this world after so great persecutions, wherein they supposed she would utterly perish, the sinner and unbeliever and enemy seeth, and is angry; with his teeth he shall gnash, and shall pine away. For who would dare to deny that even this is a most heavy punishment? But I know not whether that which he saith, before our eyes, is taken with sufficient elegance, if by this sort of punishment we understand that which is done in the inmost recesses of the heart, and doth torment even those who blandly smile at us, while by us there cannot be seen what they suffer in the inner man. But the fact, that whether in them believing their iniquity is slain, or whether the last punishment is rendered to them persevering in their naughtiness, without difficulty of doubtfulness is understood in the saying, that there may be known before our eyes vengeance among the nations.

14. And this indeed, as we have said, is a prophecy, not a wish: but for the sake of that which hath been written of in the Apocalypse, under the Altar of God the Martyrs crying unto God, and saying, How long, O Lord, dost Thou not avenge our blood, we must not omit to notice how it ought to be taken; lest the saints should be thought to desire vengeance for the sake of gratifying hatred, which is a thing very far from their perfect state: and yet it is written, A just man shall exult when he shall have seen vengeance on the ungodly; his hands he shall wash in the blood of a sinner. And the Apostle saith, Avenging not yourselves, my beloved, but give ye place to wrath: for it is written, To Me vengeance, and I will requite, saith the Lord. So that not even he doth command that they should wish not to be avenged, but that not avenging themselves they should give place to the anger of God, Who hath said, To Me vengeance, and I will requite. And the Lord in the Gospel hath set before us the widow for an example, who longing to be avenged, did intercede with the unjust judge, who at length heard her, not as being guided by justice, but overcome with weariness: but this the Lord hath set before us, to shew that much more the just God will speedily make the judgment of His elect, who cry unto Him day and night. Thence is also

that cry of the Martyrs under the altar of God, that they may be avenged in the judgment of God. Where then is the, Love your enemies, do good unto them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you? Where is also the, Not rendering evil for evil, nor cursing for cursing: and, unto no man rendering evil for evil? For if evil for evil must not be rendered to any one, not only an evil deed must not be rendered for an evil deed, but not even an evil wish must be rendered for an evil deed or wish. But he doth render an evil wish, who, even though he doth not himself take vengeance, doth yet look forward and desire that God shall punish his enemy. Wherefore inasmuch as both a just man and an evil man would have vengeance taken by the Lord upon their enemies, whence should they be distinguished, except that a just man would rather have his enemy corrected than punished; and when he seeth vengeance taken upon him by the Lord, he is not delighted with his punishment, because he doth not hate him; but with the Divine justice, because he loveth God? Lastly, if in this world vengeance is taken upon him, he doth even rejoice either for him, if he is amended; or at least for others, that they fear to imitate him. Himself also is made better, not by feasting his hatred on his punishment, but by correcting his strayings. And thus of good-will it is, not of ill-will, that the just man doth rejoice, when he seeth vengeance and washeth his hands, that is, maketh his works more clean, in the blood, that is, in the destruction of the sinner, deriving from thence not joy at another's ill, but an instance of divine admonition. But if in the world to come at the last judgment of God he hath vengeance taken for him, the same thing is pleasing to him as to God; that it should not be well with evil men, that even the ungodly should not reap the recompenses of the godly: which is a very unjust thing, and foreign to the rule of truth which the just man loveth. For when the Lord was exhorting us to love enemies, He set before us the example of our Father, Who is in Heaven, Who maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men: doth He yet therefore not chasten even by temporal correction, or not condemn at the last the obstinately hardened? Let therefore an enemy be so loved as that the Lord's justice whereby he is punished displease us not, and let the justice whereby he is punished so please us, as that the joy is not at his evil but at the good Judge. But a malevolent soul is sorrowful, if his enemy by being corrected shall have escaped punishment: and when he seeth him punished, he is so

glad that he is avenged, that he is not delighted with the justice of God, Whom he loveth not, but with the misery of that man whom he hateth: and when he leaveth judgment to God, he hopeth that God will hurt more than he could hurt: and when he giveth food to his hungering enemy, and drink to him thirsty, he hath an evil-minded sense of that which is written, For thus doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. For he trieth to aggravate the case the more, and to stir up against him the indignation of God, which he supposeth to be signified by the coals of fire; not perceiving that this fire is the burning sorrow of repentance, until such time as the head uplifted by pride is depressed unto healthful humility by the kindnesses shewn by an enemy, and by the good of the latter the evil of the former is overcome. Whence the Apostle hath guardedly added, Be not overcome of evil, but with good overcome evil. But how can he with good overcome evil, that on the surface is good, in the depth of heart evil; that in work doth spare, and in heart doth rage; in hand gentle, in will cruel? In such sort then under the appearance of one asking in this Psalm, future vengeance on the ungodly is prophesied of, as that we are to understand that holy men of God have loved their enemies, and have wished no one any thing but good, which is godliness in this world, everlasting life in that to come; but in the punishments of evil men, they have taken pleasure not in the ills of them, but in God's good judgments; and wheresoever in the holy Scriptures we read of their hatreds against men, they were the hatreds of vices, which every man must needs hate in himself, if he loveth himself.

15. Ver. 12. But now in that which followeth, Let there come in before Thy sight, or, as some copies have it, In Thy sight, the groans of the fettered: not easily doth any one discover that the Saints were thrown into fetters by persecutors; and if this doth happen amid so great and manifold a variety of punishments, so rarely it doth happen, that it must not be believed that the prophet had chosen to allude to this especially in this verse. But, in fact, the fetters are the infirmity and the corruptibleness of the body, which do weigh down the soul. For by means of the frailty thereof, as a kind of material for certain pains and troubles, the persecutor might constrain her unto ungodliness. From these fetters the Apostle was longing to be unbound, and to be with Christ; but to abide in the flesh was necessary for their sakes unto whom he was ministering the Gospel. Until then this corruptible put on

incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality, like as it were with fetters, the weak flesh doth let the willing spirit. These fetters then not any do feel, but they that in themselves do groan being burthened, desiring to be clothed upon with the tabernacle which is from Heaven; because both death is a terror, and mortal life is sorrow. In behalf of these men groaning the Prophet doth redouble his groaning, that their groaning may come in in the sight of the Lord. They also may be understood to be fettered, who are enchained with the precepts of wisdom, the which being patiently supported are turned into ornaments: whence it hath been written, "Put thy feet into her fetters." According to the greatness, he saith, of Thy arm, receive Thou unto adoption the sons of them that are put to death: or, as is read in some copies, Possess Thou sons by the death of the punished. Wherein the Scripture seemeth to me to have sufficiently shewn, what hath been the groan of the fettered, who for the name of Christ endured most grievous persecutions, which in this Psalm are most clearly prophesied. For being beset with divers sufferings, they used to pray for the Church, that their blood might not be without fruit to posterity; in order that the Lord's harvest might more abundantly flourish by the very means whereby enemies thought that she would perish. For sons of them that were put to death he hath called them who were not only not terrified by the sufferings of those that went before, but in Him for Whose name they knew them to have suffered, being inflamed with their glory which did inspire them to the like, in most ample hosts they believed. Therefore he hath said, According to the greatness of Thine arm. For so great a wonder followed in the case of Christian peoples, as they, who thought they would prevail aught by persecuting her, no wise believed would follow.

16. Ver. 13. Render, he saith, to our neighbours seven times so much into their bosoms. Not any evil things he is wishing, but things just he is foretelling and prophesying as to come. But in the number seven, that is, in sevenfold retribution, he would have the completeness of the punishment to be perceived, for with this number fulness is wont to be signified. Whence also there is this saying for the good, He shall receive in this world seven times as much: which hath been put for all. As if having nothing, and possessing all things. Of neighbours he is speaking, because amongst them dwelleth the Church even unto the day of severing: for not now is made the

corporal separation. Into their bosoms, he saith, as being now in secret, so that the vengeance which is now being executed in secret in this life, hereafter may be known among the nations before our eyes. For when a man is given over to a reprobate mind, in his inward bosom he is receiving what he deserveth of future punishments. Their reproach wherewith they have reproached Thee, O Lord. This do Thou render to them sevenfold into their bosoms, that is, in return for this reproach, most fully do Thou rebuke them in their secret places. For in this they have reproached Thy Name, thinking to efface Thee from the earth in Thy servants.

17. Ver. 13. But we Thy people, must be taken generally of all the race of godly and true Christians. We, then, whom they thought they had power to destroy, Thy people, and the sheep of Thy flock: in order that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord, will confess to Thee for an age. But some copies have it, will confess to Thee for everlasting. Out of a Greek ambiguity this diversity hath arisen. For that which the Greek hath εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, may be interpreted both by for everlasting, and for an age: but according to the context we must understand which is the better interpretation. The sense then of this passage seemeth to me to shew, that we ought to say for an age, that is, even unto the end of time. But the following verse after the manner of the Scriptures, and especially of the Psalms, is a repetition of the former with the order changed, putting that before which in the former case was after, and that after which in the former case was before. For whereas in the former case there had been said, we will confess to Thee, instead of the same herein hath been said, we will proclaim Thy praise. And so whereas in the former case there had been said, for an age, instead of the same herein hath been said, for generation and generation. For this repetition of generation doth signify perpetuity: or, as some understand it, it is because there are two generations, an old and a new. But in this age both take place. For he that shall not have been born again of water and the Spirit, shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Secondly, because in this age the praise of God is proclaimed: for in the age to come, when we shall see Him as He is, henceforth there will be no one unto whom it may be proclaimed. We, then, Thy people, and the sheep of Thy flock, whom they thought they could consume by persecution, will confess to Thee for an age, that is, while there abideth even unto the end

Thy Church, which they endeavoured to efface; unto generation and generation will proclaim Thy praise; which praise, since they would have silenced, they endeavoured to make an end of us. But in many places of holy Scriptures we have already made known to you that confession is also put for praise: as in this passage it is, These words ye shall say in confession, 'That the works of the Lord are very good.' And especially that which the Saviour Himself saith, Who had not any sin at all, which by repentance to confess: I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes. I have said this, in order that it may be more clearly perceived how in the expression, We will proclaim Thy praise, the same hath been repeated as had been said higher up, We will confess to Thee.

PSALM 80

Exposition

A Sermon delivered to the people. See §. 10.

1. There are not very many things in this Psalm, wherein our discourse hath difficulty, or wherein the attention of the hearers hath any obstacle to prevent their understanding. Furthermore, with the aid of the Lord, having affectionate desire to hear and see what things have been prophesied and foretold, as those educated in the school of Christ, we ought to hasten over the things which are evident: so that if perchance things obscure demand the office of an interpreter, those things which are evident ought to require of me the office of a reader. The song here is of the Advent of the Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of His vineyard. But the singer of the song is that Asaph, as far as doth appear, enlightened and converted, by whose name ye know the synagogue to be signified. Lastly, the title of the Psalm is; For the end in behalf of them that shall be changed: that is, for the better. For Christ, the end of the Law, hath come on purpose that He should change men for the better. And he addeth, a testimony to Asaph himself. A good testimony of truth. Lastly, this testimony doth confess both Christ and the vineyard; that is, Head and Body, King and people, Shepherd and flock, and the entire mystery of all Scriptures, Christ and the Church. But the title of the Psalm doth conclude with, for the Assyrians. The Assyrians are interpreted, men guiding. Therefore it is no longer a generation which hath not guided the heart thereof, but now a generation guiding. Therefore hear we what he saith in this testimony.

2. Ver. 1. Thou that feedest Israel, hearken. What is, Thou that feedest Israel, hearken, Thou that conductest Joseph like sheep? He is being invoked to come, He is being expected until He come, He is being yearned for until He come. Therefore may He find ‘men guiding.’ Thou that

conductest, he saith, Joseph like sheep: Joseph himself like sheep. Joseph himself are the sheep, and Joseph himself is a sheep. Observe Joseph; for although even the interpretation of his name doth aid us much, for it signifieth increase; and He came indeed in order that the grain given to death might arise manifold; that is, that the people of God might be increased; nevertheless according to that which ye know already happened to Joseph, let it come into your mind how he was sold by his brethren, let it come into your mind how having been dishonoured by his own, among aliens he was exalted; and ye will perceive in Whose flock we ought to be, with them who now do guide their heart, in order that the stone rejected by the builders may become for the Head of the corner, holding two walls coming from different quarters, but in the corner at one. Thou that sittest upon the Cherubin. Cherubin is the seat of the glory of God, and is interpreted the fulness of knowledge. There God sitteth in the fulness of knowledge. Though we understand the Cherubin to be the exalted powers and virtues of the heavens: yet, if thou wilt, thou wilt be Cherubin. For if Cherubin is the seat of God, hear what saith the Scripture: The soul of a just man is the seat of wisdom. How, thou sayest, shall I be the fulness of knowledge? Who shall fulfil this? Thou hast the means of fulfilling it: The fulness of the Law is love. Do not run after many things, and strain thyself. The amplitude of the branches doth terrify thee: by the root hold, and of the greatness of the tree think not. Be there in thee love, and the fulness of knowledge must needs follow. For what doth he not know that knoweth love? Inasmuch as it hath been said, God is love.

3. Ver. 2. Thou that sittest upon the Cherubin, appear. For we went astray because Thou didst not appear. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasse. Appear, I say, before the nation of the Jews, before the people of Israel. For there is Ephraim, there Manasses, there Benjamin. But to the interpretation let us look: Ephraim is fruit-bearing, Benjamin son of right hand, Manasses one forgetful. Appear Thou then before one made fruitful, before a son of the right hand: appear Thou before one forgetful, in order that he may be no longer forgetful, but Thou mayest come into his mind that hast delivered him. For if the Gentiles shall be remembered, and if there shall be converted to the Lord all the ends of the earth: hath not the very people that cometh of Abraham had its own wall, which rejoiceth in

the corner, seeing that it hath been written, A remnant shall be saved? Stir Thou up Thy power. For weak Thou wast when it was being said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Thou wast seeming to have no power: the persecutor had power over Thee: and Thou didst shew this aforetime, for Jacob too himself prevailed in wrestling, a man with an angel. Would he at any time, except the angel had been willing? And man prevailed, and the angel was conquered: and victorious man holdeth the angel, and saith, I will not let thee go, except thou shalt have blessed me. A great sacrament! He both standeth conquered, and blesseth the conqueror. Conquered, because he willed it; in flesh weak, in majesty strong. And he blessed him; Thou shalt be called, he saith, Israel. Nevertheless also he touched the hollow of the thigh, and it shrank, and the same one man he made both blessed and halt. Thou seest that the people of the Jews have halted: see therein also the family of the Apostles. Stir up, therefore, Thy power. How long dost Thou seem weak? Having been crucified of weakness, rise Thou in power: Stir up Thy power, and come Thou, to save us.

4. Ver. 3. O God, convert us. For averse we have been from Thee, and except Thou convert us, we shall not be converted. And illumine Thy face, and we shall be saved. Hath He any wise a darkened face? He hath not a darkened face, but He placed before it a cloud of flesh, and as it were a veil of weakness; and when He hung on the tree, He was not thought the Same as He was after to be acknowledged when He was sitting in Heaven. For thus it hath come to pass. Christ present on the earth, and doing miracles, Asaph knew not; but when He had died, after that He rose again, and ascended into Heaven, he knew Him. He was pricked to the heart, and he may have spoken also of Him this testimony which now we acknowledge in this Psalm; Illumine Thou Thy face, and we shall be whole. Thou didst cover Thy face, and we were sick: illumine Thou the same, and we shall be whole.

5. Ver. 4. O Lord God of virtues, how long wilt Thou be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? Now Thy servant. Thou wast angry at the prayer of Thy enemy, wilt Thou still be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? Thou hast converted us, we know Thee, and wilt Thou still be angry with the

prayer of Thy servant? Thou wilt evidently be angry, in fact, as a father correcting, not as a judge condemning. In such manner evidently Thou wilt be angry, because it hath been written, My son, drawing near unto the service of God, stand thou in righteousness and in fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation. Think not that now the wrath of God hath passed away, because thou hast been converted. The wrath of God hath passed away from thee, but only so that it condemn not for everlasting. But He scourgeth, He spareth not: because He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If thou refusest to be scourged, why dost thou desire to be received? He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. He scourgeth every one, Who did not spare even His only Son. But nevertheless, How long wilt Thou be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? No longer Thine enemy: but, Thou wilt be angry with the prayer of Thy servant, how long?

6. Ver. 5. There followeth: Thou wilt feed us with the bread of tears, and wilt give us to drink with tears in measure. What is, in measure? Hear the Apostle; Faithful is God, Who doth not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear. The measure is, according to your powers: the measure is, that thou be instructed, not that thou be crushed.

7. Ver. 6. Thou hast set us for a contradiction to our neighbours. Evidently this did come to pass: for out of Asaph were chosen they that should go to the Gentiles and preach Christ, and should have it said to them, "Who is this proclaimer of new demons?" Thou hast set us for a contradiction to our neighbours. For they were preaching Him Who was the subject of the contradiction. Whom did they preach? That after He was dead, Christ rose again. Who would hear this? Who would know this? It is a new thing. But signs did follow, and to an incredible thing miracles gave credibility. He was contradicted, but the contradictor was conquered, and from being a contradictor was made a believer. There, however, was a great flame: there the martyrs fed with the bread of tears, and given to drink in tears, but in measure, not more than they were able to bear; in order that after the measure of tears there should follow a crown of joys. And our enemies have sneered at us. And where are they that sneered? For a long while it was said, Who are they that worship the Dead One, that adore the Crucified? For a long while so it was said. Where is the nose of them that sneered? Now do

not they that censure flee into caves, that they may not be seen? And our enemies have sneered at us.

8. But ye see what followeth: (ver. 7.) O Lord God of virtues convert us, and shew Thy face, and we shall be whole. (Ver. 8.) A vineyard out of Egypt Thou hast brought over, Thou hast cast out the nations, and hast planted her. It was done, we know. How many nations were cast out? Amorites, Cethites, Jebusites, Gergesites, and Evites: after whose expulsion and overthrow, there was led in the people delivered out of Egypt, into the land of promise. Whence the vineyard was cast out, and where she was planted, we have heard. Let us see what next was done, how she believed, how much she grew, what ground she covered. A vineyard out of Egypt Thou hast brought over, Thou hast cast out the nations, and hast planted her.

9. Ver. 9. A way Thou hast made in the sight of her, and hast planted the roots of her, and she hath filled the land. Would she have filled the land, unless a way had been made in the sight of her? What was the way which was made in the sight of her? I am, He saith, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. With reason she hath filled the land. That hath now been said of this vineyard, which hath been accomplished at the last. But in the mean time what? (Ver. 10.) She hath covered the mountains with her shadow, and with her branch the cedars of God. (Ver. 11.) Thou hast stretched out her boughs even unto the sea, and even unto the river her shoots. This requireth the office of an expositor, that of a reader and praiser doth not suffice: aid me with attention; for the mention of this vineyard in this Psalm is wont to overcloud with darkness the inattentive. For the greatness of this vineyard hath been already explained by us: and whence she arose, and whence she became great, hath been said before. A way Thou hast made in the sight of her, and Thou hast planted her roots, and she hath filled the earth: hath been said in reference to her perfection. But nevertheless the first Jewish nation was this vine. But the Jewish nation reigned as far as the sea and as far as the river. As far as the sea; it appeareth in Scripture that the sea was in the vicinity thereof. And as far as the river Jordan. For on the other side of Jordan some part of the Jews was established, but within Jordan was the whole nation. Therefore, even unto the sea and even unto the river, is the kingdom of the Jews, the kingdom of Israel: but not from sea even unto sea,

and from the river even unto the ends of the round world; this is the future perfection of the vineyard, concerning which in this place he hath foretold, A way Thou hast made in the sight of her, and Thou hast planted her roots, and she hath filled the earth. When, I say, he had foretold to thee the perfection, he returneth to the beginning, out of which the perfection was made. Of the beginning wilt thou hear? Even unto the sea, and even unto the river. Of the end wilt thou hear? He shall have dominion from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world: that is, she hath filled the earth. Let us look then to the testimony of Asaph, as to what was done to the first vineyard, and what must be expected for the second vineyard, nay to the same vineyard. For she is the self-same: for she is not another. Thence Christ, the “Salvation out of the Jews,” thence the Apostles, thence the first believers, and they that laid the prices of their goods before the feet of the Apostles, thence all these things. And if any of the branches were broken off, because of unbelief they were broken: But thou, O people of the Gentiles, stand fast in faith: be not high-minded, but fear. For if God hath not spared the natural branches, neither will He spare thee. But if thou art highminded, thou dost not bear the root, but the root thee. What then, the vineyard before the sight whereof a way was made, that she should fill the earth, at first was where? Her shadow covered the mountains. Who are the mountains? The Prophets. Why did her shadow cover them? Because darkly they spake the things which were foretold as to come. Thou hearest from the Prophets, Keep the Sabbath-day, on the eighth day circumcise a child, offer sacrifice of ram, of calf, of he-goat. Be not troubled, her shadow doth cover the mountains of God; there will come after the shadow a manifestation. And her shrubs the cedars of God, that is, she hath covered the cedars of God; very lofty, but of God. For the cedars are types of the proud, that must needs be overthrown. The cedars of Lebanon, the heights of the world, this vineyard did cover in growing, and the mountains of God, all the holy Prophets and Patriarchs.

10. But how far hast Thou stretched out her boughs? (Ver. 11.) Even unto the sea and unto the river her shoots. Then what? Wherefore hast Thou thrown down her enclosure? Now ye see the overthrow of that nation of the Jews: already out of another Psalm ye have heard, with axe and hammer they have thrown her down. When could this have been done, except her

enclosure had been thrown down. What is her enclosure? Her defence. For she bore herself proudly against her planter. The servants that were sent to her and demanded a recompense, the husbandmen they scourged, beat, slew: there came also the Only Son, they said, This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him, and our own the inheritance will be: they killed Him, and out of the vineyard they cast Him forth. When cast forth, He did more perfectly possess the place whence He was cast forth. For thus He threatens her through Isaiah, I will throw down her enclosure. Wherefore? For I looked that she should bring forth grapes, but she brought forth thorns. I looked for fruit from thence, and I found sin. Why then dost thou ask, O Asaph, Why hast Thou thrown down her enclosure? For knowest thou not why? I looked that she should do judgment, and she did iniquity. Must not her enclosure needs be thrown down? And there came the Gentiles when the enclosure was thrown down, the vineyard was assailed, and the kingdom of the Jews effaced. This at first he is lamenting, but not without hope. For of directing the heart he is now speaking, that is, for the “Assyrians,” for “men directing,” the Psalm is. Wherefore hast Thou thrown down her enclosure: and there pluck off her grapes all men passing along the way. What is men passing along the way? Men having dominion for a time.

11. Ver. 13. There hath laid her waste the boar from the wood. In the boar from the wood what do we understand? To the Jews a swine is an abomination, and in a swine they imagine as it were the uncleanness of the Gentiles. But by the Gentiles was overthrown the nation of the Jews: but that king who overthrew, was not only an unclean swine, but was also a boar. For what is a boar but a savage swine, a furious swine? A boar from the wood hath laid her waste. From the wood, from the Gentiles. For she was a vineyard, but the Gentiles were woods. But when the Gentiles believed, there was said what? “Then there shall exult all the trees of the woods.” The boar from the wood hath laid her waste; and a singular wild beast hath devoured her. A singular wild beast is what? The very boar that laid her waste is the singular wild beast. Singular, because proud. For thus saith every proud one, It is I, it is I, and no other.

12. But with what profit is this? (Ver. 14.) O God of virtues turn Thou nevertheless. Although these things have been done, Turn Thou

nevertheless. Look from heaven and see, and visit this vineyard. (Ver. 15.) And perfect Thou her whom Thy right hand hath planted. No other plant Thou, but this make Thou perfect. For she is the very seed of Abraham, she is the very seed in whom all nations shall be blessed: there is the root where is borne the grafted wild olive. Perfect Thou this vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted. But wherein doth He perfect? And upon the Son of man, whom Thou hast strengthened to Thyself. What can be more evident? Why do ye still expect, that we should still explain to you in discourse, and should we not rather cry out with you in admiration, Perfect Thou this vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted, and upon the Son of man perfect her? What Son of man? Him Whom Thou hast strengthened to Thyself. A mighty stronghold: build as much as thou art able. For other foundation no one is able to lay, except that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.

13. Ver. 16. Things burned with fire, and dug up, by the rebuke of Thy countenance shall perish. What are the things burned with fire and dug up which shall perish from the rebuke of His countenance. Let us see and perceive what are the things burned with fire and dug up. Christ hath rebuked what? Sins: by the rebuke of His countenance sins have perished. Why then are sins burned with fire and dug up? Of all sins, two things are the cause in man, desire and fear. Think, examine, question your hearts, sift your consciences, see whether there can be sins, except they be either of desire, or of fear. There is set before thee a reward to induce thee to sin, that is, a thing which delighteth thee; thou doest it, because thou desirest it. But perchance thou wilt not be allured by bribes; thou art terrified with menaces, thou doest it because thou fearest. A man would bribe thee, for example, to bear false witness. Countless cases there are, but I am setting before you the plainer cases, whereby ye may imagine the rest. Hast thou hearkened unto God, and hast thou said in thy heart, What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but of his own soul suffer loss? I am not allured by a bribe to lose my soul to gain money. He turneth himself to stir up fear within thee, he who was not able to corrupt thee with a bribe, beginneth to threaten loss, banishment, massacres, perchance, and death. Therein now, if desire prevailed not, perchance fear will prevail to make thee sin. But furthermore, if out of the Scriptures there cometh into thy

mind, forbidding desire, what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but if his own soul suffer loss: let there come also into thy mind, forbidding fear, Fear not them who kill body, but soul are not able to kill. Whosoever will kill thee may do it as far as the body, as for the soul he may not. Thy soul will not die unless thou shalt have willed to kill it. Let another's iniquity slay thy flesh, so long as the truth preserveth thy soul. But if from the truth thou shalt have started aside, what more will the enemy do to thee than thou art of thyself doing to thyself? The raging enemy is able to kill thy flesh: but thou by bearing false witness art killing thy soul. Hear the Scripture. The mouth which lieth slayeth the soul. Therefore, my brethren, unto every right deed love and fear do lead: unto every sin love and fear do lead. To make thee do well, thou lovest God and fearest God: to make thee do ill, thou lovest the world and fearest the world. Let these two things be turned unto good: thou didst love the earth, love life eternal; thou didst fear death, fear hell. Whatever to thee if unrighteous the world hath promised, will it be able to give as much as God will give to the righteous? Whatever the world hath threatened thee if righteous, will it be able to do what God doeth to the unrighteous? Wilt thou see what God will give, if thou shalt have lived righteously? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Wilt thou see what He will do to ungodly men? Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. It is well thou wouldest have nothing else than that it should be well with thee. For in that thing which thou lovest, thou wouldest have it well with thee; and in that thing which thou fearest, thou wouldest not that it should be ill with thee: but thou dost not seek it in that country wherein it ought to be sought. Thou art in haste: for thou wouldest be both without indigence and without trouble. A good thing it is which thou wouldest have, but endure that which thou wouldest not, in order that thou mayest attain unto that which thou wouldest. Furthermore, the face of Him effacing sins shall do what? What are the sins set alight with fire and dug up? What had evil love done? A fire, as it were, it had set alight. What had evil fear done? It had dug up, as it were. For love doth inflame, fear doth humble: therefore, sins of evil love, with fire were lighted: sins of evil fear, were dug up. On the one hand, evil fear doth humble, and good love doth light; but in different ways respectively. For even the husbandman interceding for the tree, that it

should not be cut down, saith, I will dig about it, and will apply a basket of dung. The dug trench doth signify the godly humility of one fearing, and the basket of dung the profitable squalid state of one repenting. But concerning the fire of good love the Lord saith, Fire I have come to send into the world. With which fire may the fervent in spirit burn, and they too that are inflamed with the love of God and their neighbour. And thus, as all good works are wrought by good fear and good love, so by evil fear and evil love all sins are committed. Therefore, Things set alight with fire and dug up, to wit, all sins, by the rebuke of Thy countenance shall perish.

14. Ver. 17. Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, and upon the Son of Man Whom Thou hast strengthened Thyself. (Ver. 18.) And we depart not from Thee. How long is the generation crooked and provoking, and one which directeth not their heart? Let Asaph say, Let Thy mercy shew herself, do well with Thy vineyard; perfect her. Forasmuch as blindness in part befel Israel, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in, and so all Israel might be saved. Thy face having been shewn upon the Man of Thy right hand, Whom Thou hast strengthened to Thyself, we depart not from Thee. How long dost Thou rebuke us? How long censure? This do, And we depart not from Thee. Thou wilt quicken us, and Thy Name we will invoke. Thou shalt be sweet to us, Thou wilt quicken us. For aforetime we did love earth, not Thee: but Thou hast mortified our members which are upon the earth. For the Old Testament, having earthly promises, seemeth to exhort that God should not be loved for nought, but that He should be loved because He giveth something on earth. What dost thou love, so as not to love God? Tell me. Love, if thou canst, any thing which He hath not made. Look round upon the whole creation, see whether in any place thou art held with the birdlime of desire, and hindered from loving the Creator, except it be by that very thing which He hath Himself created, Whom thou despisest. But why dost thou love those things, except because they are beautiful? Can they be as beautiful as He by Whom they were made? Thou admirest these things, because thou seest not Him: but through those things which thou admirest, love Him Whom thou seest not. Examine the creation; if of itself it is, stay therein: but if it is of Him, for no other reason is it prejudicial to a lover, than because it is preferred to the Creator. Why have I said this? With reference to this verse, brethren. Dead, I say, were they that did worship

God that it might be well with them after the flesh: For to be wise after the flesh is death: and dead are they that do not worship God gratis, that is, because of Himself He is good, not because He giveth such and such good things, which He giveth even to men not good. Money wilt thou have of God? Even a robber hath it. Wife, abundance of children, soundness of body, the world's dignity, observe how many evil men have. Is this all for the sake of which thou dost worship Him? Thy feet will totter, thou wilt suppose thyself to worship without cause, when thou seest those things to be with them who do not worship Him. All these things, I say, He giveth even to evil men, Himself alone He reserveth for good men. Thou wilt quicken us; for dead we were, when to earthly things we did cleave; dead we were, when of the earthly man we did bear the image. Thou wilt quicken us; Thou wilt renew us, the life of the inward man Thou wilt give us. And Thy Name we will invoke; that is, Thee we will love. Thou to us wilt be the sweet forgiver of our sins, Thou wilt be the entire reward of the justified. (Ver. 19.) O Lord God of virtues, convert us, and shew Thy face, and we shall be whole.

PSALM 81

Exposition

A Sermon to the people of Carthage.

We have undertaken to speak to you of the present Psalm; let your quietness aid our voice, for it is somewhat worn out: the attention of the hearers, and the help of Him Who bids me speak, will give it strength. For a Title this Psalm hath, Unto the end for the presses, on the fifth of the Sabbath, a Psalm to Asaph himself. Into one title many mysteries are heaped together, still so that the lintel of the Psalm indicates the things within. As we have to speak of the presses, let no one expect that we shall speak of a vat, of a press, of olive baskets; because neither the Psalm hath this, and therefore it indicateth the greater mystery. For indeed if the text of the Psalm contained any thing of the sort, there would be some one who would imagine that the presses were to be taken to the letter, and nothing more to be sought there, nor any thing put mystically, and signified in sacred meaning; but he would say, The Psalm speaketh simply of presses, and thou tellest me of I know not what beside that thou imaginest!

No such thing did ye hear in this when it was reading. Therefore take the presses for the mystery of the Church, which is now transacting. In the presses we observe three things, pressure, and of the pressure two things, one to be laid up, the other to be thrown away. There takes place then in the press a treading, a crushing, a weight: and with these the oil strains out secretly into the vat, the lees run openly down the streets.

Look intently on this great spectacle. For God ceaseth not to exhibit to us that which we may look upon with great joy, nor is the madness of the Circus to be compared with this spectacle. That belongeth to the lees, this to the oil. When therefore ye hear the blasphemers babble impudently and say that distresses abound in Christian times; for ye know that they love to say

this: and it is an old proverb, yet one that began from Christian times, ‘God gives no rain; count it to the Christians!’ Although it was those of old that said thus. But these now say also, ‘That God sends rain, count it to the Christians! God sends no rain; we sow not. God sends rain; we reap not!’ And they wilfully make that an occasion of shewing pride, which ought to make them more earnest in supplication, choosing rather to blaspheme than to pray.

When therefore they talk of such things, when they make such boasts, when they say these things, and say them in defiance, not with fear, but with loftiness, let them not disturb you. For suppose that pressures abound; be thou oil. Let the lees, black with the darkness of ignorance, be insolent; and let it, as though cast away in the streets, go gibing publicly: but do thou by thyself in thy heart, where He Who seeth in secret will requite thee, strain off into the vat.

The olive on the tree is shaken indeed by some tempests, yet it is not crushed by the squeezings of the press; therefore both hang together from the tree, both what is to be thrown away, and what is to be stored up. But when it comes to the press, the squeezing, either is distinguished, is separated, and one thing is sought after, the other is rejected. Would ye know the force of these presses? To name some one thing about which even they murmur who make them: How great plunderings, they say, are there in our times, how great distresses of the innocent, how great robberies of other men’s goods! Thus indeed thou takest notice of the lees, that other men’s goods are seized; to the oil thou givest no heed, that to the poor are given even men’s own. The old time had no such plunderers of other men’s goods: but the old time had no such givers of their own goods. Be thou somewhat more curious about the press, choose not to see that only which flows off in public view, there is somewhat for thee to find by seeking. Discuss, listen, take knowledge, how many are doing that, which when one rich man heard from the mouth of the Lord, he went away sorrowful. From the Gospel many hear, Go, sell all that thou possessest, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in the heavens: and come, follow Me. Dost thou not observe how many are doing it? ‘But few,’ they say, ‘are those.’ Yet those few are the oil; and those who make good use of the things that

they possess belong to the oil. Add up all, and thou wilt see thy householder's store full. Thou seest such a plunderer, as thou hast never seen: see thou such a despiser of his own goods, as thou hast never seen. Praise the presses. Now is fulfilled the prophecy from the Apocalypse, Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy grow filthier still. Behold the presses in this sentence; Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy grow filthier still.

2. Wherefore also on the fifth of the sabbath? What is this? Let us go back to the first works of God, if perchance we may not there find somewhat in which we may also understand a mystery. For the sabbath is the seventh day, on which God rested from all His works, intimating the great mystery of our future resting from all our works. First of the sabbath then is called that first day, which we also call the Lord's day; second of the sabbath, the second day; third of the sabbath, the third day; fourth of the sabbath, the fourth day; the fifth of the sabbath, then, is the fifth from the Lord's day; after which the sixth of the sabbath is the sixth day, and the sabbath itself the seventh day. See ye therefore to whom this Psalm speaketh. For it seems to me that it speaketh to the baptized. For on the fifth day God from the waters created animals: on the fifth day, that is, on the 'fifth of the sabbath,' God said, Let the waters bring forth creeping things of living souls. See ye, therefore, ye in whom the waters have already brought forth creeping things of living souls. For ye belong to the presses, and in you, whom the waters have brought forth, one thing is strained out, another is thrown away. For there are many that live not worthily of the baptism which they have received. For how many that are baptized have chosen rather to be filling the Circus than this Basilica! How many that are baptized are either making booths in the streets, or complaining that they are not made!

But this Psalm, For the presses, and on the fifth of the sabbath, is sung unto Asaph. Asaph was a certain man called by this name, as Idithun, as Core, as other names that we find in the titles of the Psalms: yet the interpretation of this name intimates the mystery of a hidden truth. Asaph, in fact, in Latin is interpreted 'congregation.' Therefore, For the presses, on the fifth of the sabbath, it is sung unto Asaph, that is, for a distinguishing pressure, to the baptized, born again of water, the Psalm is sung to the Lord's congregation.

We have read the title on the lintel, and have understood what it means by these presses. Now if you please let us see the very house of the composition, that is, the interior of the press. Let us enter, look in, rejoice, fear, desire, avoid. For all these things ye are to find in this inward house, that is, in the text of the Psalm itself, when we shall have begun to read, and, with the Lord's help, to speak what He grants us.

3. Behold yourselves, O Asaph, congregation of the Lord. (ver. 1.) Exult ye unto God our helper. Ye who are gathered together to-day, ye are this day the congregation of the Lord, if indeed unto you the Psalm is sung, Exult ye unto God our helper. Others exult unto the Circus, ye unto God: others exult unto their deceiver, do ye exult unto your helper: others exult unto their god their belly, do ye exult unto your God your helper. Jubilate unto the God of Jacob. Because ye also belong to Jacob: yea, ye are Jacob, the younger people to which the elder is servant. Jubilate unto the God of Jacob. Whatsoever ye cannot explain in words, yet do not therefore forbear exulting: what ye shall be able to explain, cry out; what ye cannot, jubilate. For from the abundance of joys, he that cannot find words sufficient, useth to break out into jubilating; Jubilate unto the God of Jacob.

4. Ver. 2. Take the Psalm, and give the tabret. Both take, and give. What is, take? what, give? Take the Psalm, and give the tabret. The Apostle Paul saith in a certain place, reproving and grieving, that no one had communicated with him in the matter of giving and receiving. What is, 'in the matter of giving and receiving,' but that which he hath openly set forth in another place. If we have sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things. And it is true that a tabret, which is made of hide, belongs to the flesh. The Psalm, therefore, is spiritual, the tabret, carnal. Therefore, people of God, congregation of God, take ye the Psalm, and give the tabret: take ye spiritual things, and give carnal. This also is what at that blessed Martyr's table we exhorted you, that receiving spiritual things ye should give carnal. For these which are built for the time, are needful for receiving the bodies either of the living or of the dead, but in time that is passing by. Shall we after God's judgment take up these buildings to Heaven? Yet without these we shall not be able to do at this time the things which belong to the possessing of Heaven. If therefore ye

are eager in getting spiritual things, be ye devout in expending carnal things. Take the psalm, and give the tabret: take our voice, return your hands.

5. The pleasant psaltery, with the harp. I remember that we once intimated to your charity the difference of psaltery and harp: let the thoughtful who remember recollect, let those who either have not heard, or do not remember, learn. Of those two musical instruments, psaltery and harp, this is the difference, that the psaltery hath that hollow wood, by which the strings are made to ring, in the upper part: the chords are struck below, that they may sound above. But in the harp this same hollow of the wood holdeth the lower place: as though the other should be of heaven, this of earth. For heavenly is the preaching of the word of God. But if we wait for heavenly things, let us not be sluggish in working at earthly things; because, the psaltery is pleasant, but, with the harp. The same is expressed in another way as above, Take the psalm, and give the tabret: here for psalm, is put psaltery, for tabret, harp. Of this, however, we are admonished, that to the preaching of God's word we make answer by bodily works.

6. Ver. 3. Sound the trumpet. This is, Loudly and boldly preach, be not affrighted! as the Prophet says in a certain place, "Cry out, and lift up as with a trumpet thy voice." Sound the trumpet in the beginning of the month of the trumpet. It was ordered, that in the beginning of the month there should be a sounding of the trumpet: and this even now the Jews do in bodily sort, after the spirit they understand it not. For the beginning of the month, is the new moon: the new moon, is the new life. What is the new moon? If any, then, is in Christ, he is a new creature. What is, sound the trumpet in the beginning of the month of the trumpet? With all confidence preach ye the new life, fear not the noise of the old life.

7. Ver. 4. Because it is a commandment for Israel, and a judgment for the God of Jacob. Where a commandment, there judgment. For, They that have sinned in the Law, by the Law shall be judged. And the very giver of the commandment, the Lord Christ, the Word made flesh, saith, For judgment I am come into the world, that they that see not may see, and they that see may be made blind. What is, That they that see not may see, they that see be made blind, but that the lowly be exalted, the proud thrown down? For not

they that see are to be made blind, but those who to themselves seem to see are to be convicted of blindness. This is brought about in the mystery of the press, that they who see not may see, and they that see be made blind.

8. Ver. 5. A testimony in Joseph He made that. Look you, brethren, what is it? Joseph is interpreted augmentation. Ye remember, ye know of Joseph sold into Egypt: Joseph sold into Egypt is Christ passing over to the Gentiles. There Joseph after tribulations was exalted, and here Christ, after the suffering of the Martyrs, was glorified. Thenceforth to Joseph the Gentiles rather belong, and thenceforth augmentation; because, “Many are the children of her that was desolate, rather than of her that hath the husband.”

A testimony in Joseph He made it, till he should go out of the land of Egypt. Observe that also here the fifth of the sabbath is signified: when Joseph went out from the land of Egypt, that is, the people multiplied through Joseph, he was caused to pass through the Red sea. Therefore then also the waters brought forth creeping things of living souls. No other thing was it that there in figure the passage of that people through the sea foreshewed, than the passing of the Faithful through Baptism; the apostle is witness: for I would not have you ignorant, brethren, he said, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Nothing else then the passing through the sea did signify, but the Sacrament of the baptized; nothing else the pursuing Egyptians, but the multitude of past sins. Ye see most evident mysteries. The Egyptians press, they urge; so then sins follow close, but no farther than to the water. Why then dost thou fear, who hast not yet come, to come to the Baptism of Christ, to pass through the Red sea? What is Red? Consecrated with the Blood of the Lord. Why fearest thou to come? The consciousness, perhaps, of some huge offences goads and tortures in thee thy mind, and says to thee that it is so great a thing thou hast committed, that thou mayest despair to have it remitted thee. Fear lest there remain any thing of thy sins, if there lived any one of the Egyptians!

But when thou shalt have passed the Red sea, when thou shalt have been led forth out of thine offences with a mighty hand and with a strong arm, thou wilt perceive mysteries that thou knowest not: since Joseph himself

too, when he came out of the land of Egypt, heard a language which he knew not. Thou shalt hear a language which thou knowest not: which they that know now hear and recognise, bearing witness and knowing. Thou shalt hear where thou oughtest to have thy heart: which just now when I said many understood and answered by acclamation, the rest stood mute, because they have not heard the language which they knew not. Let them hasten, then, let them pass over, let them learn. A language which he had not known he heard.

9. Ver. 6. He turned away from burdens his back. Who turned away from burdens his back, but He that cried, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden? In another manner this same thing is signified. What the pursuit of the Egyptians did, the same thing do the burdens of sins. He turned away from burdens his back. As if thou shouldest say, From what burdens? His hands in the basket did serve. By the basket are signified servile works; to cleanse, to manure, to carry earth, is done with a basket, such works are servile: because every one that doeth sin, is the slave of sin; and if the Son shall have made you free, then will ye be free indeed. Justly also are the rejected things of the world counted as baskets, but even baskets did God fill with morsels; Twelve baskets did He fill with morsels; because He chose the rejected things of this world to confound the things that were mighty. But also when with the basket Joseph did serve, he then carried earth, because he did make bricks. His hands in the basket did serve.

10. Ver. 7. In tribulation thou didst call on Me, and I delivered thee. Let each Christian conscience recognise itself, if it have devoutly passed the Red sea, if with faith in believing and observing it hath heard a strange language which it knew not, let it recognise itself as having been heard in its tribulation. For that was a great tribulation, to be weighed down with loads of sins. How does the conscience, lifted from the earth, rejoice. Lo, thou art baptized, thy conscience which was yesterday overladen, to-day rejoiceth thee. Thou hast been heard in tribulation, remember thy tribulation. Before thou camest to the water, what anxiety didst thou bear on thee! what fastings didst thou practise! what tribulations didst thou carry in thy heart! what inward, pious, devout prayers! Slain are thine enemies; all

thy sins are blotted out. In tribulation thou didst call upon me, and I delivered thee.

11. I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest. Not in a tempest of the sea, but in a tempest of the heart. I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest: I proved thee in the water of contradiction. Truly, brethren, truly, he that was heard in the hidden part of the tempest ought to be proved in the water of contradiction. For when he hath believed, when he hath been baptized, when he hath begun to go in the way of God, when he hath striven to be strained into the vat, and hath drawn himself out from the lees that run in the street, he will have many disturbers, many insulters, many detractors, many discouragers, many that even threaten where they can, that deter, that depress. This is all the 'water of contradiction.' I suppose there are some here to-day, for instance, I think it likely there are some here whom their friends wished to hurry away to the circus, and to I know not what triflings of this day's festivity: perchance they have brought those persons with them to church. But whether they have brought those with them, or whether they have by them not permitted themselves to be led away to the circus, in the 'water of contradiction' have they been tried. Do not then be ashamed to proclaim what thou knowest, to defend even among blasphemers what thou hast believed. For if thou art heard in the hidden part of the tempest, with the heart doth one believe unto righteousness: if thou art proved in the water of contradiction, with the mouth is confession made unto salvation. For how much is that water of contradiction? even now it is nearly dried up. Our ancestors felt it: when to the word of God, when to the mysteries of Christ, the Gentiles offered fierce resistance, the water was disturbed. For that waters are sometimes to be understood for peoples, the Scripture of the Apocalypse evidently sheweth, where when many waters were seen, and it was asked what they were, it was answered, They are peoples. They therefore endured the water of contradiction, when the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things; when the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. When the heathen raged, then did that lion roaring come to meet the strong man Samson, as he went to take a wife from the foreigners; that is Christ going down to take a Church from the Gentiles. But what did he? He seized, held, crushed, tore the lion; he became in His hands like a kid of the

goats. For what could the raging people become, but a sick sinner? But now that fierceness has been slain, no longer does the royal power so roar, no more does the people of the Gentiles rage as it meets Christ: yea, truly, in the very kingdom of the Gentiles we find laws for the Church, like as it were a honeycomb in the mouth of the lion. Why then should I now fear the water of contradiction, which is now nearly all dried up? That is now almost silent, if the lees do not contradict. However much the bad that are aliens may rage, O that our own bad people would not help them!

I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest, I proved thee in the water of contradiction. Ye recollect what was said of Christ, that He was thus born for the fall of many, and the rising again of many, and for a sign to be spoken against. We know, we see: the sign of the Cross has been set up, and it has been spoken against. There has been speaking against the glory of the Cross: but there was a title over the Cross which was not to be corrupted. For there is a title in the Psalm, For the inscription of the title, corrupt thou not. It was a sign to be spoken against: for the Jews said, Make it not, King of the Jews, but make it, that He said I am the King of the Jews. Conquered was the contradiction; it was answered, "What I have written, I have written."

I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest, I proved thee in the water of contradiction.

12. All this, from the beginning of the Psalm up to this verse, we have heard of the oil of the press. What remains is rather for grief and warning: for it belongs to the lees of the press, even to the end; perchance also not without a meaning in the interposition of the Diapsalma. But even this too is profitable to hear, that he who sees himself already of the oil may rejoice; he that is in danger of running among the lees may beware. To both give heed, choose the one, fear the other.

Ver. 8. Hear, O My people, and I will speak, and will bear witness unto thee. For it is not to a strange people, not to a people that belongs not to the press: "Judge ye," He saith, "between Me and My vineyard."

Hear, O my people, and I will speak, and will bear witness unto thee.

13. Ver. 9. Israel, if thou shalt have heard Me, there shall not be in thee any new god. A new god is one made for the time: but our God is not new, but from eternity to eternity. And our Christ is new, perchance, as Man, but eternal God. For what before the beginning? And truly, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And our Christ Himself is the Word made flesh, that He might dwell in us. Far be it, then, that there should be in any one a new god. A new god is either a stone or a phantom. He is not, saith one, a stone; I have a silver and a gold one. Justly did he choose to name the very costly things, who said, The idols of the nations are silver and gold. Great are they, because they are of gold and silver; costly they are, shining they are; but yet, Eyes they have, and see not! New are these gods. What newer than a god out of a workshop? Yea, though those now old ones spiders' webs have covered over, they that are not eternal are new.

So much for the Pagans. One beside, taking in vain the name of the Lord his God, hath made for himself a Christ that is a creature, a Christ unequal and not coeval with Him that begetteth, speaking of a Son of God, and denying the Son of God. For if He is the only Son, What the Father is He is, and That He is from eternity. But thou hast imagined some other thing in thy heart, thou hast set up a new god.

Another hath made to himself a god fighting against a race of darkness, fearing lest he be invaded, busy lest he be corrupted; yet in part corrupted, in order that he might, as a whole, be safe; but not whole, because in part corrupt. The Manichees say these things, these too make to themselves in their heart a new god. Not such is our God, not such is thy portion, O Jacob! But He that made heaven and earth, Himself is thy God, Who needeth not the good, and feareth not from the evil.

14. Many, therefore, Heretics together with Pagans, have made themselves gods, these and those; these gods and those have they feigned for themselves, and have placed them, although not in temples, yet, what is worse, in their hearts, and have themselves become temples of false and ridiculous images. It is a great work to break these idols within, and to cleanse a place for the living God, not for a new god. For all these, thinking one thing and another, framing to themselves first some then other gods,

and varying their very faith through falsehood, seem to disagree with each other; but they all from earthly thoughts depart not, in earthly thoughts they agree among themselves. Their opinion is diverse, the vanity of it is one. Of them in another Psalm is said, They from vanity in one. Although by variety of opinions they disagree, yet by like vanity they are bound together. And ye know that vanity is backward, it is behind; therefore he who had forgotten the things behind, that is, had forgotten vanity, reaching forward to those things that are before, that is, unto the Truth, follows after the palm of the heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore for the worse do they agree among themselves, although they seem to differ from one another. Therefore Samson tied together the tails of foxes. Foxes signify the insidious, and chiefly heretics, deceitful, given to fraud, hiding themselves and taking men in by the winding ways of their holes, and withal stinking with a nasty savour. Against which savour saith the Apostle, We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place. These foxes are signified in the Song of Songs, where it is said, Take ye for us the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, that hide in winding holes. Take them for us, convict them for us: for thou takest one whom thou convictest of falsehood. Then when the little foxes gainsay the Lord, and say, In what authority doest Thou these things? Do ye too answer Me, He says, one word: The baptism of John, whence is it? from heaven, or of men? Now foxes use to have such holes as that on one side they do enter, and on another side go out; at either entrance the taker of foxes hath placed his nets. Tell Me, is it from heaven, or of men? They perceive that He had spread a net on either side, whereby He might take them; and they say with themselves, If, say they, we shall say from heaven, He will say to us, Wherefore then did ye not believe? For he bore witness of Christ. If we shall say, Of men, the people stoneth us, because they hold him for a prophet. Perceiving therefore that on this side and that there were means to take them withal, they answered, We know not. And the Lord said, Neither do I tell you on what authority I do these things. Ye say that ye know not what ye know. I do not tell you what ye ask. Because on no side ye would venture to come out, in your own darkness ye have remained. Let us too therefore obey if we can the Word of God when He speaketh. Take ye for us the little foxes that spoil the vineyards. Let us see whether we too cannot take some little foxes. Let us set at either entrance that by which, what way soever a fox may have chosen to go out, he may be

taken. For example, to a Manichæan, making himself a new god, and in his heart setting up that which is not, let us say, and put the question to him, Is the substance of God corruptible or incorruptible? Choose which thou wilt, and go out which way thou wilt, but thou shalt not escape. If thou shalt have said corruptible, not by the people, but by thy very self thou wilt be stoned: but if thou shalt have said that God is incorruptible, how then hath the Incorruptible stood in fear of the race of darkness? What is the race of darkness to do to Him Who is incorruptible? What remains but that it be said, We know not? But yet, if this is said not in craftiness but in ignorance, let him not remain in darkness, of a fox let him become a sheep, let him believe the invisible, sole incorruptible God, not a new god; sole by His soleness, not solarity, lest we ourselves should seem to have opened another hole for the fox to escape. Although we shall not be afraid even of the name “Sol.” For there is in our Scriptures the Sun of Righteousness, and health in His wings. From the heat of this sun shade is desired: but under the wings of this other Sun is a refuge from the heat; for health is in His wings. This is the Sun of which the ungodly shall say, Therefore we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and the sun is not arisen upon us. The worshippers of the sun shall say, The Sun is not arisen upon us; because whilst they adore the sun which He maketh to rise upon the good and the evil, to them the Sun is not arisen, Who enlighteneth the good alone. Each sort, then, make to themselves new gods, such as they will. For what hindereth the workshop of the deceived heart to frame to itself a phantom such as it may have chosen? But all these agree in the things behind, that is, are held in a similar vanity. Whence our Samson, which name is also interpreted ‘their sun,’ that is, of those to whom He shines; not of all, as is that which riseth upon the good and the evil, but the Sun of certain ones, the Sun of Righteousness: (for he bore a figure of Christ:) bound together, as I had begun to say, the tails of foxes, and then bound on fire; fire to set burning, but that the harvest of aliens. Such accordingly connected in things behind, as if tied together by their tails, draw along a fire that destroyeth; but they do not set burning the crops of our people. For the Lord knoweth them that are His; and let every one that calleth on the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of clay: and some one indeed unto honour, and others unto dishonour. But if any

one shall have cleansed himself from such, he shall be a vessel unto honour, useful for the Lord, prepared for every good work; and therefore neither the tails of foxes, nor the faces of foxes, shall he fear.

But let us see concerning this people: If thou shalt have heard Me, He saith, there shall not be in thee any new god. It moveth me that He hath said in thee, for He hath not said ‘from thee,’ as if it were an image taken to one from without, but in thee, in thy heart, in the image of thy fancy, in the deception of thine error thou shalt carry with thee thy new god, if thou remain old. If, then, thou wilt hear Me. “Me,” He says, because “I am I that Am. There shall not be in thee any new god: nor shalt thou worship a strange god. For if there be error in thee, Thou wilt not worship a strange god. If thou think not of a false god, thou wilt not worship a manufactured god: for there will not be in thee any strange god.

15. Ver. 10. For I am. Why wouldest thou adore what is not? For I am the Lord thy God. Because I am I that Am, and indeed I Am He saith, I that Am, over every creature: yet to thee what good have I afforded in time? “Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt.” Not to that people alone is it said. For we all were brought out of the land of Egypt, we have all passed through the Red sea; our enemies pursuing us have perished in the water. Let us not be ungrateful to our God; let us not forget God that abideth, and fabricate in ourselves a new god. I, Who led thee out of the land of Egypt, saith God. Open wide thy mouth, and I will fill it. Thou sufferest straitness in thyself because of the new god set up in thy heart; break the vain image, cast down from thy conscience the feigned idol: open wide thy mouth, in confessing, in loving: and I will fill it, because with me is the fountain of life.

16. This indeed saith the Lord, but what followeth? (Ver. 11.) And My people obeyed not My voice. For He would not speak these things except to His own people. For, “we know that whatsoever things the Law saith, it saith to them that are in the Law.

And My people obeyed not My voice: and Israel did not listen to Me. Who? To whom? Israel to Me. O ungrateful soul! Through Me the soul, by Me the soul called, by Me brought back to hope, by Me washed from sins! And

Israel did not listen to Me! For they are baptized and pass through the Red sea: but on the way they murmur, gainsay, complain, are stirred with seditions, ungrateful to Him Who delivered them from pursuing enemies, Who leads through the dry land, through the desert, yet with food and drink, with light by night and shade by day: And Israel did not listen to Me.

17. Ver. 12. And I let them go according to the affections of their heart. Behold the press: the orifices are open, the lees run. And I let them go, not according to the healthfulness of My commands; but, according to the affections of their heart: I gave them up to themselves. The Apostle also saith, “God gave them up to the desires of their own hearts.” I let them go according to the affections of their heart, they shall go in their own affections. There is what ye shudder at, if at least ye are straining out into the hidden vats of the Lord, if at least ye have conceived a hearty love for His storehouses, there is what ye shudder at. Some stand up for the circus, some for the amphitheatre, some for the booths in the streets, some for the theatres, some for this, some for that, some finally for their “new gods;” they shall go in their own affections.

18. Ver. 13. If My people would have heard Me, if Israel would have walked in My ways. For perchance that Israel saith, Behold I sin, it is manifest, I go after the affections of my own heart: but what can I do? The devil doth this. Demons do this. What is the devil? Who are the demons? Certainly thine enemies. If Israel would have walked in My ways: unto nothing all their enemies I would have brought down. Therefore, If My people would have heard Me. For wherefore is it Mine, if it doth not hear Me? If My people would have heard Me. What is, My people? Israel. What is, Would have heard Me? If he had walked in My ways. He complaineth and groaneth under enemies: Unto nothing their enemies I would have brought down; and on them that oppress them I would have sent forth My hand.

19. But now what have they to do to complain of enemies? Themselves are become the worse enemies. For how? What followeth? Of enemies ye complain, yourselves, what are ye? (Ver. 15.) The enemies of God have lied unto Him. Dost thou renounce? I renounce. And he returns to what he renounced. In fact, what things dost thou renounce, except bad deeds,

diabolical deeds, deeds to be condemned of God, thefts, plunderings, perjuries, manslayings, adulteries, sacrileges, abominable rites, curious arts. All these thou dost renounce, and again by these thou turnest back and art overcome. Thy latter end is become worse than the former things. The dog is returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. The enemies of God have lied unto Him. And how great is the patience of the Lord! Why are they not laid low? why are they not slaughtered? why are they not swallowed by the gaping earth? why are they not burned up by the flaming sky? Because great is the patience of the Lord. And shall they be unpunished? Far be it! Let them not so flatter themselves about the mercy of God, as to promise themselves injustice on His part. Knowest thou not that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, according to the hardness of thy heart, and thine heart impenitent, treasurest up unto thyself wrath in the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the just judgment of God, Who shall render to every one according to his works. And if now He rendereth not, then He will render. For if now He rendereth, for a time He rendereth: but to one that is not converted nor corrected, for eternity He will render. See therefore that they shall not be unpunished, attend to what follows: The enemies of the Lord have lied unto Him. Thou wilt say, And what hath He done to them? Do they not live? Do they not breathe the air? Do they not enjoy the light? Do they not drink the fountains? Do they not eat the fruits of the earth? And their time shall be for ever.

20. Let not any man therefore flatter himself, because he belongs in a manner to the press: it is good for him, if he belongs to the oil in the press. Let not each one be promising to himself, while he has wicked deeds, which shall not possess the kingdom of God, and say to himself, because I have the sign of Christ, and the Sacraments of Christ, I shall not be destroyed for ever; and if I undergo a cleansing, through fire I shall be saved. For what is that which the Apostle saith of those who have the foundation? Other foundation can no man lay beside that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. What is it, they say, that follows? But let every one on that foundation take heed what he buildeth. For one buildeth up gold, silver, precious stones; another wood, hay, stubble. Every man's work of what sort it is, the fire will prove: for the day of the Lord will declare it, because by fire it shall be

revealed. If any man's work shall abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward: that is, because upon the foundation he hath built up righteous works, gold, silver, precious stones. But if sins, wood, hay, stubble; yet because of the foundation, himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

Brethren, I wish to be extremely fearful; for it is better not to give you a hurtful security. I will not give what I do not receive, as I fear, I will affright: I would make you secure if I were myself made secure: I myself fear eternal fire. And their time shall be for ever, I do not understand otherwise than of the eternal fire, of which in another place the Scripture saith, Their fire shall not be quenched, and their worm shall not die. But of the ungodly He said it, saith one, not of me, who though I be a sinner, though an adulterer, though a defrauder, though a robber, though a perjurer, yet have Christ for a foundation, am a Christian, am baptized: I get purged through fire, and because of the foundation perish not. Tell me again, What art thou? A Christian, he says. Now then pass on. What else? A robber, an adulterer, and the rest of which the Apostle says, that they who do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God. Certainly then, when not corrected of such things, and for such things committed doing no penance, dost thou hope for the kingdom of heaven? I think not. Because, they that do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God. And, Knowest thou not that the long-suffering of God leadeth thee to repentance? Thou, promising thyself I know not what, according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God, Who shall render to every man according to his works. Attend therefore to the Judge Himself Who is coming. Well: thanks be to God, He hath not kept silence about the definitive sentence, He hath not sent out the criminals, and drawn a curtain. Beforehand He hath willed to announce what He hath determined to do; namely, Then shall be gathered before Him all nations. What shall He do with them? He will separate them, and will put some on the right hand and others on the left. Is there any place at all kept in the midst? What will He say to those on the right? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom. What to those on the left? Go ye into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. If thou fearest not being sent for the

place whither, look with whom it is. If therefore all those works shall not possess the kingdom of God; (yea not the works, but they that do such things; for such works there shall be none in the fire: for they shall not, while burning in that fire, be committing theft or adultery; but, they that do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God;) they shall not therefore be on the right hand, with those to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom: because, they that do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God. If therefore on the right they shall not be, there remaineth not but that they must be on the left. To those on the left what shall He say? Go ye into eternal fire. Because, their time shall be for ever.

21. Explain to us, then, saith one, how those that build wood, hay, stubble, on the foundation, do not perish, but are saved, yet so as by fire? An obscure question indeed that, but as I am able I tell you briefly. Brethren, there are men altogether despisers of this world, to whom nothing is pleasant that flows in the course of time, they cling not by love to any earthly works, holy, chaste, continent, just, perchance even selling all their goods and distributing to the poor, or possessing as though they possessed not, and using this world as though not using it. But there are others who cling to things allowed to infirmity with a degree of affection. He robs not another of his estate, but so loves his own, that if he loses it he will be disturbed. He does not covet another's wife, but so clings to his own, so cohabits with his own, as not therein to keep the measure prescribed in the laws, for the sake of begetting children. He does not take away other men's things, but reclaims his own, and has a law-suit with his brother. For to such it is said, Now indeed there is altogether a fault among you, because ye have law-suits with each other. But these very suits he orders to be tried in the Church, not to be dragged into court, yet he says they are faults. For a Christian contends for earthly things more than becomes one to whom the kingdom of Heaven is promised. Not the whole of his heart doth he raise upward, but some part of it he draggeth on the earth. Lastly, if there come the trial of martyrdom to be undergone, they that have Christ for foundation and build up gold, silver, precious stones, what say they on such an opportunity? It is good for me to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Cheerful they run, either not at all or but slightly are they saddened from

earthly frailness. But all those others that love their own property, their own houses, are grievously disturbed; the hay, and the stubble, and the sticks are burned. They have then wood, hay, stubble on the foundation, but of allowable things, not of unlawful. For I say, brethren, thou hast the foundation, cleave to heaven, trample on earth. If such thou art, thou buildest not save gold, silver, and precious stones. But when thou sayest, I love that possession, I fear lest it be lost; and the loss approaches, and thou growest sad; thou dost not indeed prefer it to Christ; for in such sort thou lovest that possession, that if it be said to thee, Wilt thou have it or Christ? though thou art sad at losing it, yet thou dost rather embrace Christ, Whom thou hast laid for thy foundation: thou wilt be saved as through fire. Hear another case. Thou canst not keep that possession unless thou bear false witness; and not to do this, is to lay Christ for a foundation: for the Truth hath said, The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul. Therefore if thou lovest thy possession, yet dost not for its sake commit violence, dost not for its sake bear false witness, dost not for its sake commit manslaughter, dost not for its sake swear falsely, dost not for its sake deny Christ: in that thou wilt not for its sake do these things, thou hast Christ for a foundation. But yet because thou lovest it, and art saddened if thou lovest it, upon the foundation thou hast placed, not gold, or silver, or precious stones, but wood, hay, stubble. Saved therefore thou wilt be, when that begins to burn which thou hast built, yet so as by fire. For let no one on this foundation building adulteries, blasphemies, sacrileges, idolatries, perjuries, think he shall be saved through fire, as though they were the wood, hay, stubble: but he that buildeth the love of earthly things on the foundation of the kingdom of Heaven, that is upon Christ, his love of temporal things shall be burned, and himself shall be saved through the right foundation.

22. The enemies of the Lord have lied unto Him; in saying, I go to the vineyard, and not going; and their time shall be, not for a time, but for ever. And who are these? (Ver. 16.) And He fed them of the fat of wheat. Ye know the fat of wheat, whereof many are fed that have lied unto Him. And He fed them of the fat of wheat: He mingled them with His own Sacraments. Even Judas, when He gave him the sop, He fed of the fat of wheat. And the enemy of the Lord lied unto him, and his time shall be for ever. And He fed them of the fat of wheat, and from the rock with honey He

satisfied them. In the wilderness from the rock He brought forth water, not honey. Honey is wisdom, holding the first place for sweetness among the viands of the heart. How many enemies of the Lord, then, that lie unto the Lord, are fed not only of the fat of wheat, but also from the rock with honey, from the wisdom of Christ? How many are delighted with His word, and with the knowledge of His sacraments, with the unfolding of His parables, how many are delighted, how many applaud with clamour! And this honey is not from any chance person, but from the rock. But the Rock was Christ. How many, then are satisfied with that honey, cry out, and say, It is sweet; say, Nothing better, nothing sweeter could be thought or said! and yet the enemies of the Lord have lied unto Him. I like not to dwell any more on matters of grief; although the Psalm endeth in terror to this purpose, yet from the end of it, I pray you, let us return to the heading: Exult unto God our Helper. Turned unto God.

And after the word.

Not lightly have your minds in the name of Christ been occupied with the Divine exhibitions, and raised to earnestness, not only for desiring some things, but also for shunning some things. These are the exhibitions that are useful, healthful, building up not destroying: yea both destroying and building up, destroying new gods, building up faith in the true and eternal God. Also for to-morrow we invite your love. To-morrow, they have, as we have heard, a sea in the theatre: let us have a harbour in Christ. But since the day after to-morrow, that is, the fourth of the week, we cannot meet at the 'Table of Cyprian,' because it is the festival of the holy Martyrs, to-morrow let us meet at that Table.

PSALM 82

A Psalm for Asaph himself.

This Psalm, like others similarly named, was so entitled either from the name of the man who wrote it, or from the explanation of that same name, so as to refer in meaning to the Synagogue, which Asaph signifies; especially as this is intimated in the first verse. For it begins, (ver. 1.) God stood in the synagogue of gods. Far however be it from us to understand by these Gods the gods of the Gentiles, or idols, or any creature in heaven or earth except men; for a little after this verse the same Psalm relates and explains what Gods it means in whose synagogue God stood, where it says, I have said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High: but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. In the synagogue of these children of the Most High, of whom the same Most High said by the mouth of Isaiah, I have begotten sons and brought them up, but they despised Me, stood God. By the synagogue we understand the people of Israel, because synagogue is the word properly used of them, although they were also called the Church. Our congregation, on the contrary, the Apostles never called synagogue, but always Ecclesia; whether for the sake of the distinction, or because there is some difference between a congregation whence the synagogue has its name, and a convocation whence the Church is called Ecclesia: for the word congregation (or flocking together) is used of cattle, and particularly of that kind properly called “flocks,” whereas convocation (or calling together) is more of reasonable creatures, such as men are. Accordingly in the person of Asaph is sung in another Psalm, I became as it were a beast before Thee; yet I am always by Thee. Yet although the property of the one true God, instead of the greatest and highest benefits, they used to ask Him for carnal, earthly, temporal things. We find that they were also often called sons, not by that grace which belongs to the New Testament, but by that of the Old, the grace by which

He chose Abraham, and from his flesh raised up so great a nation, by which before they were yet born he loved Jacob but hated Esau, by which He freed them from Egypt, by which He cast out the nations, and brought them into the land of promise. For if this also were not grace, it certainly would not presently be said of us, who have power given us to become sons of God, not for the sake of obtaining an earthly but an heavenly kingdom, in the same Gospel, that we have received grace for grace, that is, for the promises of the Old Testament the promises of the New Testament. I think then that it is clear in what synagogue of gods God stood.

2. The next question is, whether we should understand the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity, to have stood among the congregation of gods, and in the midst to distinguish the gods; because Each One is God, and the Trinity Itself is One God. It is not indeed easy to make this clear, because it cannot be denied that not a bodily but a spiritual presence of God, agreeable to His nature, exists with created things in a wonderful manner, and one which but a few do understand, and that imperfectly: as to God it is said, If I shall ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into hell, Thou art there also. Hence it is rightly said, that God stands in the congregation of men invisibly, as He fills heaven and earth, which He asserts of Himself by the Prophet's mouth; and He is not only said, but is, in a way, known to stand in those things which He hath created, as far as the human mind can conceive, if man also stands and hears Him, and rejoices greatly on account of His voice within. But I think that the Psalm intimates something that took place at a particular time, by God's standing in the congregation of gods. For that standing by which He fills heaven and earth, neither belongs peculiarly to the synagogue, nor varies from time to time. God, therefore, stood in the congregation of gods; that is, He Who said of Himself, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The cause too is mentioned; but in the midst, to judge of the gods. I acknowledge that God stood in the congregation of gods, of those whose are the fathers, and from whom according to the flesh Christ came. For in order that He might stand in the congregation of gods, on that account He was of them according to the flesh. But what is God? Not such as those gods in whose synagogue of gods He stood: but as the Apostle continues, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. I acknowledge, I say, that

He stood; I acknowledge God the Bridegroom in the midst, of Whom one who was His friend said, He standeth in the midst of you, Whom ye know not. For they are those of whom a little after it is said in the Psalm, They did not know, neither did they understand, they walk on in darkness. The Apostle also bears witness, That blindness hath in part happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in. For they saw Him when He stood in the midst of them; but they did not see Him to be God, as He wished to be seen, Who said, He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father also He distinguishes the gods, not by their own merits, but by His grace, of the same lump making some vessels for honour and others for dishonour. For who distinguisheth thee? What hast thou that thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why boastest thou as if thou hast not received?

3. Hear now the voice of God decreeing, hear the voice of the Lord dividing the flames of fire: (ver. 2.) How long will ye judge unrighteously, and accept the persons of the ungodly; as in another place, How long are ye heavy in heart? Until He shall come Who is the light of the heart? I have given a law, ye have resisted stubbornly: I sent Prophets, ye treated them unjustly, or slew them, or connived at those who did so. But if they are not worthy to be even spoken to, who slew the servants of God that were sent to them, ye who were silent when these things were doing, that is, ye who would imitate as if they were innocent those who then were silent, how long will ye judge unrighteously, and accept the persons of the ungodly? If the Heir comes even now, is He to be slain? Was He not willing for your sake to become as it were a child under guardians? Did not He for your sake hunger and thirst like one in need? Did He not cry to you, Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart? Did He not become poor, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might be made rich?

Ver. 3. Give sentence, therefore, for the fatherless and the poor man, justify the humble and needy. Not them who for their own sake are rich and proud, but Him Who for your sake was humble and poor, believe ye to be righteous: proclaim Him righteous.

4. But they will envy Him, and will not at all spare Him, saying, "This is the Heir, come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours."

Ver. 4. Deliver, then, the poor man, and save the needy from the hands of the ungodly. This is said that it might be known, that in that nation where Christ was born and put to death, those persons were not guiltless of so great a crime, who being so numerous, that, as the Gospel says, the Jews feared them, and therefore dared not lay hands on Christ, afterwards consented, and permitted Him to be slain by the malicious and envious Jewish rulers: yet if they had so willed, they would still have been feared, so that the hands of the wicked would never have prevailed against Him. For of these it is said elsewhere, Dumb dogs, they know not how to bark Of them too is that said, Lo, how the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart. He perished as far as lay in them, who would have Him to perish; for how could He perish by dying, Who in that way rather was seeking again what had perished? If then they are justly blamed and deservedly rebuked, who by their dissembling suffered such a wicked deed to be committed; how must they be blamed, or rather not only blamed, but how severely must they be condemned, who did this of design and malice?

5. To all of them, verily, what follows is most fitly suited: (ver. 5.) They did not know nor understand, they walk on in darkness. “For if even they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory:” and those others, if they had known, would never have consented to ask that Barabbas should be freed, and Christ should be crucified. But as the above-mentioned blindness happened in part unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, this blindness of that People having caused the crucifixion of Christ, all the foundations of the earth shall be moved. So have they been moved, and shall they be moved, until the predestined fulness of the Gentiles shall come in. For at the actual death of the Lord the earth was moved, and the rocks rent. And if we understand by the foundations of the earth those who are rich in the abundance of earthly possessions, it was truly foretold that they should be moved, either by wondering that lowliness, poverty, death, should be so loved and honoured in Christ, when it is to their mind great misery; or even in that themselves should love and follow it, and set at nought the vain happiness of this world. So are all the foundations of the earth moved, while they partly admire, and partly are even altered. For as without absurdity we call foundations of heaven those on whom the kingdom of heaven is built up in the persons of saints and

faithful; whose first foundation is Christ Himself, born of the Virgin, of whom the Apostle says, Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus; next the Apostles and Prophets themselves, by whose authority the heavenly place is chosen, that by obeying them we may be builded together with them; whence he says to the Ephesians, Now are ye no longer strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God, built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone, in Whom all the building fitly joined together increases to a holy temple in the Lord; so it is not unsuitable to understand by the foundations of the world, those who by the envy which their superabundant possession of earthly happiness excites, lead men to lust after such enjoyments, and by acquiring them to be built together like earth upon earth, as in that building above like heaven upon heaven: since to the sinner it was said, Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return; and, The Heavens declare the glory of God, when their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world.

6. But the kingdom of earthly happiness is pride, to oppose which came the lowliness of Christ, rebuking those whom He wished by lowliness to make the children of the Most High, and blaming them: (ver. 6.) I said, Ye are gods, ye are all the children of the Most High. (Ver. 7.) But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Whether to those He said this, I said, Ye are gods, and to those particularly who are unpredestined to eternal life; and to the other, &c. But ye shall die like men, &c. and shall fall like one of the princes, in this way also distinguishing the gods; or whether He blames all together, in order to distinguish the obedient and those who received correction, I said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High: that is, to all of you I promised celestial happiness, but ye, through the infirmity of your flesh, shall die like men, and through haughtiness of soul, like one of the princes, that is, the devil, shall not be exalted, but shall fall. As if He said: Though the days of your life are so few, that ye speedily die like men, this avails not to your correction: but like the devil, whose days are many in this world, because he dies not in the flesh, ye are lifted up so that ye fall. For by devilish pride it came to pass that the perverse and blind rulers of the Jews envied the glory of Christ: by this will it came to pass,

and still does, that the lowliness of Christ crucified unto death is lightly esteemed in the eyes of them who love the excellence of this world.

7. And therefore that this vice may be cured, in the person of the Prophet himself it is said, (ver. 8.) Arise, O God, and judge the earth; for the earth swelled high when it crucified Thee: rise from the dead, and judge the earth. For Thou shalt destroy among all nations. What, but the earth? that is, destroying those who savour of earthly things, or destroying the feeling itself of earthly lust and pride in believers; or separating those who do not believe, as earth to be trodden under foot and to perish. Thus by His members, whose conversation is in heaven, He judges the earth, and destroys it among all nations. But I must not omit to remark, that some copies have, for Thou shalt inherit among all nations. This too may be understood agreeably to the sense, nor does any thing prevent both meanings existing at once. His inheritance takes place by love, which in that He cultivates by His commands and gracious mercy, He destroys earthly desires.

PSALM 83

Of this Psalm the title is, A song of a Psalm of Asaph. We have already often said what is the interpretation of Asaph, that is, congregation. That man, therefore, who was called Asaph, is named in representation of the congregation of God's people in the titles of many Psalms. But in Greek, congregation is called synagogue, which has come to be held for a kind of proper name for the Jewish people, that it should be called The Synagogue; even as the Christian people is more usually called The Church, in that it too is congregated.

2. The people of God, then, in this Psalm saith, (ver. 1.) O God, who shall be like unto Thee? Which I suppose to be more fitly taken of Christ, because, being made in the likeness of men, He was thought by those by whom He was despised to be comparable to other men: for He was even reckoned among the unrighteous, but for this purpose, that He might be judged. But when He shall come to judge, then shall be done what is here said, O God, who is like unto Thee? For if the Psalms did not use to speak to the Lord Christ, that too would not be spoken which not one of the faithful can doubt was spoken unto Christ. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore hath God, Thy God, anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. To Him therefore also now it is said, O God, who shall be like unto Thee? For unto many Thou didst vouchsafe to be likened in Thy humiliation, even so far as to the robbers that were crucified with Thee: but when in glory Thou shalt come, who shall be like unto Thee? For what great thing is said, when it is said to God, "Who shall be like unto Thee?" unless it be said to Him, Who vouchsafed to be like men, taking unto Him the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man? And therefore he saith not, "Who is like unto Thee," which in fact would be right to say if it

referred to the Godhead. But because it referred to the form of a servant, it is then His unlikeness to other men will appear, when He shall appear in glory. Therefore it follows, Keep not silence, nor be restrained, O God. Because at first He was silent, that He might be judged; when like as a lamb before him that sheared him was dumb, so He opened not His mouth, and restrained His power. And that He might shew that He was holding it back, upon that word of His when He said, I am He, they who were seeking Him that they might take Him, went backward, and fell. Would He therefore ever have fallen within their hands and suffered, unless He had held Himself back and restrained Himself, and in a manner made Himself mild? For so also have some translated the word used here, neither be Thou restrained, O God, as to say, neither grow Thou mild, O God. Himself saith elsewhere, I was silent, shall I always be silent? To Whom it is here said, Keep not silence, of the Same it is said elsewhere, God shall come manifest, our God, and shall not keep silence. It is said here, Keep not silence. For He was silent, that He might be judged, when He came hidden; but He will not be silent, that He may judge, when He shall come manifest.

3. Ver. 2. For lo Thine enemies have sounded, and they that hate Thee have lifted up the head. He seems to me to signify the last days, when these things that are now repressed by fear are to break forth into free utterance, but quite irrational, so that it should rather be called a sound, than speech or discourse. They will not, therefore, then begin to hate, but they that hate Thee will then lift up the head. And not 'heads,' but head; since they are to come even to that point, that they shall have that head, which is lifted up above all that is called God, and that is worshipped; so that in him especially is to be fulfilled, He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and when He to Whom it is said, Keep not silence, nor grow mild, O God, shall slay him with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

4. Ver. 3. Upon Thy people they have malignantly taken counsel. Or, as other copies have it, They have cunningly devised counsel, and have devised against Thy saints. In scorn this is said. For how should they be able to hurt the nation or people of God, or His saints, who know how to say, If God be for us, who shall be against us?

5. Ver. 4. They have said, Come, and let us destroy them from a nation. He has put the singular number for the plural: as it is said, “Whose is this cattle,” even though the question be of a flock, and the meaning “these cattle.” Lastly, other copies have ‘from nations,’ where the translators have rather followed the sense than the word. Come, and let us destroy them from a nation. This is that sound whereby they sounded rather than spake, since they did vainly make a noise with vain sayings. And let it not be mentioned of the name of Israel any more. This others have expressed more plainly, and let there not be remembrance of the name of Israel any more. Since, let it be mentioned of the name, (*memoretur nominis*;) is an unusual phrase in the Latin language; for it is rather customary to say, let the name be mentioned, (*memoretur nomen*;) but the sense is the same. For he who said, let it be mentioned of the name, translated the Greek phrase. But Israel must here be understood in fact of the seed of Abraham, to which the Apostle saith, Therefore ye are the seed of Abraham, according to the promise heirs. Not Israel according to the flesh, of which he saith, Behold Israel after the flesh.

6. Ver. 5. Since they have imagined with one consent; together against Thee have they disposed a testament: as though they could be the stronger. In fact, a testament is a name given in the Scriptures not only to that which is of no avail till the death of the testators, but every covenant and decree they used to call a testament. For Laban and Jacob made a testament, which was certainly to have force between the living; and such cases without number are read in the words of God.

7. Then he begins to make mention of the enemies of Christ, under certain proper names of nations; the interpretation of which names sufficiently indicates what he would have to be understood. For by such names are most suitably figured the enemies of the truth. Idumæans, for instance, are interpreted either ‘men of blood,’ or ‘of earth.’ Ismaelites, are ‘obedient to themselves,’ and therefore not to God, but to themselves. Moab, ‘from the father;’ which in a bad sense has no better explanation, than by considering it so connected with the actual history, that Lot, a father, by the illicit intercourse procured by his daughter, begat him; since it was from that very circumstance he was so named. Good, however, was his father, but as the

Law is good if one use it lawfully, not impurely and unlawfully. Hagarens, proselytes, that is strangers, by which name also are signified, among the enemies of God's people, not those who become citizens, but those who persevere in a foreign and alien mind, and when an opportunity of doing harm occurs, shew themselves. Gebal, "a vain valley," that is, humble in pretence. Amon, "an unquiet people," or "a people of sadness." Amalech, "a people licking;" whence elsewhere it is said, "and his enemies shall lick the earth." The alien race, though by their very name in Latin, they sufficiently shew themselves to be aliens, and for this cause of course enemies, yet in the Hebrew are called Philistines, which is explained, falling from drink, as of persons made drunken by worldly luxury. Tyre in Hebrew is called Sor; which whether it be interpreted straitness or tribulation, must be taken in the case of these enemies of God's people in that sense, of which the Apostle speaks, Tribulation and straitness on every soul of man that doeth evil. All these are thus enumerated in the Psalms: The tabernacles of the Edomites, Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagarenes, Gebal, and Amon, and Amalech, and the Philistines with those who inhabit Tyre.

8. And as if to point out the cause why they are enemies of God's people, he adds, For Assur came with them. Now Assur is often used figuratively for the devil, who works in the children of disobedience, as in his own vessels, that they may assail the people of God. They have holpen the children of Lot, he saith: for all enemies, by the working in them of the devil, their prince, have holpen the children of Lot, who is explained to mean one declining. But the apostate angels are well explained as the children of declension, for by declining from truth they swerved to become followers of the devil. These are they of whom the Apostle speaks; 'Ye wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.' Those invisible enemies are holpen then by unbelieving men, in whom they work in order to assail the people of God.

9. Now let us see what the prophetic spirit prays may fall upon them, rather foretelling than cursing.

Ver. 9. Do thou to them, he saith, as unto Madian and Sisera, as unto Jabin at the brook of Kishon.

Ver. 10. They perished at Endor, they became as the dung of the earth. All these, the history relates, were subdued and conquered by Israel, which then was the people of God: as was the case also with those whom he next mentions;

Ver. 11. Make their princes like Oreb and Zeb, and Zebbee and Salmana. The meaning of these names is as follows: Madian is explained a perverted judgment: Sisera, shutting out of joy: Jabin, wise. But in these enemies conquered by God's people is to be understood that wise man of whom the Apostle speaketh, Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Oreb is dryness, Zeeb, wolf, Zebbee, a victim, namely of the wolf; for he too has his victims; Salmana, shadow of commotion. All these agree to the evils which the people of God conquers by good. Moreover Kishon, the torrent in which they were conquered, is explained, their hardness. Endor, where they perished, is explained, the Fountain of generation, but of the carnal generation namely, to which they were given up, and therefore perished, not heeding the regeneration which leadeth unto life, where they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, for they shall die no more. Rightly then it is said of these; they became as the dung of the earth, in that nothing was produced of them but fruitfulness of the earth. As then all these were in figure conquered by the people of God, as figures, so he prays that those other enemies may be conquered in truth.

10. All their princes, (ver. 12.) who said, Let us take to ourselves the sanctuary of God in possession. This is that vain noise, with which, as said above, Thy enemies have made a murmuring. But what must be understood by the sanctuary of God, except the temple of God? as saith the Apostle: For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. For what else do the enemies aim at, but to take into possession, that is, to make subject to themselves the temple of God, that it may give in to their ungodly wills?

11. But what follows? (Ver. 13.) My God, make them like unto a wheel. This is fitly taken as meaning that they should be constant in nothing that they think; but I think it may also be rightly explained, make them like unto

a wheel, because a wheel is lifted up on the part of what is behind, is thrown down on the part of what is in front; and so it happens to all the enemies of the people of God. For this is not a wish, but a prophecy. He adds: as the stubble in the face of the wind. By face he means presence; for what face hath the wind, which has no bodily features, being only a motion, in that it is a kind of wave of air? But it is put for temptation, by which light and vain hearts are hurried away.

12. This levity, by which consent is easily given to what is evil, is followed by severe torment; therefore he proceeds:

Ver. 14. Like as the fire that burneth up the wood, and as the flame that consumeth the mountains: (ver. 15.) so shalt Thou persecute them with Thy tempest, and in Thy anger shalt disturb them. Wood, he saith, for its barrenness, mountains for their loftiness; for such are the enemies of God's people, barren of righteousness, full of pride. When he says, fire and flame, he means to repeat under another term, the idea of God judging and punishing. But in saying, with Thy tempest, he means, as he goes on to explain, Thy anger: and the former expression, Thou shalt persecute, answers to, Thou shalt disturb. We must take care, however, to understand, that the anger of God is free from any turbulent emotion: for His anger is an expression for His just method of taking vengeance: as the law might be said to be angry when its ministers are moved to punish by its sanction.

13. Ver. 16. Fill their faces with shame, and they shall seek Thy name, O Lord. Good and desirable is this which he prophesieth for them: and he would not prophesy thus, unless there were even in that company of the enemies of God's people, some men of such kind that this would be granted to them before the last judgment: for now they are mixed together, and this is the body of the enemies, in respect of the envy whereby they rival the people of God. And now, where they can, they make a noise and lift up their head: but severally, not universally as they will do at the end of the world, when the last judgment is about to fall. But it is the same body, even in those who out of this number shall believe and pass into another body, (for the faces of these are filled with shame, that they may seek the name of the Lord,) as well as in those others who persevere unto the end in the same wickedness, who are made as stubble before the wind, and are consumed

like a wood and barren mountains. To these he again returns, saying, (ver. 17.) They shall blush and be vexed for ever and ever. For those are not vexed for ever and ever who seek the name of the Lord, but having respect unto the shame of their sins, they are vexed for this purpose, that they may seek the name of the Lord, through which they may be no more vexed.

14. Again, he returns to these last, who in the same company of enemies are to be made ashamed for this purpose, that they may not be ashamed for ever: and for this purpose to be destroyed in as far as they are wicked, that being made good they may be found alive for ever. For having said of them, Let them be ashamed and perish, he instantly adds, (ver. 18.) and let them know that Thy name is the Lord, Thou art only the Most Highest in all the earth. Coming to this knowledge, let them be so confounded as to please God: let them so perish, as that they may abide. Let them know, he says, that Thy name is the Lord: as if whoever else are called lords are named so not truly but by falsehood, for they rule but as servants, and compared with the true Lord are not lords; as it is said, I Am that I Am: as if those things which are made are not, compared with Him by Whom they are made. He adds, Thou only art the Most Highest in all the earth: or, as other copies have it, over all the earth; as it might be said, in all the heaven, or over all the heaven: but he used the latter word in preference, to depress the pride of earth. For earth ceaseth to be proud, that is, man ceaseth, to whom it was said, Thou art dust; and, Why is earth and ashes proud? when he saith that the Lord is the Most Highest above all the earth, that is, that no man's thoughts avail against those who are called according to His purpose, and of Whom it is said, If God is for us, who can be against us?

PSALM 84

This Psalm is entitled, For the winepresses. And, as you observed with me, my beloved, (for I saw that you attended most closely,) nothing is said in its text either of any press, or wine-basket, or vat, or of any of the instruments or the building of a winepress; nothing of this kind did we hear read; so that it is no easy question what is the meaning of this title inscribed upon it, for the winepresses. For certainly, if after the title it mentioned any thing about such things as I enumerated, carnal persons might have believed that it was a song concerning those visible winepresses; but as it has this title, yet says nothing afterwards of those winepresses which we know so well, I cannot doubt that there are other winepresses, which the Spirit of God intended us to look for and to understand here. Therefore, let us recall to mind what takes place in these visible winepresses, and see how this takes place spiritually in the Church. The grape hangs on the vines, and the olive on its trees, (for it is for these two fruits that presses are usually made ready;) and as long as they hang on their boughs, they seem to enjoy free air; and neither is the grape wine, nor the olive oil, before they are pressed. Thus it is with men whom God predestined before the world to be conformed to the image of His only-begotten Son, Who has been first and especially pressed in His Passion, as the great Cluster. Men of this kind, therefore, before they draw near to the service of God, enjoy in the world a kind of delicious liberty, like hanging grapes or olives: but as it is said, My son, when thou drawest near to the service of God, stand in judgment and fear, and make thy soul ready for temptation: so each, as he draweth near to the service of God, findeth that he is come to the winepress; he shall undergo tribulation, shall be crushed, shall be pressed, not that he may perish in this world, but that he may flow down into the storehouses of God. He hath the coverings of carnal desires stripped off from him, like grape-skins: for this hath taken place in him in carnal desires, of which the Apostle speaks, Put ye off the

old man, and put on the new man. All this is not done but by pressure: therefore the Churches of God of this time are called wine-presses.

2. But who are we who are placed in the winepresses? Sons of Core. For this follows: For the winepresses, to the sons of Core. The sons of Core has been explained, sons of the bald: as far as those could explain it to us, who know that language, according to their service due to God: and in this I do not deny that I behold a great mystery, and by the help of the Lord, would find it out with you. For all baldness ought not to be mocked, as it is by the sons of wickedness: but if one mock at consecrated baldness, he is torn by demons. For Elisha too was walking, and senseless children called after him, Baldhead, baldhead: and to accomplish the figure, he turned and prayed the Lord that bears might come out of the wood and devour them. Their infancy was punished by death in this world: they perished as children, who would one day have perished in old age: but fear of the mystery was impressed on men. For Elisha bore the then character of One, whose sons we are, the sons of Core, namely, of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now it occurs to you, my beloved, out of the Gospel, why being bald he bore the figure of Christ: ye remember that He was crucified on Calvary. Whether then this be the meaning of Sons of Core, as I have explained from what others tell me; or whether there is any other sacred meaning unknown to us; meantime do ye behold what a fulness of sacred truths we meet with. Sons of Core, sons of Christ, for the Bridegroom speaketh of His sons, when He saith, The children of the Bridegroom cannot fast, while the Bridegroom is with them. These winepresses, then, are presses of Christians.

3. But being placed under pressure, we are crushed for this purpose, that for our love by which we were borne towards those worldly, secular, temporal, unstable, and perishable things, having suffered in them, in this life, torments, and tribulations of pressures, and abundance of temptations, we may begin to seek that rest which is not of this life, nor of this earth; and the Lord becomes, as is written, a refuge for the poor man. What is, for the poor man? For him who is, as it were, destitute, without aid, without help, without any thing on which he may rest, in earth. For to such poor men, God is present. For though men abound in money on earth, they think of what the Apostle saith, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be

not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches; and considering how uncertain that is in which they rejoiced before they drew near to the service of God, that is, before they entered into the winepresses, they see that from their very wealth, they either have the pressure of care, how it is to be managed, how guarded; or if they have a little given way to desire, so as to love it, they are filled more with fear than with enjoyment. For what is so uncertain as a rolling thing? It is not unfitly that money itself is stamped round, because it remains not still. Such men, therefore, though they have something, are yet poor. But those who have none of this wealth, but only desire it, are counted also among rich men who will be rejected; for God takes account not of power, but of will. The poor then are destitute of all this world's substance, for even though it abounds around them, they know how fleeting it is; and crying unto God, having nothing in this world with which they may delight themselves, and be held down, placed in abundant pressures and temptations, as if in winepresses, they flow down, having become oil or wine. What are these latter but good desires? For God remains their only object of desire; now they love not earth. For they love Him Who made heaven and earth; they love Him, and are not yet with Him. Their desire is delayed, in order that it may increase; it increases, in order that it may receive. For it is not any little thing that God will give to him who desires, nor does he need to be little exercised to be made fit to receive so great a good: not any thing which He hath made will God give, but Himself Who made all things. Exercise thyself to receive God: that which thou shalt have for ever, desire thou for a long time. In the people of Israel, those were rejected who were hasty: continually in Scripture this temper of haste is blamed. For who are they who make haste! Those who, having turned to God, when they did not find here that rest which they were seeking, and those joys which were promised them, as if fainting by the way and thinking some long time remained before they should have done with this world or with this life, and seeking here some rest, which, if it is enjoyed, is false, they look back, and fall from their purpose: and forget that terrible saying, Remember Lot's wife. For why was she made a pillar of salt, if she seasons not men to make them wise? Therefore her bad example, if thou take care, becomes good to thee. Remember, he saith, Lot's wife: for she looked back, whence she had been set free, to Sodom, and there remained where she looked back; herself to remain on that spot, to season

others who should pass. Therefore being freed from the Sodom of our past life, let us not look back: for this is to be in haste, not to wait for what God hath promised because it is far off, and to look back to that which is near, whence thou hast been once set free. Of such what saith the Apostle Peter? It has happened to them according to the true proverb: The dog is returned to his vomit. For the consciousness of thy sins was weighing on thy breast: receiving pardon thou didst vomit, as it were, and thy breast was relieved: there was made a good conscience instead of a bad conscience: but why turnest thou again to thy vomit? If a dog doing thus disgusts thy sight, what art thou in the sight of God?

4. But each one, beloved brethren, from that point of his journey at which he hath arrived, and which he hath vowed to God, from thence looketh back, when he letteth Him go. For example, he has resolved to keep conjugal chastity; for righteousness begins here; he hath retired from fornication and illicit uncleanness: when he returns to fornication, he hath looked back. Another by the gift of God hath vowed something great, hath resolved not to allow even marriage: he who would not be condemned if he had married a wife, if he hath married after making a vow to God, is condemned; since he does the same as one who had not promised; but one is not condemned, the other is. Why, except because the latter hath looked back? For he had been in front, and the other had not come up to the same point. If a virgin, who would not have sinned in marrying, marry after being devoted, she shall be accounted an adulteress of Christ. For she hath looked back from the place which she had reached. If those who choose to leave all worldly hopes and all earthly occupations, and betake them to the society of saints, to that common life where no one calls any thing his own, but all things are common unto them, and they have one soul, and one heart towards God; whoever chooseth to depart from them is not esteemed such as he who had not entered: for the latter hath not yet attained: the former hath looked back. Wherefore, most beloved, as each can, make vows, and perform to the Lord God what each can: let no one look back, no one delight himself with his former interests, no one turn away from that which is before to that which is behind: let him run until he arrive: for we run not with the feet but with the desire. But let no one in this life say that he hath arrived. For who can be so perfect as Paul? Yet he saith, Brethren, I count

not myself to have attained: but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press forward to the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Thou seest Paul still running, and thinkest thou that thou hast already attained?

5. If therefore thou feelest the passions of this world, even when thou art happy, thou understandest now that thou art in the winepress. For do ye think, my brethren, that unhappiness in this life is to be feared, and that happiness is not to be feared? Nay, rather, no unhappiness breaketh him whom no happiness can corrupt. How therefore should that corrupter be shunned and feared, lest she seduce thee by her caresses? Lean not on a staff of reed: for it is written that some lean upon a staff of reed. Trust not thyself to it: it is a weak thing to lean upon, it breaketh and slayeth thee. If therefore the world smile upon thee with happiness, imagine thyself in the winepress, and say, I found trouble and heaviness, and I did call upon the name of the Lord. He said not, I found trouble, without meaning, of such a kind as was hidden: for some troubles are hidden from some in this world, who think they are happy while they are absent from God. For as long as we are in the body, he saith, we are absent from the Lord. If thou wert absent from thy father, thou wouldest be unhappy: art thou absent from the Lord, and happy? There are then some who think it is well with them. But those who understand, that in whatever abundance of wealth and pleasures, though all things obey their beck, though nothing troublesome creep in, nothing adverse terrify, yet that they are in a bad case as long as they are absent from the Lord; with a most keen eye these have found trouble, and grief, and have called on the name of the Lord. Such is he who sings in this Psalm. Who is he? The Body of Christ. Who is that? You, if you will: all we, if we will: all sons of Core, and all one Man, for Christ's Body is one. How is that not one Man which hath one Head? The Head of all of us is Christ; the body of that Head are we all. And we all are in this life in winepresses: if we are wise, we have already come to the winepress. Therefore, being placed in the pressure of temptations, let us utter this word, and send on our longing desire.

Ver. 1. How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. He was in some tabernacles, that is, in winepresses: but he longed for other tabernacles,

where is no pressure: in this he sighed for them, from these, he, as it were, flowed down into them by the channel of longing desire.

6. And what follows? (Ver. 2.) My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord. It is not enough that it longeth and faileth: for what doth it fail? For the courts of the Lord. The grape when pressed hath failed: but for what? So as to be changed into wine, and to flow into the vat, and into the rest of the store-room, to be kept there in great quiet. Here it is longed for, there it is received: here are sighs, there joy: here prayers, there praises: here groans, there rejoicing. Those things which I mentioned, let no one while here turn from ashamed: let no one be unwilling to suffer. There is danger, lest the grape, while it fears the winepress, should be devoured by birds or by wild beasts. He seems to be in great sadness, when he says, My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord; for he has not what he longeth for; but is he without joy. What joy? That which the Apostle speaks of: Rejoicing in hope. Then he will one day rejoice in reality: now he doth already in hope. And therefore, those who rejoice in hope, being certain that they shall receive, bear in the winepress all pressures. Therefore, the Apostle himself having said, Rejoicing in hope; as if speaking to those who are still in the winepress, added instantly, patient in tribulation. Patient in tribulation; what follows? Enduring in prayer. Why 'enduring?' Because ye suffer delay: ye pray and suffer delay: ye endure the delay: well may it be borne, that that is delayed, which when it hath come is not taken away.

7. Thou hast heard a groan in the winepress, My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord: hear how it holdeth out, rejoicing in hope: My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God. Here they have rejoiced for that cause. Whence cometh rejoicing, but of hope? Wherefore have they rejoiced? In the living God. What has rejoiced in thee? My heart and my flesh. Why have they rejoiced?

Ver. 3. For, saith he, the sparrow hath found her a house, and the turtledove a nest, where she may lay her young. What is this? He had named two things, and he adds two figures of birds which answer to them: he had said that his heart rejoiced and his flesh, and to these two he made the sparrow and turtle-dove to correspond: the heart as the sparrow, the flesh as the dove. The sparrow hath found herself a home: my heart hath found itself a

home. She tries her wings in the virtues of this life, in faith, and hope, and charity, by which she may fly unto her home: and when she shall have come thither, she shall remain; and now the complaining voice of the sparrow, which is here, shall no longer be there. For it is the very complaining sparrow of whom in another Psalm he saith, Like a sparrow alone on the housetop. From the housetop he flies home. Now let him be on the housetop, treading on his carnal house: he shall have a heavenly house, a perpetual home: that sparrow shall make an end of his complaints. But to the dove he hath given young, that is, to the flesh: the dove hath found a nest, where she may lay her young. The sparrow a home, the dove a nest, and a nest too where she may lay her young. A home is chosen as for ever, a nest is framed for a time: with the heart we think upon God, as if the sparrow flew to her home: with the flesh we do good works. For ye see how many good works are done by the flesh of the saints; for by this we work the things we are commanded to work, by which we are helped in this life. Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor and roofless into thy house; and if thou see one naked, clothe him: and other such things which are commanded us we work only through the flesh. Therefore that sparrow, who thinketh upon his home, parteth not from the dove who seeketh for herself a nest, where she may lay her young: for she throweth them not away in any corner, but hath found herself a nest where she may lay them. We speak, brethren, what ye know: how many seem to do good works without the Church? how many even Pagans feed the hungry, clothe the naked, receive the stranger, visit the sick, comfort the prisoner? how many do this? The dove seems, as it were, to bring forth young: but finds not herself a nest. How many works may heretics do not in the Church; they place not their young in a nest. They shall be trampled on and crushed: they shall not be kept, shall not be guarded. In the person of this flesh working a woman is spoken of by the Apostle Paul, saying, Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived. For afterwards Adam consented with the woman: for the woman was deceived by the serpent. And now no evil persuasion can do more than move in thee in the first instance the desire of thy flesh, to which if thy mind afterwards consents, the sparrow too hath fallen; but if the desires of the flesh are conquered, thy limbs are kept to good works, the arms of concupiscence are taken away, and the dove begins to have young. Therefore, what saith the Apostle in that place? But she shall

be saved by child-bearing. A widow without children, if she continue so, shall she not be happier? Shall she not be saved, because she beareth not sons? Shall not a virgin of God be better? Shall she not be saved, because she hath no sons? or doth she not belong to God? Therefore the woman shall be saved, who is a type of the flesh, by childbearing, that is, if she do good works. But it is not every where that the dove can find a nest for herself where she may lay her young; in the true faith, in the Catholic faith, in the fellowship of the unity of the Church let her bring forth her works. Therefore, when the Apostle was speaking of her, he added, But she shall be saved by child-bearing, if she abide in faith, and love, and sanctification, with soberness. By abiding in faith, faith itself is a nest for thy young. For on account of the weakness of the young of thy turtle dove, the Lord deigned to give unto thee whence thou mightest make thyself a nest: for He clothed Himself with flesh, as hay for thy nest, that He might come unto thee. In that faith lay thy young: in that nest work thy works. For what the nests are, what that nest is, follows at once: Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts. Having said, And the dove hath found herself a nest, where she may lay her young; as if thou hadst asked, What nest? Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God. What is, My King and my God? Thou Who rulest me, Who hast created me.

8. Here then is the nest, here absence from home, here sighing, here crushing, and here pressing, since here is the winepress: but what is it which he longs for? what that he desires? whither goeth he? whither tends our longing? whither doth it hurry us? Placed here, it meditateth on those things: placed among temptations, placed among pressures, placed in the winepress, sighing after heavenly promises: as if intending to do something there, it dwells beforehand on future joys. (Ver. 4.) Blessed are those who dwell in Thy house. Wherefore blessed? What shall they have? What shall they do? All who are called blessed on earth have something and do something. One man is blessed with so many farms, such a large family, so much gold and silver: he is called blessed by what he has. Blessed is another, he has attained such a rank, the proconsulship, or prefecture: he is called blessed in what he does. Either then in having or in doing men are blessed. But how will they be blessed there? what will they have? what will they do? What they will have I have said above: Blessed are they that dwell

in Thy house. If thou hast thy own house, thou art poor; if God's, thou art rich. In thy own house thou wilt fear robbers; of the house of God, He is Himself the wall. Therefore blessed are those who dwell in Thy house. They possess the heavenly Jerusalem, without constraint, without pressure, without difference and division of boundaries; all have it, and each have all. Great are those riches. Brother crowdeth not brother: there is no want there. Next, what will they do there? For among men it is necessity which is the mother of all employments. I have already said, in brief, brethren, run in your mind through any occupations, and see if it is not necessity alone which produces them. Those very eminent arts which seem so powerful in giving help to others, the art of speaking in their defence or of medicine in healing, for these are the most excellent employments in this life; take away litigants, who is there for the advocate to help? take away wounds and diseases? what is there for the physician to cure? And all those employments of ours which are required and done for our daily life, arise from necessity. To plough, to sow, to clear fallow ground, to sail; what is it which produces all these works, but necessity and want? Take away hunger, thirst, nakedness; who has need of all these things? These good works also which are enjoined to us; for those which I have mentioned are respectable, but belong to all men; (I mean to except wicked deeds, detestable actions, scandalous crimes, homicides, house-breaking, adulteries, for I do not count these among human actions;) but I mean those which are positively virtuous, even they are only produced by necessity, and that a necessity arising from the frailty of the flesh; for instance, the injunction, 'Break thy bread to the hungry.' For whom could you break bread, if there were nobody hungry? 'Take in the roofless poor into thy house.' What stranger is there to take in, where all live in their own country? What sick person to visit, where they enjoy perpetual health? What litigants to reconcile, where there is everlasting peace? What dead to bury, where there is eternal life? None of those honourable actions which are common to all men will then be your employment, nor any of these good works; the young swallows will then fly out of their nest. What then? You have said already what we shall have; 'Those who dwell in Thy house are blessed.' Say now what they shall do, for I see not then any need to induce me to action. Even what I am now saying and arguing springs from some need. Will there be any such argument there to teach the ignorant, or remind the forgetful? Or will the

Gospel be read in that country where the Word of God Itself shall be contemplated? Wherefore let him who in longing aspirations spoke with our voice, saying what we should have in that country which he sighed for, 'Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house,' let him say too what we shall do there. 'They shall be always praising Thee.' This shall be our whole duty, an unceasing Hallelujah.

Think not, my brethren, that there will be any weariness there: if ye are not able to endure long here in saying this, it is because some want draws you away from that enjoyment. If what is not seen gives not so much joy here, if with so much eagerness under the pressure and weakness of the flesh we praise that which we believe, how shall we praise that which we see? When death shall be swallowed up in victory, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, no one will say, 'I have been standing a long time;' no one will say, 'I have fasted a long time,' 'I have watched a long time.' For there shall be great endurance, and our immortal bodies shall be sustained in contemplation of God. And if the word which we now dispense to you keeps your weak flesh standing so long, what will be the effect of that joy? how will it change us? For we shall be like Him, since we shall see Him as He is. Being made like Him, when shall we ever faint? what shall draw us off? Brethren, we shall never be satiated with the praise of God, with the love of God. If love could fail, praise could fail. But if love be eternal, as there will there be beauty inexhaustible, fear not lest thou be not able to praise for ever Him Whom thou shalt be able to love for ever. Blessed are they who shall dwell in Thy house; for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. For this life let us sigh.

9. But how shall we come thither? (Ver 5.) Happy is the man whose strength is in Thee. He knew where he was, and that by reason of the frailty of his flesh he could not fly to that state of blessedness: he thought upon his own burden, as it is said elsewhere; 'For the corruptible body weighs down the soul, and the earthly house depresses the understanding which has many thoughts.' The Spirit calls upward, the weight of the flesh calls back again downward: between the double effort to raise and to weigh down, a kind of struggle ensues: this struggle goes toward the pressure of the winepress. Hear how the Apostle describes this same struggle of the winepress, for he

was himself afflicted there, there he was pressed. 'I delight,' he says, 'in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.' Great is this struggle and hopeless to escape from, if it were not for the help that follows; 'Miserable man that I am: who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' And so here in this Psalm he saw those joys, and thought in his mind, 'Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, O Lord; for ever and ever they will be praising Thee.' But who shall ascend thither? What shall I do with the burden of the flesh? Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, they will praise Thee for ever and ever. 'For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man.' But what shall I do? how shall I fly? how shall I arrive thither? I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. He said that he was unhappy, and he said, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, and praise Him for ever and ever? Who shall set me free? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And as in the words of the Apostle, that difficulty and that almost inextricable struggle is alleviated by the addition, The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord; so here, when he sighed in the ardent longing for the house of God, and those praises of God, and when a kind of despair arose at the feeling of the burden of the body and the weight of the flesh, again he awoke to hope, and said, (ver. 5.) Blessed is the man whose taking up is in Thee.

10. What then does God supply by His grace to him whom He taketh hold of to lead him on? He goes on to say: He hath placed steps in his heart. He makes steps for him by which he may ascend. Where are these steps? In his heart. Therefore the more thou lovest, the more shalt thou rise. He hath placed steps in his heart. Who hath done this? He who hath taken hold of him: for, Blessed, says he, is he whose taking up is in Thee, O Lord. Because of himself he cannot rise, it is necessary that Thy grace should raise him. And what does Thy grace? It places steps in his heart. Where does it place steps? In his heart, (ver. 6.) in the valley of weeping. So here thou hast for a winepress the valley of weeping, the very pious tears in tribulation are the new wine of those that love. He hath placed steps in his heart. Where then hath He placed them? In the valley of weeping. For here

He hath placed steps, in the valley of weeping. For here is weeping, where is sowing. They went forth weeping, he says, casting their seed. Therefore, by the grace of God may upward steps be placed in thy heart. Rise by loving. Hence the Psalm “of degrees” is called. And where hath He placed these steps? In thy heart, in the valley of weeping. He hath said where He hath placed them, whither hath He set them? What hath He placed? Steps. Where? Within, In the heart. In what region, in what place, as it were, of abode? In the valley of weeping. To ascend whither? To the place which He hath appointed. What is this, brethren, To the place which He hath appointed. What place would he name, which He hath appointed, if it could be named? It hath been said to thee, He hath placed steps in his heart, in the valley of weeping. Dost thou ask, whither? What will He say to thee? What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man. It is a hill, it is a mountain, it is a land, it is a meadow: by nearly all these names that place has been called. But what is it in itself, without images who can explain? For, Now we see through a glass darkly what that place is: then we shall see face to face. Ask not therefore whither he hath appointed us to go, or what place it is. He knoweth whither, He Who hath appointed the place whither He is leading thee, the ascent to which He hath placed in thy heart. What? dost thou fear to ascend, lest He who leads thee should go wrong? Lo, in the valley of weeping, He hath placed steps of ascent to the place which He hath appointed. Now we lament; whence proceed our lamentations, but from that place where the steps of our ascent are placed? Whence comes our lamentation, but from that cause wherefore the Apostle exclaimed that he was a wretched man, because he saw another law in his members, warring against the law in his mind? And whence does this proceed? From the penalty of sin. And we thought that we could easily be righteous as it were by our own strength, before we received the command; but when the command came, sin revived; but I died, saith the Apostle. For a law was given to men, not such as could save them at once, but it was to shew them in what severe sickness they were lying. Hear the words of the Apostle; For if a law had been given which could give life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath shut up all under sin, that the promise which is of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; so that grace came after the law, and found man not only laid prostrate, but already confessing and saying, Miserable

man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And the physician came in due time to the valley of weeping, saying, Surely thou knowest that thou hast fallen; listen unto Me that thou mayest arise, thou who didst despise Me, so that thou didst fall. Therefore the Law was given, that it might convince the sick man of his disease, whereas he seemed to himself to be whole; that sins might be made manifest, not that they might be taken away. But when sin was made manifest by the law given, sin was but increased, for it is both sin, and against the Law; Sin, saith he, taking occasion by the command, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. What does he mean by taking occasion by the law? Having received the command, men tried as by their own strength to obey it; conquered by lust, they became guilty of transgression of this very command also. But what saith the Apostle? Where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded; that is, the disease increased, the medicine became of more avail. Accordingly, my brethren, did those five porches of Solomon, in the middle of which the pool lay, heal the sick at all? The sick, says the Evangelist, lay in the five porches. In the Gospel we have and read it. Those five porches are the law in the five books of Moses. For this cause the sick were brought forth from their houses that they might lie in the porches. So the law brought the sick men forth, but did not heal them: but by the blessing of God the water was troubled, as by an Angel descending into it. At the sight of the water troubled, the one person who was able, descended and was healed. That water surrounded by the five porches, was the people of the Jews shut up in their law. The Lord came and troubled this people, so that He Himself was slain. For if the Lord had not troubled the Jews by coming down to them, would He have been crucified? So that the troubled water signified the Passion of the Lord, which arose from His troubling the Jewish people. The sick man who believeth in this Passion, like him who descended into the troubled water, is healed thereby. He whom the Law could not heal, that is, while he lay in the porches, is healed by grace, by faith in the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. One is healed, for those healed are one. What then does He say here? He hath placed steps of ascent in his heart, in the valley of weeping, to the place which He hath appointed. Now we will rejoice in that place.

11. Ver. 8. But why in the valley of weeping? What is this valley of weeping, from whence we shall come into that place of joy? He shall give blessing, saith he, Who gave the law. He afflicted us by the law, pressed us under the law, shewed unto us the winepress, we saw the pressure, we were conscious of the tribulation of the flesh, we groaned with the rebellion of sin against our mind, we cried out, 'Miserable man that I am:' we groaned under the law; what remains but that He who gave the law should give His blessing? Grace shall come after the law, grace itself is the blessing. And what has that grace and blessing given unto us? They shall go from virtue to virtue. For here by grace many virtues are given. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith, to another the gift of healing, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues, to another prophecy. Many virtues, but necessary for this life; and from these virtues we go on to a virtue. To what virtue? To Christ the Virtue of God and the Wisdom of God. He giveth different virtues in this place, Who for all the virtues which are necessary and useful in this valley of weeping shall give one virtue, Himself. For in Scripture and in many writers four virtues are described useful for life: prudence, by which we discern between good and evil; justice, by which we give each person his due, owing no man any thing, but loving all men: temperance, by which we restrain lusts; fortitude, by which we bear all troubles. These virtues are now by the grace of God given unto us in the valley of weeping: from these virtues we mount unto that other virtue. And what will that be, but the virtue of the contemplation of God alone? There this our prudence will be unnecessary where no evils will meet us which we shall have to avoid. But what think we, my brethren? There will be no justice, such as here: for there will be no need with any man to which we shall owe relief. There will be no such temperance, where will be no lust to be restrained. No such fortitude as here, where there will be no evils to be borne. Therefore from these virtues of action here we shall pass to that virtue of contemplation, by which we shall see God: as it is written, I will be near Thee in the morning, and I will behold Thee. And hear how from these virtues of present action we shall pass to that contemplation. It follows in that place: They shall go from virtue to virtue. What virtue? That of contemplation. What is contemplation? The God of Gods shall appear in Sion. The God of Gods, Christ of the Christians. How

is this? I said, Ye are Gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High. For He gave unto them power to become the sons of God, He in whom we believed, that fair Bridegroom, who on account of our uncomeliness appeared here without comeliness: for we saw Him, he saith, and He had no form nor beauty. When all is finished, that mortality makes necessary, He shall appear to the pure in heart, as He is, "God with God," The Word with the Father, "by Which all things were made:" for, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. The God of Gods shall appear in Sion.

12. And again, from the thought of those joys he returns to his own sighs. He sees what has come before in hope, and where he is in reality. Then shall the God of Gods appear in Sion: this is why we shall rejoice: Him we shall praise for ever and ever. But as yet it is but the time of prayer, the time of deprecation: and if of rejoicing a little, yet still in hope: we are on our journey, we are in the valley of weeping. Therefore returning to the groans proper to this place, he saith, (ver. 8.) O Lord God of virtues, hear my prayer: hearken, O God of Jacob: for Jacob himself also Thou hast made Israel out of Jacob. For God appeared unto him, and he was called Israel, seeing God. Hear me therefore, O God of Jacob, and make me Israel. When shall I become Israel? When the God of Gods shall appear in Sion.

13. Ver. 9. Behold, O God our defender. 'Under the shadow of Thy wings they shall hope:' therefore, Behold, O God our defender. And look on the face of Thy Christ. For when doth God not look upon the face of His Christ? What is this, Look on the face of Thy Christ? By the face we are known. What is it then, Look on the face of Thy Christ? Cause Thy Christ to become known to all. Look on the face of Thy Christ: let Christ become known to all, that we may be able to go from strength to strength, that grace may abound, since sin hath abounded.

14. Ver. 10. For one day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. Those courts they were for which he sighed, for which he fainted. My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord: one day there is better than a thousand days. Men long for thousands of days, and wish to live here long: let them despise these thousands of days, let them long for one day, which has neither rising nor setting: one day, an everlasting day, to which no yesterday yields, which no to-morrow presses. Let this one day be longed for by us.

What have we to do with a thousand days? We go from the thousand days to one day; let us hasten to that one day, as we go from strength to strength.

15. Ver. 11. I have chosen to be cast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. For he found the valley of weeping, he found humility by which he might rise: he knoweth that if he would raise himself he shall fall, if he humble himself he shall be exalted: he hath chosen to be cast away, that he may be raised up. How many beside this tabernacle of the Lord's winepress, that is beside the Catholic Church, wishing to be lifted up, and loving their honours, refuse to see the truth. If this verse had been in their heart, I have chosen to be cast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners, would they not cast away honours, and run to the valley of weeping, and hence find in their heart the way of ascent, and hence go from virtues to virtue, placing their hope in Christ, not in some man or another? A good word is this, a word to rejoice in, a word to be chosen: I have chosen to be cast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. He himself chose to be cast away in the house of the Lord; but He who invited him to the feast, when he chose a lower place calleth him to a higher one, and saith unto him, Go up higher. Yet he chose not but to be in the house of the Lord, in any part of it, so that he were not outside the threshold.

16. Wherefore did he choose rather to be cast away in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of the ungodly? (Ver. 12.) Because God loveth mercy and truth. The Lord loveth mercy, by which He first came to my help: He loveth truth, so as to give to him that believeth what He has promised. Hear in the case of the Apostle Paul, His mercy and truth, Paul who was first Saul the persecutor. He needed mercy, and he has said that it was shewn towards him: I who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, that in me Christ Jesus might shew forth all longsuffering towards those who shall believe in Him unto life eternal. So that, when Paul received pardon of such great crimes, no one should despair of any sins whatever being forgiven him. Lo! Thou hast Mercy. God was then unwilling to put His Truth in action, so as to punish the sinner. For if the sinner were punished, would it not be truth? or would he dare to say, I ought not to be punished, when he could not say, I have not

sinned? And if he did say, I have not sinned: to whom would he say it? Whom would he deceive? Therefore the Lord first exerted mercy towards him: after mercy, truth. Hear him how he demands truth afterwards. First he said, I obtained mercy, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but by the grace of God I am what I am. Afterwards He saith, when he was drawing near his passion, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. He who giveth mercy, keepeth truth. How doth He keep truth? Which the Lord, Who is a righteous Judge, shall repay me at that day. He freely gave him pardon, He shall render him a crown: He is a free giver of pardon, a debtor of a crown. How a debtor? hath He received any thing? To whom doth God owe any thing? Lo, we see that Paul holdeth Him a debtor, having received mercy, demanding truth. The Lord, he says, shall give me back in that day. What shall He give thee back, but that which He oweth thee? How oweth He unto thee? What hast thou given Him? Who hath first given unto Him, and it shall be restored to him again. The Lord Himself hath made Himself a debtor, not by receiving, but by promising: it is not said unto Him, Restore what Thou hast received: but, Restore what Thou hast promised. He hath shewn mercy unto me, he saith, that He might make me innocent: for before I was a blasphemer and injurious: but by His grace I have been made innocent. But He who first shewed mercy, can He deny His debt? He loveth mercy and truth. He will give grace and glory. What grace, but that of which the same one said; By the grace of God I am what I am? What glory, but that of which he said, There is laid up for me a crown of glory?

17. Ver. 12. Therefore the Lord will not withhold good from those who walk in innocence. Why then, O men, are ye unwilling to keep innocence, except in order that ye may have good things? Such an one will not keep innocence, in order not to restore that which is committed to his trust: he would have gold, and loseth innocence. What doth he gain? what doth he lose? He hath the gain of gold, he hath suffered the loss of innocence. 'But if I shall keep innocence,' he saith, 'I shall be poor.' Is not innocence itself no slight wealth? If thou hast a chest full of gold, shalt thou be rich; if thou hast a heart full of innocence, shalt thou be poor? But behold: if thou longest for good things, though thou be at present in poverty, in tribulation,

in the valley of weeping, in pressure, in temptations, keep innocence. For there shall be hereafter that good for thee for which thou longest: rest, eternity, immortality, freedom from suffering shall be hereafter: these are the good things which God keepeth for His righteous ones. For the good things which thou now longest for, as of great worth, for which thou art willing to be guilty and not guiltless, listen while I tell thee who have them, who abound in them. Thou seest wealth in the hands of robbers, of the impious, the wicked, the base; in the hands of scandalous and criminal men thou seest wealth: God giveth them these things on account of their fellowship in the human race, for the abundant overflowing of His goodness: Who also maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and causeth it to rain upon the righteous and upon sinners. Giveth He so much to the wicked, and keepeth nothing for thee? He keepeth something: be at ease, He Who had mercy on thee, when thou wast impious, doth He desert thee when thou hast become pious? He Who gave to the sinner the free gift of His Son's death, what keepeth He for the saved through that death? Therefore be at ease. Hold Him a debtor, for thou hast believed in Him promising. The Lord will withhold no good thing from those who walk in innocence. What then remains for us here, in the winepress, in affliction, in hardship, in our present dangerous life? What remains for us, that we may arrive thither? O Lord God of virtues, blessed is the man that putteth his hope in Thee.

PSALM 85

A Sermon to the People.

We have prayed to the Lord our God to shew us His mercy, and to grant us His salvation. This was spoken in prophecy, when first these Psalms were uttered and written: but as regards the present time, the Lord now sheweth His mercy to the nations, and hath granted unto them His salvation. He indeed hath shewn it: but many refuse to be made whole, and to see what He sheweth. But because He Himself healeth the eyes of the heart so that they see Him; therefore having said, Shew us Thy mercy, as if many blind persons would answer, How shall we see when He sheweth? he added, And grant us Thy salvation. For by granting His salvation, He healeth in us that by which we may be able to see what He sheweth: not as a physician takes care to shew this light to those whose eyes he has cured, when the light which he is to shew is one thing, the physician who heals the eyes to which he shews it another, and not the light itself. Not thus is it with the Lord our God: for He Himself is the Physician, Who cures us that we may see, and He Himself the Light which we become able to see. Let us however run through the whole Psalm, as far as we can, and as the Lord permits, as well as the shortness of time will allow.

2. Its title is, A Psalm for the end, to the sons of Core. Let us understand no other end than that of which the Apostle speaks: for, Christ is the end of the Law, for justification to every one that believeth. Therefore when at the head of the title of the Psalm he placed the words, for the end, he directed our heart to Christ. If we fix our gaze on Him, we shall not stray: for He is Himself the Truth unto which we are eager to arrive, and He Himself the Way by which we run. What is, To the sons of Core? Core is explained as a Hebrew word meaning in our language bald. To the sons of Core then means, To the sons of the Bald. Who is he who is bald? Not that we should mock him, but that we should mourn before him. For some mocked, and

were destroyed by dæmons: as in the Book of Kings the children mocked at bald Elisha, and said after him, Thou bald-head, Thou bald-head, and bears came out of the wood, and destroyed the children who were wicked enough to mock, for whom their parents had now to mourn. This event as by a prophecy signified our Lord Jesus Christ hereafter to come. For He was mocked as if bald by the Jews deriding Him, when He was crucified on the spot of Calvary. If we have believed in Him, we are His sons. To us therefore is that Psalm chanted, which is entitled, To the sons of Core; for we are children of the Bridegroom. He, the Bridegroom, giveth unto his Bride a pledge, His own Blood, and the Holy Spirit, by which He hath enriched us meanwhile in our wanderings: but He yet keepeth for us His hidden riches. What must that be which He keepeth for us, out of which He hath given us such an earnest?

3. Therefore the Prophet singeth to Him of the future, and useth words as it were of past time: he speaks of things future as if already done, because with God that which is future has already taken place. Here then the Prophet saw things future with respect to us, but already past in His providence and most sure predestination; as in that Psalm also, where all acknowledge Christ to be spoken of, for its recitation sounds even as if the Gospel were in reading; They pierced My hands and My feet, they numbered all My bones: they gazed and stared upon Me, they divided My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Who, when the reader reads this Psalm, would not recognise the Gospel? And yet the saying in the Psalm is not, they will pierce My hands and My feet; but they pierced; and not, they will number My bones; but they numbered; and not, they will divide My garments, but they did divide My garments among them. All these things which the Prophet saw in the future, he mentioned as if past; so here also, (ver. 1.) Lord, Thou hast been favourable unto Thy land; as if He had already done so.

4. Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. His ancient people of Jacob, the people of Israel, born of Abraham's seed, in the promise to become one day the heir of God. That was indeed a real people, to whom the Old Testament was given; but in the Old Testament the New was figured: that was the figure, this the truth expressed. In that figure, by a kind

of foretelling of the future, there was given to that people a certain land of promise, in a region where the people of the Jews abode; where also is the city of Jerusalem, whose name we have all heard of. When this people had received possession of this land, they suffered many troubles from their neighbouring enemies who surrounded them: and when they sinned against their God, they were given into captivity, not for destruction, but for discipline; their Father not condemning, but scourging them. And after being seized on, they were set free, and many times were both made captives, and set free; and they are now in captivity, and that for a great sin, even because they crucified their Lord. What then are we to understand them to mean by the words, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob? Are we to understand here that other captivity, from which we all desire to be set free? For we all belong to Jacob, if we belong to Abraham's seed. For thus speaketh the Apostle; In Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, not those who are children of the flesh, these are the children of God, but the children of promise, these are counted as a seed. If the children of promise are counted for the seed, the Jews became degenerate by offending God: we, by deserving well of God, are become the children of Abraham, not according to the flesh, but according to faith. For by imitating his faith, we are become his children, whilst they, by degenerating from his faith, deserved to be disinherited. For, that you may know that they lost their birth from Abraham, when they arrogantly boasted in the hearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, glorying in their blood, not in their life, and saying to the Lord, We have Abraham for our father; the Lord saith unto them, as degenerate, If ye are the children of Abraham, do ye the works of Abraham. If they then were on that account not children, because they did not Abraham's works; we are therefore children, because we do the works of Abraham. But what are the works of Abraham which we do? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Therefore we all belong to Jacob, imitating Abraham's faith, who believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. What then is that captivity from which we desire to be set free? For none of us, I suppose, is now among the barbarians, nor has any armed nation rushed upon us and led us captive. But I am now pointing out another captivity, in which we groan, and from which we desire to be set free. Let the Apostle Paul proceed, let him tell of it: let him be our mirror, let him speak, and let us see ourselves there: for there is no one but may

recognise himself there. That blessed Apostle then saith: For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man: the law of God delights me within: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. Now thou hast heard of the law, thou hast heard of the battle, but thou hast not yet heard of the captivity; hear what follows: warring against the law of my mind, he says, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. We acknowledge this captivity, who is there of us who would not be set free from it? And how shall he be set free? This Psalm hath prophesied in song. Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. To whom did it speak? To Christ; for it said, for the end, for the sons of Core: for He hath turned away the captivity of Jacob. Hear Paul himself confessing. When he said that he was dragged captive by the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, he cried out under that captivity, and said, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? He asked who it should be, and straightway it occurred to him, The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Of this grace of God the Prophet speaketh to our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. Attend to the captivity of Jacob, attend, and see that it is this: Thou hast turned away our captivity, not by setting us free from the barbarians, with whom we had not met, but by setting us free from bad works, from our sins, by which Satan held sway over us. For if any one has been set free from his sins, the prince of sinners hath not whence he may hold sway over him.

5. For how did He turn away the captivity of Jacob? See, how that that setting free is spiritual, see how that it is done inwardly. (Ver. 2.) Thou hast forgiven, he saith, the iniquity of Thy people: Thou hast covered all their sins. Behold how He hath turned away their captivity, in that He hath remitted iniquity: iniquity held them captive; thy iniquity forgiven, thou art freed. Confess therefore that thou art in captivity, that thou mayest be worthy to be freed: for he that knoweth not of his enemy, how can he invoke the liberator? Thou hast covered all their sins. What is, Thou hast covered? So as not to see them. How didst Thou not see them? So as not to take vengeance on them. Thou wast unwilling to see our sins: and therefore sawest Thou them not, because Thou wouldest not see them: Thou hast

covered all their sins. (Ver. 3.) Thou hast appeased all Thy anger: Thou hast turned Thyself from Thy wrathful indignation.

6. And as these things are said of the future, though the sound of the words is past, it follows: (ver. 4.) Turn us, O God of our salvation. That which he had just related as if it were done, how prayeth he that it may be done, except because he wished to shew that he had spoken as if of the past in prophecy? But that it was not yet done which he had said was done he sheweth by this, that he prayeth that it may be done: Turn us, O God of our salvation, and turn away Thine anger from us. Didst thou not say before, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob, Thou hast covered all their sins: Thou hast appeased all Thy anger, Thou hast turned Thyself from Thy wrathful indignation? How then now sayest thou, And turn away Thine anger from us? The Prophet answereth: These things I speak of as done, because I see them about to be done: but because they are not yet done, I pray that they may come, which I have already seen. Turn away Thine anger from us.

7. Ver. 5. Be not angry with us for ever. For by the anger of God we are subject to death, and by the anger of God we eat bread on this earth in want, and in the sweat of our face. This was Adam's sentence when he sinned: and that Adam was every one of us, for in Adam all die; the sentence passed on him hath taken effect after him on us. For we were not yet ourselves, but we were in Adam: therefore whatever happened to Adam himself took effect on us also, so that we should die: for we all were in him. For those sins of parents belong not to the children, which the parents commit after the children are born: for the children being now born belong unto themselves, and the parents belong unto themselves. Therefore those who have been born, if they keep the evil ways of their parents, must bear also their deserts: but if they have changed themselves, and have not imitated their bad parents, they begin to have a merit of their own, not the merit of their parents. So far as this the sin of thy father hurts thee not, if thou hast changed thyself, even as it would not hurt thy father if he had changed himself. But that which our stock hath received unto its subjection to death, it hath derived from Adam. What hath it so derived? That frailty of the flesh, this torture of pains, this house of poverty, this chain of death, and

snare of temptations; all these things we carry about in this flesh; and this is the anger of God, because it is the vengeance of God. But because it was so to be, that we should be regenerated, and by believing should be made new, and all that mortality was to be removed in our resurrection, and the whole man was to be restored in newness; for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive; seeing this the Prophet saith, Be not angry with us for ever, nor stretch out Thy wrath from one generation to another. The first generation was mortal by Thy wrath: the second generation shall be immortal by Thy mercy.

8. What then? Was this thy own work, O man, that thou deservedst the mercy of God, in that thou wast converted unto Him; and have they who have not been converted, not found mercy, but wrath? And what then? Couldst thou cause that thou shouldest be converted, if thou hadst not been called? Was it not He Who called thee when turned away, Who caused that thou shouldest be turned unto Him? Seek not thou to claim even thy conversion for thyself, for if He had not called thee when a fugitive, thou couldst not have turned unto Him. Therefore the Prophet, ascribing to God the benefit of his conversion, prays thus, and says:

Ver. 6. O God, Thou shalt turn us again, and make us alive. Not as if we ourselves of our own accord, without Thy mercy, turn unto Thee, and then Thou shalt make us alive: but, Thou shalt turn us again, and make us alive: so that not only our being made alive is from Thee, but our very conversion that we may be made alive. Thou, O God, shalt turn us again, and make us alive: and Thy people shall rejoice in Thee. To their own evil they shall rejoice in themselves: to their own good they shall rejoice in Thee. For when they wished to have joy of themselves, they found in themselves woe: but now because God is all our joy, he that will rejoice securely let him rejoice in Him Who cannot perish. For why, my brethren, will ye rejoice in silver? Either thy silver perisheth, or thou: and no one knows which first: yet this is certain, that both shall perish; which first, is uncertain. For neither can man remain here always, nor can silver remain here always: so too gold, so garments, so houses, so money, so broad lands, so, lastly, this light itself. Be not thou willing then to rejoice in these: but rejoice in that light which hath no setting: rejoice in that dawn which no yesterday

precedes, which no to-morrow follows. What light is that? I, saith He, am the Light of the world. He Who saith unto thee, I am the Light of the world, calls thee to Himself. When He calls thee, He converts thee: when he converts thee, He healeth thee: when He hath healed thee, thou shalt see thy Converter, unto Whom it is said, And Thy people shall rejoice in Thee.

9. Ver. 7. Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord. This is what we have been singing before, and we have already spoken of the same. Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation: Thy salvation, that is, Thy Christ. Happy is he unto whom God sheweth His mercy. He it is who cannot indulge in pride, unto whom God sheweth His mercy. For by shewing him His salvation He persuadeth him that whatever good man has, he hath not but from Him Who is all our good. And when a man has seen that whatever good he has he hath not from himself, but from his God; he sees that every thing which is praised in him is of the mercy of God, not of his own deserving; and seeing this, he is not proud; not being proud, he is not lifted up; not lifting himself up, he falleth not; not falling, he standeth; standing, he clingeth fast; clinging fast, he abideth; abiding, he enjoyeth, and rejoiceth in the Lord his God. He who made him shall be unto him a delight: and his delight no one spoileth, no one interrupteth, no one taketh away. What powerful man will threaten to take it away? what bad neighbour, what robber, what plotter taketh away God from thee? Though he can take from thee all what thou hast in the body, he taketh not away Him Whom thou hast in thy heart. This is that mercy which I pray may God shew unto us. Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation: grant unto us Thy Christ, for in Him is Thy mercy. Let us too say unto Him, Grant unto us Thy Christ. Already indeed He hath given unto us His Christ: yet still let us say unto Him, Grant unto us Thy Christ, for still we say unto Him, Give us this day our daily bread. And who is our bread, but He Himself Who said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Let us say unto Him, Give unto us Thy Christ. He hath indeed already given unto us Christ, but as Man; Him Whom He hath given unto us as Man, He will give unto us as God. To men He gave Man: such He gave to men as men could receive; for as God no man could receive Christ. He became Man unto men, He reserved Himself as God for gods. Have I spoken arrogantly? Arrogantly indeed, if He had not Himself said, I said, Ye are

gods, and ye are all the children of the Highest. We are renewed even unto adoption, so as to be made sons of God. Already indeed we are so, but by faith; we are so in hope, we are not yet such in reality. For by hope we are saved, as saith the Apostle. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, how doth he hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. What do we with patience wait for, except to see what we believe? For now we believe what we see not: by abiding in that which believing we see not, we shall deserve to see that which we believe. Therefore, what saith John in his Epistle? Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. Who would not rejoice, if suddenly while he was wandering abroad, ignorant of his descent, suffering want, and in a state of misery and toil, it were announced, Thou art the son of a senator: thy father enjoys an ample patrimony on your family estate; I bid thee return to thy father: how would he rejoice, if this were said to him by some one whose promise he could trust? One whom we can trust, an Apostle of Christ, hath come and said to us, What is the reason that ye despair of yourselves? why do ye afflict yourselves, and wear yourselves down with grief; why do ye choose, following your own desires, to suffer grief in want of those other joys? Ye have a father, ye have a country, ye have an inheritance. Who is that father? Beloved, we are the sons of God. Wherefore then see we not yet our Father? Because it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We are that now, but in hope: for what we shall be hath not yet appeared. And what shall we be? We know, saith he, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. But hath he said this of the Father, and not of the Son our Lord Jesus Christ? and shall we then be blessed in seeing the Father, not the Son? Hear Christ Himself: He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. For when the One God is seen, the Trinity is seen, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Hear more expressly that the vision of the Son Himself shall give unto us blessedness, and that there is no difference between the vision of Him and the vision of the Father. He Himself saith in the Gospel: He that loveth Me keepeth My commands, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him. He spoke unto them, and said, I will manifest Myself unto him. Wherefore? was it not the same Person Who was speaking? but flesh could see flesh; the heart did not yet the Deity. For this cause did flesh see flesh, that by faith the heart might be cleansed that it might see God. For it

was said of the Lord, Purifying their hearts by faith: and the Lord said, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Therefore He promised us to shew Himself unto us. Think, my brethren, what His beauty is. All those beautiful things which ye see, which ye love, He made. If these are beautiful, what is He Himself? If these are great, how great is He? Therefore from these things which we love here, let us the more long for Him: and despising these things, let us love Him: that by that very love we may by faith purify our hearts, and His vision, when it cometh, may find our heart purified. The light which shall be shewn unto us ought to find us whole: this is the work of faith now. This is what we have spoken here: And grant us Thy salvation: grant us Thy Christ, that we may know Thy Christ, see Thy Christ; not as the Jews saw Him and crucified Him, but as the Angels see Him, and rejoice.

10. Ver. 8, 9. I will hearken what the Lord God shall speak in me. The Prophet spoke: God spoke within in him, and the world made a noise without. Therefore, retiring for a little from the noise of the world, and turning himself back upon himself, and from himself upon Him Whose voice he heard within; sealing up his ears, as it were, against the tumultuous disquietude of this life, and against the soul weighed down by the corruptible body, and against the imagination, that through the earthly tabernacle pressing down, thinketh on many things, he saith, I will hearken what the Lord God speaketh in me; and he heard, what? For He shall speak peace unto His people. The voice of Christ, then, the voice of God, is peace: it calleth unto peace. Ho! it saith, whosoever are not yet in peace, love ye peace: for what can ye find better from Me than peace? What is peace? Where there is no war. What is this, where there is no war? Where there is no contradiction, where there is no resistance, nothing to oppose. Consider if we are yet there: consider if there is not now a conflict with the devil, if all the saints and faithful ones wrestle not with the prince of dæmons. And how do they wrestle with him whom they see not? They wrestle with their own desires, by which he suggests unto them sins: and by not consenting to what he suggests, though they are not conquered, yet they fight. Therefore there is not yet peace where there is fighting. Or give me a man who suffers no temptation in his flesh, so that he can say to me, that he now has peace. Perhaps indeed he suffers no temptations to unlawful pleasures, yet he

suffers the mere suggestions: either something is suggested to him which he refuses, or he is pleased with something which he must keep under. But, lo! nothing unlawful now gives him pleasure; yet he has to struggle daily against hunger and thirst; for what just man is not exposed to this? Hunger then and thirst fight against us, the weariness of the flesh fights against us, enjoyment of sleep fights against us, oppression fights. We would watch, and we fall asleep: we would fast, and we hunger and thirst: we would stand, and we fail from fatigue: we wish to sit, yet if we do even this long, we become tired. Whatever we provide for our refreshment, there again we find weariness. Art thou hungry? one asks thee: thou answerest, I am. He places food before thee for thy refreshment; continue thou to use it, for thou hadst need of it; yet in continuing that which thou needest for refreshment, therein findest thou weariness. By long sitting thou wast tired; thou risest and refreshest thyself by walking; continue that relief, and by much walking thou art wearied; again thou wouldest sit down. Find me any thing by which thou art refreshed, wherein if thou continue thou dost not again become weary. What peace then is that which men have here, opposed by so many troubles, desires, wants, wearinesses? This is no true, no perfect peace. What will be perfect peace? This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy struggle? For where there is as yet mortality, how can there be full peace? It is from death that weariness cometh, which we find in all our pleasures. From death it is, since we carry a mortal body: which indeed the Apostle calls dead, even before its separation from the soul: The body, saith he, is dead because of sin. For if thou persevere in that by which thou art refreshed, thou wilt even die. Persevere in eating much; this itself will kill thee: persevere in fasting much, by this thou wilt die: sit continually, being resolved not to rise up, by this thou wilt die: be always walking so as never to take rest, by this thou wilt die; watch continually, taking no sleep, by this thou wilt die; sleep continually, never watching, thus too thou wilt die. When therefore death shall be swallowed up in victory, these things shall no longer be: there will be full and eternal peace. We shall be in a City, of which, brethren, when I speak I find it hard to leave off, especially when offences wax common. Who would not long for that City whence no friend goeth out, whither no enemy entereth, where is

no tempter, no seditious person, no one dividing God's people, no one wearying the Church in the service of the devil; since the prince himself of all such is cast into eternal fire, and with him those who consent unto him, and who have no will to retire from him? There shall be peace made pure in the sons of God, all loving one another, seeing one another full of God, since God shall be all in all. We shall have God as our common object of vision, God as our common possession, God as our common peace. For whatever there is which He now giveth unto us, He Himself shall be unto us instead of His gifts; this will be full and perfect peace. This He speaketh unto His people: this it was which he would hearken unto who said, I will hearken what the Lord God will say unto me: for He shall speak peace unto His people, and to His saints, and unto those who turn their hearts unto Him. Lo, my brethren, do ye wish that unto you should belong that peace which God uttereth? Turn your heart unto Him: not unto me, or unto that one, or unto any man. For whatever man would turn unto himself the hearts of men, he falleth with them. Which is better, that thou fall with him unto whom thou turnest thyself, or that thou stand with Him with Whom thou turnest thyself? Our joy, our peace, our rest, the end of all troubles, is none but God: blessed are they that turn their hearts unto Him.

11. Ver. 9. Nevertheless, His salvation is nigh them that fear Him. There were some even then who feared Him in the Jewish people. Every where throughout the earth idols were worshipped: devils were feared, not God: in that nation God was feared. But why was He feared? In the Old Testament He was feared, lest He should give them up to captivity, lest He should take away their land from them, lest He should destroy their vines with hail, lest He should make their wives barren, lest He should take away their children from them. For these carnal promises of God captivated their minds, which as yet were of small growth, and for these things God was feared: but He was near unto them who even for these things feared Him. The Pagan prayed for land to the devil: the Jew prayed for land to God: it was the same thing which they prayed for, but not the same to whom they prayed. The latter, though seeking what the Pagan sought, yet was distinguished from the Pagan; for He sought it of Him Who had made all things. And God, Who was far from the Gentiles, was near unto them: yet He had regard even to those who were afar off, and to those who were near, as the Apostle said:

And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them that were near. Whom did He mean by those near? The Jews, because they worshipped one God. Whom by those who were afar off? The Gentiles, because they had left Him by Whom they were made, and worshipped things which themselves had made. For it is not in space that any one is far from God, but in affections. Thou lovest God, thou art near unto Him. Thou hatest God, thou art far off. Thou art standing in the same place, both while thou art near and far off. This it was, my brethren, which the Prophet had regard to: although he saw the mercy of God extending over all, yet he saw something especial and peculiar shewn toward the Jews, and he saith, Nevertheless, I will hearken what the Lord God shall say unto me: for He shall speak peace unto His people; and His people shall be, not Judæa only, but it shall be gathered together out of all nations: For he shall speak peace unto His Saints, and to those who turn their hearts unto Him, and to all who shall turn their hearts unto Him from the whole world. Nevertheless, His salvation shall be nigh them that fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land: that is, in that land in which the Prophet was born, greater glory shall dwell, because Christ began to be preached from thence. Thence were the Apostles, and thither first they were sent; from thence were the Prophets, there first was the Temple, there sacrifice was made to God, there were the Patriarchs, there He Himself came of the seed of Abraham, there Christ was manifested, there Christ appeared; for from thence was the Virgin Mary who bore Christ. There He walked with His feet, there He worked miracles. Thirdly, He ascribed so great honour to that nation, that when a certain Canaanitish woman interrupted Him, praying for the healing of her daughter, He said unto her, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Seeing this, the Prophet saith, Nevertheless, His salvation is nigh them that fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.

12. Ver. 10. Mercy and truth have met together. 'Truth in our land,' in a Jewish person, 'mercy' in the land of the Gentiles. For where was truth? Where the utterances of God were. Where was mercy? On those who had left their God, and turned themselves unto devils. Did He look down also upon them? Yea, as if he said, Call those who are fugitives afar off, who have departed far from Me: call them, let them find Me Who seek them, since they themselves would not seek Me. Therefore, Mercy and truth have

met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Do righteousness, and thou shalt have peace; that righteousness and peace may kiss each other. For if thou love not righteousness, thou shalt not have peace; for those two, righteousness and peace, love one another, and kiss one another: that he who hath done righteousness may find peace kissing righteousness. They two are friends: thou perhaps willest the one, and not the other: for there is no one who wills not peace: but all will not work righteousness. Ask all men, Wiliest thou peace? With one mouth the whole race of man answers thee, I wish, I desire, I will, I love it. Love also righteousness: for these two, righteousness and peace, are friends; they kiss one another: if thou love not the friend of peace, peace itself will not love thee, nor come unto thee. For what great thing is it to desire peace? Every bad man longeth for peace. For peace is a good thing. But do righteousness, for righteousness and peace kiss one another, they quarrel not together. Wherefore dost thou quarrel with righteousness? Lo, righteousness saith unto thee, Thou shalt not steal, and thou hearest not; Thou shalt not commit adultery, and thou wilt not hear. Do not to another what thou wouldest not suffer, say not to another what thou wouldest not have said to thyself. Thou art an enemy to my friend, saith peace unto thee; why seekest thou me? I am the friend of righteousness: whenever I find an enemy of my friend, him I go not near. Wilt thou then attain unto peace? Do righteousness. Therefore another Psalm saith unto thee: Eschew evil, and do good: (this is to love righteousness:) and when thou hast eschewed evil and done good, seek peace, and ensue it. For now thou shalt not have to seek it long, for it shall itself meet thee, that it may kiss righteousness.

13. Ver. 11. Truth hath sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven. Truth hath sprung out of the earth: Christ is born of a woman. Truth hath sprung out of the earth: the Son of God hath come forth of the flesh. What is truth? The Son of God. What is the earth? Flesh. Ask whence Christ was born, and thou seest that Truth is sprung out of the earth. But the Truth Which sprang out of the earth was before the earth, and by It the heaven and the earth were made: but in order that righteousness might look down from heaven, that is, in order that men might be justified by Divine grace, Truth was born of the Virgin Mary; that He might be able to offer a sacrifice to justify them, the sacrifice of suffering, the sacrifice of

the Cross. And how could He offer a sacrifice for our sins, except He died? How could He die, except He received from us that wherein He might die; that is, unless He received from us mortal flesh, Christ could not have died: because the Word dieth not, Godhead dieth not, the Virtue and Wisdom of God doth not die. How should He offer a sacrifice, a healing victim, if He died not? How should He die, unless He clothed Himself with flesh? How should He put on flesh, except truth sprang out of the earth? Truth hath sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

14. On the same passage we may mention another meaning. Truth is sprung out of the earth: confession from man. For thou, O man, wast a sinner. O earth, who when thou hadst sinned didst hear the sentence, Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return, from thee let truth spring, that righteousness may look down from heaven. How doth truth spring from thee, whilst thou art a sinner, whilst thou art unrighteous? Confess thy sins, and truth shall spring out of thee. For if whilst thou art unrighteous, thou callest thyself just, how can truth spring out of thee? But if being unrighteous thou dost confess thyself to be so, truth hath sprung out of the earth. Remark that Publican praying in the Temple far off from the Pharisee, who did not even dare to lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner: lo, truth hath sprung out of the earth, because confession of sins hath been made by man. What follows then? Verily I say unto you, that that Publican went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee: for “every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Truth is sprung out of the earth, in confession of sins: and righteousness hath looked down from heaven, so that this Publican went down justified rather than the Pharisee. For that ye may know that truth belongeth to confession of sins, John the Evangelist says, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and truth is not in us. Hear him now how he goes on to say how truth springs out of the earth, that righteousness may look down from heaven: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Therefore, Truth is sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven. What righteousness hath looked down from heaven? It is that of God, as though He said: Let us spare this man, for he spareth not himself: let us pardon

him, for he himself confesseth. He is changed so as to punish his sin: I too will change, so as to set him free. Truth is sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

15. Ver. 12. For the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her fruit. There is one verse left: I hope you will not be tired with what I have to say. Listen, brethren, to a subject which is necessary to understand: listen, comprehend, carry it away with you, and let not the seed of God be without effect in your hearts. Truth, he saith, is sprung out of the earth, confession of sins, that is, from men: and righteousness hath looked down from heaven, that is, justification has been given by the Lord God to him who confesses, that the wicked may acknowledge that he cannot become godly except He make him so unto Whom he confesses, except he believe in Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Thy own sins therefore thou canst have: good fruit thou canst have none of, except He give it thee, unto Whom thou makest confession. Therefore when he had said, Truth is sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven, as if he were asked, What is it that thou saidst, Righteousness hath looked down from heaven; he continues, For the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase. Let us therefore look back upon ourselves: and if we find in ourselves nothing but sins, let us hate sins, and long for righteousness. For when we have begun to hate sins, that very hatred of sins straightway begins to make us like God, because we hate that which God also hateth. When therefore thou hast begun to hate sins and to confess to God, when unlawful delights hurry thee away, and draw thee to those things which profit not, make complaint to God: and confessing unto Him thy sins, thou shalt deserve from Him delight, and He will give unto thee the sweetness of working righteousness, so that righteousness shall begin to delight thee, whom before unrighteousness delighted: so that thou who at first didst delight in drunkenness, shalt rejoice in sobriety: and thou who didst at first rejoice in theft, so as to take from another man what thou hadst not, shalt seek to give to him that hath not that which thou hast: and thou who didst take delight in robbing, shalt delight now in giving: thou whom shows delighted, shalt delight in prayer; thou who didst delight in trifling and lascivious songs, shalt now delight in singing hymns to God; in running to church, thou who at first didst run to the theatre. Whence is that sweetness

born to thee, except from this, that God giveth sweetness, and our land shall give her increase? For, behold, ye see what I mean: behold, I have spoken unto you the word of God, I have sown seed in your devout hearts, finding your souls furrowed, as it were, with the plough of confession: with devout attention ye have received the seed; think now upon the word which ye have heard, like those who break up the clods, lest the fowls should carry away the seed, that what is sown may be able to spring up there: and unless God rain upon it, what profits it that it is sown? This is what is meant by the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase. May He with His visitations, in leisure, in business, in your house, in your bed, at mealtime, in conversation, in walks, visit your hearts, when we are not by. May the rain of God come and make to sprout what is sown there: and when we are not by, and are resting quietly, or otherwise employed, may God give increase to the seeds which we have sown, that remarking afterwards your improved characters, we too may rejoice for your fruit. For the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase.

16. Ver. 13. For righteousness shall go before him, and he shall direct his steps in the way: that righteousness, namely, which consists in confession of sins: for this is truth itself. For thou oughtest to be righteous towards thyself, and to punish thyself: for this is the beginning of man's righteousness, that thou shouldest punish thyself, who art evil, and God should make thee good. Therefore since this is the beginning of man's righteousness, this becomes a way for God, that God may come unto thee: there make for Him a way, in confession of sins. Therefore John too, when he was baptizing in the water of repentance, and would have men come to him repenting of their former deeds, spoke thus; Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Thou didst please thyself in thy sins, O man: let that which thou wast displease thee, that thou mayest be able to become what thou wast not. Prepare the way of the Lord: let that righteousness go before, of confession of sins: He will come and visit thee, for He shall place His steps in the way: for now He hath where to place His steps, He hath whereby He may come to thee. Before thou didst confess thy sins, thou hadst shut up the way of God: there was no way by which He might come unto thee. Confess thy past life, and thou openest a way; and Christ shall

come unto thee, and shall place His steps in the way, that He may guide thee with His own footsteps.

PSALM 86

A Sermon to the people on the vigil of a festival, perhaps of St. Cyprian, delivered at Carthage.

No greater gift could God have given to men than in making His Word, by Which He created all things, their Head, and joining them to Him as His members: that the Son of God might become also the Son of man, one God with the Father, one Man with men; so that when we speak to God in prayer for mercy, we do not separate the Son from Him; and when the Body of the Son prays, it separates not its Head from itself: and it is one Saviour of His Body, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who both prays for us, and prays in us, and is prayed to by us. He prays for us, as our Priest; He prays in us, as our Head; He is prayed to by us, as our God. Let us therefore recognise in Him our words, and His words in us. Nor when any thing is said of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in prophecy, implying a degree of humility below the dignity of God, let us hesitate to ascribe it to Him Who did not hesitate to join Himself unto us. For unto Him all creation is subject, since by Him all creation was made. And, therefore, when we behold His sublime and divine nature, when we hear, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made: gazing upon this divine nature of the Son of God, far surpassing and exceeding all the most sublime things of creation, we hear Him then in some part of Scripture groaning, praying, confessing; and we hesitate to ascribe unto Him these words, because our thoughts are reluctant to descend from that late contemplation of His divine nature, to this His humble condition, and seem almost to do Him injury, if they recognise in a man His words, unto Whom as to God they were directing words of prayer, they often remain doubtful, and try to change the understanding, and yet they meet with nothing in the Scripture but what

reverts ever to Him, and suffers them not to turn aside from Him. They ought, therefore to rouse themselves, and thoroughly wake up in their faith; then they would see, that He Whom they were a little before contemplating in the form of God, took upon Himself the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death; and it was His will to make the words of the Psalm His own words, as He hung upon the Cross, and said, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? He is prayed to in the form of God, in the form of a servant He prayeth; there the Creator, here created; assuming unchanged the creature, that it might be changed, and making us with Himself one Man, Head and Body. Therefore we pray to Him, through Him, in Him; and we speak with Him, and He speaks with us; we speak in Him, He speaks in us the prayer of this Psalm, which is entitled, A Prayer of David. For our Lord was, according to the flesh, the Son of David; but according to His divine nature, the Lord of David, and his Maker; and not only before David, but also before Abraham, from whom David came; and also before Adam, from whom were all men; and also before heaven and earth, in which are all creatures. Let no one then, when he hears these words, say, Christ speaketh not; nor again say, I speak not; nay rather, if he own himself to be in the Body of Christ, let him say both, Christ speaks, and I speak. Be thou unwilling to say any thing without Him, and He saith nothing without thee. Have we not this in the Gospel? There where it is certainly written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; there certainly we have, Jesus was sorrowful, Jesus was wearied, Jesus slept, Jesus was hungry and was thirsty, Jesus prayed, and continued in prayer all night. He prayed, says the Gospel, and He continued in prayer; and there ran down over His body great drops of blood. What did that shew, when drops of blood ran down from His body as He prayed, but that His body, which is the Church, was already flowing with the blood of martyrs?

2. Ver. 1. Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me. He speaks in the form of a servant: speak thou, O servant, in the form of thy Lord: Bow down Thine ear, O Lord. He bows down His ear, if thou dost not lift up thy neck: for unto the humble He draweth near: from him that is exalted He removes afar off, except whom He Himself hath exalted from being humble. God

then bows down His ear unto us. For He is above, we below: He in a high place, we in a lowly one, yet not deserted. For, God sheweth His love towards us: for while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. For scarcely for a just man will one die: yet for a good man peradventure one would even dare to die: but our Lord died for the wicked. For no merits of ours had gone before, for which the Son of God should die: but the more, because there were no merits, was His mercy great. How sure then, how firm is the promise, by which for the righteous He keepeth His life, Who for the wicked gave His own death! Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am poor and in misery. To the rich then He boweth not down His ear: unto the poor and him that is in misery He boweth down His ear, that is, unto the humble, and him that confesseth, unto him that is in need of mercy: not unto him that is full, who lifteth up himself and boasteth, as if he wanted nothing, and saith, I thank Thee that I am not as this Publican. For the rich Pharisee boasted of his merits: the poor Publican confessed his sins.

3. Yet do not take what I have said, my brethren, in such a way, as if God does not hear those who have gold and silver, and a household, and farms, if they happen to be born to this estate, or hold such a rank in the world: only let them remember the Apostle's words: Charge those who are rich in this world, that they be not highminded. For those that are not highminded are poor in God, and to the poor and needy and those in want He inclines His ear. For they know that their hope is not in gold and silver, nor in those things in which for a time they seem to abound. It is enough that riches ruin them not; it is enough that they do them no harm: for good they can do them none. What certainly profiteth is a work of mercy, done by a rich or by a poor man: by a rich man, with will and deed, by a poor man, with will alone. When therefore he is such an one as despiseth in himself every thing which is wont to swell men with pride, he is one of God's poor: He inclines unto him His ear, for He knows that his heart is contrite. It is true, my brethren, that that poor man, who lay full of sores before the rich man's door, was taken away by Angels into Abraham's bosom: so we read, so we believe: but that rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and who feasted in splendour every day, was taken away to hell to be tormented. Was it really for the merit of his poverty that the poor man was carried away by Angels, or was it for the sin of his riches that the rich man was sent

away to be tormented? In that poor man is signified the honour which is paid to humility, in that rich man the condemnation which awaits pride. I will prove shortly that it was not riches but pride which was tormented in that rich man. It is certain that the poor man was carried into the bosom of Abraham: of Abraham himself Scripture saith that he had here very much gold and silver, and was rich on the earth. If every one that is rich is hurried away to be tormented, how could Abraham have gone before that poor man, so as to be ready to receive him when carried to his bosom? But Abraham in his riches was poor, humble, reverencing all commands, and obeying them. So true was it that he counted all those riches for nothing, that on God's command he was ready to sacrifice his son, for whom he was keeping his riches. Learn therefore ye to be poor and needy, whether ye have any thing in this world, or whether ye have not. For you may find a poor man proud, and a rich man you may find confessing. God resisteth the proud, both those clothed all in silk, and those in rags: to the humble He giveth grace, both those who have some of this world's goods, and those who have not. God looketh within: there He weigheth, there He trieth in the balance: thou seest not God's scales, thy mind is raised to behold it. See, the desert of his being heard, that is, the cause why he was heard he places herein, saying, For I am poor and in misery. Take care lest thou be not poor and in misery, if so thou art not, thou shalt not be heard. Whatever there is around thee, or in thee, for which thou mightest presume, cast it from thee: presume not thou in aught but in God: be thou in need of Him, that thou mayest be filled with Him. For whatever else thou mayest have without Him, thou art the more entirely poor.

4. Ver. 2. Preserve Thou My Soul, for I am holy. I know not whether any one could say this, I am holy, but He Who was in the world without sin: He by Whom all sins were not committed but remitted. We own it to be His voice saying, Preserve Thou My Soul, for I am holy; of course in that form of a servant which He had assumed. For in that was flesh, in that was also a Soul. For He was not, as some have said, only Flesh and the Word: but Flesh and Soul also, and the Word, and all this, One Son of God, One Christ, One Saviour; in the form of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant the Head of the Church. When therefore I hear, for I am holy, I recognise His voice: yet do I exclude my own? Surely He speaks

inseparably from His body when He speaks thus. Shall I then dare to say, For I am holy? If holy as making holy, and as needing none to sanctify, I should be proud and false: but if holy as made holy, as it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy, then the body of Christ may venture, and that one Man, crying from the end of the earth, may venture with his Head, and under his Head, to say, For I am holy. For he hath received the grace of holiness, the grace of Baptism, and of remission of sins. And such were ye, saith the Apostle, enumerating many sins, light ones and heavy, customary and horrible; And such were ye: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified. If then he calls them sanctified, each one of the faithful may say, I am holy. This is not the pride of one puffed up, but the confession of one not ungrateful. For if thou sayest that thou art holy of thyself, thou art proud: on the other hand, thou who art faithful in Christ, and a member of Christ, if thou sayest that thou art not holy, thou art ungrateful. The Apostle rebuking pride, saith not, Thou hast not; but he saith, What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Thou wast not rebuked for saying that thou hast what thou hast not, but for wishing that what thou hast should be of thyself. Do thou then own both that thou hast, and that of thyself thou hast nothing, so as to be neither proud nor ungrateful. Say unto thy God, I am holy, for Thou hast sanctified me: because I received, not because I had: because Thou gavest, not because I deserved. For on another side thou art beginning to do an injury to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For if all Christians who are faithful and have been baptized in Him have put Him on, as the Apostle saith, As many as are baptized in Christ have put on Christ: if they have been made members of His body, and say that they are not holy, they do injury to their Head, of Whom they are members, and yet not holy. Look thou where thou art, and from thy Head assume dignity. For thou wert in darkness, but now light in the Lord. Ye were sometime darkness, he saith: but did ye remain darkness? Was it for this the Enlightener came, that ye might still remain darkness, or that in Him ye might become light? Therefore, every Christian by himself, therefore also the whole body of Christ, may say, it may cry every where, while it suffers tribulations, various temptations and offences, it may say, Preserve Thou my soul, for I am holy: my God, save Thy servant, that putteth his trust in Thee. See thou, that holy man is not proud, since he putteth his trust in God.

5. Ver. 3. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I have cried unto Thee all day. Not one day: understand all day to mean continually: from the time that the body of Christ groans being in afflictions, until the end of the world, when afflictions pass away, that man groaneth and calleth upon God: and each one of us after his measure hath his part in that cry in the whole body. Thou hast cried in thy days, and thy days have passed away: another hath come after thee, and cried in his days: and thou here, he there, another elsewhere: the body of Christ crieth all the day, its members departing and succeeding one another. One Man it is that reaches to the end of the world: the same members of Christ cry, and some members already rest in Him, some still cry, some when we shall be at rest will cry, and after them others will cry. It is the whole body of Christ whose voice He hears, saying, Unto Thee have I cried all the day. Our Head on the right hand of the Father intercedes for us: some members He recovereth, others He scourgeth, others He cleanseth, others He comforteth, others He is creating, others calling, others recalling, others correcting, others restoring.

6. Ver. 4. Make glad the soul of Thy servant: for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. Make it glad, for unto Thee have I lifted it up. For it was on earth, and from the earth it felt bitterness: lest it should wither away in bitterness, lest it should lose all the sweetness of Thy grace, I lifted it up unto Thee: make Thou it glad with Thyself. For Thou alone art gladness: the whole world is full of bitterness. Surely with reason He admonishes His members to lift up their hearts. May they hear and do it: may they lift up unto Him what on earth is ill. There the heart decayeth not, if it be lifted up to God. If thou hadst corn in thy rooms below, thou wouldest take it up higher, lest it should grow rotten. Wouldest thou remove thy corn, and dost thou suffer thy heart to rot on the earth? Thou wouldest take thy corn up higher: lift up thy heart to heaven. And how can I, dost thou say? What ropes are needed? what machines? what ladders? Thy affections are the steps: thy will the way. By loving thou mountest, by neglect thou descendest. Standing on the earth thou art in heaven, if thou lovest God. For the heart is not so raised as the body is raised: the body to be lifted up changes its place: the heart to be lifted up changes its will. For unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

7. Ver. 5. For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious. Therefore make Thou me glad. As though wearied with the bitterness of earthly things he wished to be sweetened, and sought the fount of sweetness, and found it not on the earth. For wherever he turned himself, he found offences, fears, troubles, temptations. In what man was there safety? in whom could he securely rejoice? Certainly not in himself: how much less in others? Either men are bad, and we must bear with them, and hope that they will be changed; or they are good, and we ought to love them so as to fear at the same time, lest (as they are changeable) they should become bad; in one case their wickedness causes bitterness of soul, in the other it is caused by anxiety and fear, lest he who walks well should slip. Wherever therefore he turns himself, he finds bitterness in earthly things: he has not whereby he may be sweetened, unless he lift himself up to God. For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious. What is gracious? Bearing me until Thou hast made me perfect. I will speak truly, my brethren, like a man among men, and sprung from men: let each one endure to look into his own heart without flattery, and without false soothing. For nothing is more foolish than for a man vainly to soothe and seduce himself. Let him attend then and see what things pass in man's heart: how even prayers are often hindered by vain thoughts, so that the heart scarcely remains fixed on God: and it would hold itself so as to be fixed, and somehow flees from itself, and finds no frames in which it can inclose itself, no bars by which it may keep in its flights and wandering movements, and stand still to be made glad by its God. Scarcely does one such prayer occur amongst many. Each one might say that this happened to him, but that it happened not to others, if we did not find in the holy Scripture David praying in a certain place, and saying, Since I have found my heart, O Lord, so that I might pray unto Thee. He said that he had found his heart, as if it were wont to flee from him, and he to follow it like a fugitive, and not be able to catch it, and to cry to God, For my heart hath deserted me. Therefore, my brethren, thinking over what he saith here, Thou, O Lord, art good and gracious, I think I see what he meaneth by "gracious." Make glad the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: for Thou art good and gracious: I seem to feel that for this reason he calls God gracious, because He bears with those failings of ours, and yet expects prayer from us, in order to make us perfect: and when we have given it to Him, He receives it gratefully, and listens to it, and

remembers not those many prayers which we pour out unthinkingly, and accepts the one which we can scarcely find. For what man is there, my brethren, who, on being addressed by his friend, when he wishes to answer his address, sees his friend turn away from him and speak to another, who is there who would bear this? Or if you appeal to a judge, and set him up to hear you, and all at once, while you are speaking to him, pass from him, and begin to converse with your friend, who would endure this? Yet God endures the hearts of so many persons who pray and think of different things: I am not now speaking of evil things, such are sometimes perverse and at enmity with God; to think of any thing that is superfluous is an injury to Him with Whom you have begun to speak. Thy prayer is a speech addressed to God: when thou readest, God speaks to thee: when thou prayest, thou speakest to God. What then? Must we despair of mankind, and say that every man is already condemned into whose prayers any wandering thoughts have crept and interrupted them? If we say this, my brethren, I know not what hope remains. Therefore because there is some hope before God, because His mercy is great, let us say unto Him, Make glad the soul of Thy servant: for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. And how have I lifted it up? As I could, as Thou gavest me strength, as I could catch it when it fled away. “And hast thou forgotten,” imagine God to say, “that as often as thou didst stand before Me, thou didst think of so many vain and useless things, and didst scarcely pour out unto Me an earnest and steady prayer?” For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious: gracious art Thou, enduring me. From infirmity I sink: heal Thou me, and I shall stand: strengthen Thou me, and I shall be strong. But until Thou do this, Thou bearest with me: For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious.

8. And of great mercy.

That is, not only of mercy, but of great mercy: for as our iniquity abounds, so also aboundeth Thy mercy. And of great mercy art Thou unto all that call upon Thee. What is it then which Scripture saith in many places; They shall call, and I will not hear them? (yet surely Thou art merciful to all that call upon Thee;) but that some call, yet call not upon Him, of whom it is said, They have not called upon God. They call, but not on God. Thou callest upon whatever thou lovest: thou callest upon whatever thou callest unto

thyself, whatever thou wishest to come unto thee. Therefore if thou callest upon God for this reason, in order that money may come unto thee, that an inheritance may come unto thee, that worldly rank may come unto thee, thou callest upon those things which thou desirest may come unto thee: but thou makest God the helper of thy desires, not the listener to thy needs. God is good, if He gives what thou wishest. What if thou wishest ill, will He not then be more merciful by not giving? Then, if He gives not, then is God nothing to thee; and thou sayest, How much I have prayed, how often I have prayed, and have not been heard! Why, what didst thou ask? Perhaps that thy enemy might die. What if he at the same time were praying for thy death? He Who created thee, created him also: thou art a man, he too is a man; but God is the Judge: He hears both, and He grants their prayer to neither. Thou art sad, because thou wast not heard when praying against him; be glad, because his prayer was not heard against thee. But thou sayest, I did not ask for this; I asked not for the death of my enemy, but for the life of my child; what ill did I ask? Thou askedst no ill, as thou didst think. What if he was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding. But he was a sinner, thou sayest, and therefore I wished him to live, that he might be corrected. Thou wishedst him to live, that he might become better; what if God knew, that if he lived he would become worse? How then couldest thou know what was good for him, to die or to live? If then thou knewest not, return into thy heart, leave it to God to take counsel for thee. What am I to do then, dost thou say? what am I to pray for? What art thou to pray for? What the Lord has taught thee, what thy heavenly Master has taught thee. Call upon God as God, love God as God: there is nothing better than He is; long for Him, Him desire. See how he calls on God in another Psalm: One thing have I required of the Lord, this I will ask. What is it which he required? That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. For what reason? That I may behold the delightfulness of the Lord. If then thou wouldest be a lover of God, with thy innermost marrow and with pure sighings love Him, desire Him, for Him burn, long for Him, than Whom thou shalt find nothing more pleasant, nothing better, nothing more joyful, nothing more lasting. For what so lasting as that which is everlasting? Thou needest not fear, lest He should ever be lost to thee, Who causes that thou be not lost thyself. If, therefore, thou callest on God

as God, be confident thou shalt be heard: thou hast part in that verse; And of great mercy unto all that call upon Thee.

9. Say not thou then, He did not give me that which I prayed for. Return thou into thy conscience: weigh it, question it, spare it not. If thou calledst on God truly, be sure that that which perhaps thou wishedst to have as a temporal blessing He gave thee not, for this reason, because it was not good for thee. Let your heart, my brethren, be builded up on this, a Christian heart, a faithful heart: begin not, when ye are sad as if defrauded of your wants, begin not to be angry against God: for it is not good to kick against the pricks. Look back to the Scriptures. The devil is heard, and not the Apostle: what think ye? How are the devils heard? They prayed that they might go into the swine, and it was allowed them. How was the devil heard? He asked for Job, that he might tempt him, and received permission. How was the Apostle not heard? Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. He heard him whom He ordained to damnation, and did not hear him whom He willed to heal. So a sick man asketh many things of the physician; but the physician giveth them not: he heareth not for his desire, that he may hear for his cure.

Make God then thy Physician: seek of Him health, and He Himself will be thy health: seek not as if thou wouldest gain salvation from any other source, but so that He Himself may be salvation unto thee: not so as again to love any other salvation besides Him, but as thou hast it written in the Psalm: Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. What is it to thee what He saith unto thee, so that He give Himself unto thee? Wouldest thou that He should give Himself unto thee? What if that which thou wouldest have He wills not that thou shouldest have, that He may give Himself unto thee? He removes hindrances, that he may enter into thee. Think, brethren, and reflect what good things God giveth unto sinners: and learn hence what He keepeth for His own servants. To sinners who blaspheme Him every day He giveth the sky and the earth, He giveth springs, fruits, health, children,

wealth, abundance: all these good things none giveth but God. He who giveth such things to sinners, what thinkest thou He keeps for His faithful ones? Is this to be believed of Him, that He Who giveth such things to the bad, keepeth nothing for the good? Nay verily He doth keep, not earth, but heaven for them. Too common a thing perhaps I say when I say heaven; Himself rather, Who made the heaven. Fair is heaven, but fairer is the Maker of heaven. But I see the heavens, Him I see not. Because thou hast eyes to see the heavens: a heart thou hast not yet to see the Maker of heaven: therefore came He from heaven to earth, to cleanse the heart, that He may be seen Who made heaven and earth. But wait thou with full patience for salvation. By what treatment to cure thee, He knoweth: by what cutting, what burning, He knoweth. Thou hast brought sickness on thyself by sinning: He comes not only to nurse, but also to cut and to burn. Seest thou not how much men suffer under the hands of physicians, when a man promises them an uncertain hope? Thou wilt be cured, says the physician: thou wilt be cured, if I cut. It is a man who speaks, and to a man that he speaks: neither is he sure who speaks, nor he who hears, for he who is speaking to the man hath not made man, and knows not perfectly what is passing in man: yet at the words of a man who knows not what is passing in man, man sooner believeth, submits his limbs, suffers himself to be bound, often without being bound is cut or burned; and receives perhaps health for a few days, even when just healed not knowing when he may die: perhaps, while being healed, dies; perhaps cannot be healed. But to whom hath God promised any thing, and deceived him?

10. Ver. 6. Fix my prayer in Thy ears, O Lord. Great earnestness of him who prays! Fix my prayer in Thine ears, O Lord: that is, let not my prayer go out of Thine ears, fix it then in Thine ears. How did he travail that he might fix his prayer in the ears of God? Let God answer and say to us; Wouldest thou that I fix thy prayer in My ears? Fix My law in thy heart. Fix my prayer in Thine ears, O Lord; and attend to the voice of my prayer.

11. Ver. 7. In the day of my trouble I have cried unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me. The cause that Thou heardest me was, that in the day of my trouble I cried unto Thee. A little before he had said, All the day have I cried, all the day have I been troubled. Let no Christian then say that there

is any day in which he is not troubled. By all the day we have understood the whole of time. What then, is there trouble even when it is well with us? Even so, trouble. How is there trouble? Because as long as we are in the body we are absent from the Lord. Let what will abound here, we are not yet in that country whither we are hastening to return. He to whom foreign travel is sweet, loveth not his country: if his country is sweet, travel is bitter; if travel is bitter, all the day there is trouble? When is there not trouble? When there is joy in one's country. At Thy right hand are delights for evermore. 'Thou shalt fill me with joy,' he saith, 'with Thy countenance: that I may see the delight of the Lord.' There toil and groaning shall pass away: there shall be not prayer but raise; there Alleluia, there Amen, the voice in concord with Angels; there vision without failing and love without weariness. So long therefore as we are not there, ye see that we are not in that which is good. But do all things abound? If all things abound, see if thou art assured that all things perish not. But I have what I had not: more money is come to me which I had not before. Perhaps more fear too is come, which thou hadst not before: perhaps thou wast so much the more secure as thou wast the poorer. In fine, be it that thou hast wealth, that thou hast redundance of this world's affluence, that thou hast assurance given thee that all this shall not perish; besides this, that God say unto thee, Thou shalt remain for ever in these things, they shall be for ever with thee, but My face thou shalt not see. Let none ask counsel of the flesh: ask ye counsel of the Spirit: let your heart answer you; let hope, faith, charity, which has begun to be in you, answer. If then we were to receive assurance that we should always be in affluence of worldly goods, and if God were to say to us, My face ye shall not see, would ye rejoice in these goods? Some one might perhaps choose to rejoice, and say, These things abound unto me, it is well with me, I ask no more. He hath not yet begun to be a lover of God: he hath not yet begun to sigh like one far from home. Far be it, far be it from us: let them retire, all those seductions: let them retire, those false blandishments: let them be gone, those words which they say daily unto us, Where is thy God? Let us pour out our soul over us, let us confess in tears, let us groan in confession, let us sigh in misery. Whatever is present with us besides our God, is not sweet: we would not have all things that He hath given, if He gives not Himself Who gave all things. Fix my prayer, O Lord,

in Thy ears, and attend to the voice of my prayer. In the day of my trouble I have cried unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me.

12. Ver. 8. Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord. What did he say? Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord. Let the Pagans make for themselves what gods they will; let them bring workmen in silver and in gold, furbishers, sculptors; let them make gods. What kind of gods? Having eyes, and seeing not; and the other things which the Psalm mentions in what follows. But we do not worship these, he says; we do not worship them, these are symbols. What then do ye worship? Something else that is worse: for the gods of the gentiles are devils. What then? Neither, say they, do we worship devils. Ye have certainly nothing else in your temples, nothing else inspires your prophets than a devil. But what do ye say? We worship Angels, we have Angels as gods. Ye know not altogether what Angels are. Angels worship the one God, and favour not men who wish to worship Angels and not God. For we find Angels of high rank forbidding men to adore them, and commanding them to adore the true God. But when they say Angels, suppose they mean men, since it is said, I have said, Ye are Gods, and all the children of the Most Highest. Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord. Whatever man thinks to the contrary, that which was made is not like Him Who made it. Except God, whatever else there is in the universe was made by God. What a difference there is between Him Who made, and that which was made, who can worthily imagine? Therefore this man said, Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord: but how much God is unlike them he said not, because it cannot be said. Let your Charity attend: God is ineffable: we more easily say what He is not than what He is. Thou thinkest of the earth; this is not God: thou thinkest of the sea; this is not God: of all things which are in the earth, men and animals; this is not God: of all things which are in the sea, which fly through the air; this is not God: whatever shines in the sky, the stars, sun and moon; this is not God: the heaven itself; this is not God: think of the Angels, Virtues, Powers, Archangels, Thrones, Seats, Principalities; this is not God. What is He then? I could only tell thee, what He is not. Askest thou what He is? What the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath risen up into the heart of man. Why seekest thou that that should rise up to the tongue, which hath not risen up into the heart? Among the gods

there is none like unto Thee, O Lord; there is not one that can do as Thou doest.

13. Ver. 9. All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. He has announced the Church: All nations that Thou hast made. If there is any nation which God hath not made, it will not worship Him: but there is no nation which God hath not made; because God made Adam and Eve, the source of all nations; thence all nations sprang. All nations therefore hath God made; all nations, therefore, that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. When was this said? When before Him there worshipped none but a few holy men in one people of the Hebrews, then this was said: and see now what it is which was said: All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. When these things were spoken, they were not seen, and they were believed: now that they are seen, why are they denied? All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy Name.

14. Ver. 10. For Thou art great, and doing wondrous things: Thou alone art the great God. Let no man call himself great. Some were to be who would call themselves great: against these it is said, Thou alone art the great God. For what great thing is ascribed to God, when it is said that He alone is the great God? Who knows not that He is the great God? But because there were to be some who would call themselves great and make God little, against these it is said, Thou alone art the great God. For what Thou sayest is fulfilled, not what those say who call themselves great. What hath God said by His Spirit? All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. What saith he, whoever he is, who calleth himself great? Far from it: God is not worshipped in all nations: all nations have perished, Africa alone remains. This thou sayest, who callest thyself great: another thing He saith Who alone is the great God. What saith He, Who alone is the great God? All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. I see what the only great God hath said: let man be silent, who is falsely great; great only in appearance, because he disdains to be small. Who disdains to be small? He who saith this. Whoever will be great among you, said the Lord, shall be your servant. If that man

had wished to be the servant of his brethren, he would not have separated them from their mother: but when he wishes to be great, and wishes not to be small, as would be for his welfare, God, Who resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble, because He alone is great, fulfilleth all things which He predicted, and contradicteth those who blaspheme. For such persons blaspheme against Christ, who say that the Church has perished from the whole world, and is left only in Africa. If thou wert to say to him, Thou wilt lose thy villa, he would perhaps scarcely keep from laying his hand upon thee: and yet he says, that Christ has lost His inheritance, redeemed by His own Blood! See now what a wrong he does, my brethren. The Scripture says, In a wide nation is the king's honour; but in the domination of the people is the affliction of a prince. This wrong then thou dost unto Christ, to say that His people is diminished to that small number. Was it for this thou wast born, for this thou callest thyself a Christian, that thou mayest grudge Christ His glory, Whose sign thou sayest that thou bearest on thy forehead, and hast lost out of thy heart? In a wide nation is the king's honour: acknowledge thy King: give Him glory, give Him a wide nation. What wide nation shall I give Him, dost thou say? Choose not to give Him from thy own heart, and thou wilt give aright. Whence am I to give? thou wilt say. Lo, give from hence: All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. Say this, confess this, and thou hast given a wide nation: for all nations in One are one: this is very oneness. For as there is a Church and Churches, and those are Churches which also are a Church, so that is a nation which was nations: formerly nations, many nations, now one nation. Why one nation? Because one faith, one hope, one charity, one expectation. Lastly, why not one nation, if one country? Our country is heavenly, our country is Jerusalem: whoever is not a citizen of it, belongs not to that nation: but whoever is a citizen of it is in that one nation of God. And this nation, from the east to the west, from the north and the sea, is extended through the four quarters of the whole world. This God saith: From the east and west, from the north and the sea, give glory to God. This He foretold, this He fulfilled, Who alone is great. Let him therefore who would not be little cease from saying this against Him Who alone is great: for there cannot be two great, God and Donatus.

15. Ver. 11. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth. Thy way, Thy truth, Thy life, is Christ. Therefore belongeth the Body to Him, and the Body is of Him. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way. In what way? And I will walk in Thy truth. It is one thing to lead to the way, another to guide in the way. Behold man every where poor, every where in need of help. Those who are beside the way are not Christians, or not yet Catholics: let them be guided to the way: but when they have been brought to the way and made Catholics in Christ, they must be guided by Him in the way itself, lest they fall. Now assuredly they walk in the way. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way: surely I am now in Thy way, lead me there. And I will walk in Thy truth: while Thou ledest I shall not err: if Thou let me go, I shall err. Pray then that He let thee not go, but lead thee even to the end. How doth He lead thee? By always admonishing, always giving thee His hand. And the arm of the Lord, to whom is it revealed? For in giving His Christ He giveth His hand: in giving His hand, He giveth His Christ. He leadeth to the way, in leading to His Christ: He leadeth in the way, by leading in His Christ, and Christ is truth. Lead me, therefore, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth: in Him verily Who said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. For Thou Who ledest in the way and the truth, whither ledest Thou, but unto life? In Him then, unto Him Thou ledest. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth.

16. Let my heart be made glad, so that it may fear Thy name. There is then fear in gladness. How can there be gladness, if fear? Is not fear wont to be painful? There will hereafter be gladness without fear, now gladness with fear; for not yet is there perfect security, nor perfect gladness. If there is no gladness, we faint: if full security, we rejoice wrongly. Therefore may He both sprinkle on us gladness, and strike fear into us, that by the sweetness of gladness He may lead us to the abode of security; by giving us fear, may cause us not to rejoice wrongly, and to withdraw from the way. Therefore saith the Psalm: Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling: so also saith the Apostle Paul; Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you. Whatever prosperity comes then, my brethren, is rather to be feared: those things which ye think to be prosperous, are rather temptations. An inheritance cometh, there cometh wealth, there is an abundant overflow of some happiness: these are

temptations: take care that they corrupt you not. Whatever prosperity also there is according to Christ, and the true love of Christ: if perhaps thou hast gained thy wife, who was of the party of Donatus: if thy sons have been made believers who were pagans: if perhaps thou hast gained thy friend who wished to draw thee away to the theatres, and thou hast drawn him to the church: if some hostile opponent of thine who was furiously mad against thee, laying aside his fury, has become gentle, and owned God, and now barks at thee no more, but cries with thee against wickedness: these things are pleasant. For what do we rejoice for, if we do not rejoice for these things? Or what other are our joys, but these? But because tribulations also abound, and temptations, and dissensions, and schisms, and other evils, without which this world cannot be, until iniquity pass away: let not that rejoicing make us secure, but let our heart be so made glad, as to fear the name of the Lord, lest it be made glad on one side, be stricken on another. Expect not security in journeying: if ever we wish for it here, it will be the birdlime of the body, not the safety of the man. Let my heart be made glad, so that it may fear Thy name.

17. Ver. 12, 13. I will confess unto Thee, O Lord my God, in my whole heart, and I will glorify Thy name for ever: for great is Thy mercy toward me, and Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell. Do not be angry, brethren, if I do not explain what I have said as though I were certain. For I am a man, and as much as is granted to me concerning the sacred Scriptures, so much I venture to speak: nothing of myself. Hell I have not yet seen, nor have you: and there will be perhaps another way for us, and not through hell. These things are uncertain. But because Scripture, which cannot be gainsaid, says, Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell, we understand that there are as it were two hells, an upper one and a lower one: for how can there be a lower hell, unless because there is also an upper? The one would not be called lower, except by comparison with that upper part. It appears then, my brethren, that there is some heavenly abode of Angels: there is there a life of ineffable joys, there immortality and incorruption, there all things abiding according to the gift and grace of God. That part of the creation is above. If then that is above, but this earthly part, where is flesh and blood, where is corruptibleness, where is nativity and mortality, departure and succession, changeableness

and inconstancy, where are fears, desires, horrors, uncertain joys, frail hope, perishable existence; I suppose that all this part cannot be compared with that heaven of which I was just now speaking; if then this part cannot be compared with that, the one is above, the other below. And whither do we go after death, unless there is a depth deeper than this depth in which we are in the flesh and in this mortal state? For the body is dead, saith the Apostle, because of sin. Therefore even here are the dead; that thou mayest not wonder because it is called hell, if it abounds with the dead. For he saith not, the body is about to die: but, the body is dead. Even now surely our body hath life: and yet compared with that body which is to be like the bodies of Angels, the body of man is found to be dead, although still having life. But again, from this hell, that is from this part of hell, there is another lower, whither the dead go: from whence God would rescue our souls, even sending thither His own Son. For it was on account of these two hells, my brethren, that the Son of God was sent, on all sides setting free. To this hell he was sent by being born, to that by dying. Therefore it is His voice in that Psalm, not according to any man's conjecture, but an Apostle explaining, when he saith, For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell. Therefore it is here also either His voice, Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell: or our voice by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself: for on this account He came even unto hell, that we might not remain in hell.

18. I will mention another opinion also. For perhaps even in hell itself there is some lower part where are thrust the ungodly who have sinned most. For whether in hell there were not some places where Abraham was, we cannot define sufficiently. For not yet had the Lord come to hell that He might rescue from thence the souls of all the saints who had gone before, and yet Abraham was there in repose. And a certain rich man when he was in torments in hell, when he saw Abraham, lifted up his eyes. He could not have seen him by lifting up his eyes, unless the one was above, the other below. And what did Abraham answer unto him, when he said, Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger and drop it upon my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame? My son, he said, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is at rest, but thou art tormented. And besides this, he said, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that

neither can we go to you, nor can any one come from thence to us. Therefore between these two hells, perhaps, in one of which the souls of the just have gotten rest, in the other the souls of the ungodly are tormented, one waiting and praying here, placed here in the body of Christ, and praying in the voice of Christ, said that God had delivered his soul from the nethermost hell, because He delivered him from such sins as might have been the means of drawing him down to the torments of the nethermost hell. As if a physician were to see an illness threatening thee perhaps from some laborious work, and were to say, Spare thyself, treat thyself thus, rest, use this food; for if thou doest it not thou wilt be sick; and thou, if thou doest so and art made well, sayest rightly to the physician, Thou hast set me free from sickness: not sickness in which thou wast, but in which thou wast likely to be. Some one having a troublesome cause was to be sent to prison: another comes and defends him; what does he say when he thanks him? Thou hast delivered my soul out of prison. A debtor was to be hanged up: his debt is paid; he is said to be delivered from being hanged up. They were not in all these evils: but because they were in such due course towards them, that unless aid had been brought, they would have been in them, they rightly say that they are delivered from thence, whither they were not suffered by their deliverers to be taken. Therefore, brethren, whether it be this or that, consider me to be herein an inquirer into the word of God, not a rash assertor. And thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell.

19. Ver. 14. O God, the transgressors of the law have arisen up against me. Whom calleth he transgressors of the law? Not the Pagans, who have not received the law: for no one transgresseth that which he hath not received; the Apostle saith clearly, For where there is no law, there is no prevarication. Transgressors of the law he calls 'prevaricators.' Whom then do we understand, brethren? If we take this word from our Lord Himself, the transgressors of the law were the Jews. The transgressors of the law rose up against Me: they did not keep the law, and accused Christ as if He transgressed the law. The transgressors of the law rose up against Me. And we know what the Lord suffered. Thinkest thou His Body suffers no such thing now? How can this be? If they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household? The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. The body also suffereth

transgressors of the law, and they rise up against the Body of Christ. Who are the transgressors of the law? Do the Jews perchance dare to rise up against Christ? No: for it is not they that cause us much trouble. For they have not yet believed: they have not yet owned their salvation. Against the Body of Christ bad Christians rise up, from whom the Body of Christ daily suffereth trouble. All schisms, all heresies, all within who live wickedly and engraft their own character on those who live well, and draw them over to their own side, and with evil communications corrupt good manners; these persons transgressing the law rose up against Me. Let every pious soul speak, let every Christian soul speak. That one which suffers not this, let it not speak. But if it is a Christian soul, it knows that it suffers evils: if it owns in itself its own sufferings, let it own herein its own voice; but if it is without suffering, let it also be without the voice; but that it may not be without suffering, let it walk along the narrow way, and begin to live godly in Christ: it must of necessity suffer this persecution. For all, saith the Apostle, who will live godly in Christ, suffer persecution.

O God, the transgressors of the law have risen up against Me, and the synagogue of the powerful have sought after My soul. The synagogue of the powerful is the congregation of the proud. The synagogue of the powerful rose up against the Head, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, crying and saying with one mouth, Crucify Him, crucify Him: of whom it is said, The sons of men, their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. They did not strike, but cried: by crying they struck, by crying they crucified Him. The will of those who cried was fulfilled, when the Lord was crucified: And the synagogue of the powerful sought after my soul. And they did not place Thee before their eyes. How did they not place Him before them? They did not know Him God. They should have spared him as Man: what they saw, according to this they should have walked. Suppose that He was not God, He was man: was He therefore to be slain? Spare Him a man, and own Him God.

20. Ver. 15. And Thou, Lord God, art One Who hast compassion and merciful, longsuffering, and very pitiful, and true. Wherefore longsuffering and very pitiful, and One Who hast compassion? Because hanging on the Cross He said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Whom

prayeth He to? for whom doth He pray? Who prayeth? Where prayeth He? The Son prays to the Father, crucified for the ungodly, in the midst of very insults, not of words but of death inflicted, hanging on the Cross; as if for this He had His hands stretched out, that thus He might pray for them, that His 'prayer might be directed like incense in the sight of the Father, and the lifting up of His hands like an evening sacrifice. Longsuffering, and very pitiful, and true.

21. Ver. 16. If therefore Thou art true, Look upon me, and have mercy upon me: give power unto Thy servant. Because Thou art true, give power unto Thy servant. Let the time of patience pass away, the time of judgment come. How, give power unto Thy servant? The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. He rising again will come even to earth Himself to judge: He will appear terrible Who appeared despicable. He will shew His power, Who shewed His patience; on the Cross was patience; in the judgment will be power. For He will appear as Man judging, but in glory: because 'as ye saw Him go,' said the Angels, 'so He will come.' His very form shall come to judgment; therefore the ungodly also shall see Him: for they shall not see the form of God. For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Appearing in the form of Man, He will say, Go into everlasting fire; that it may be fulfilled which Isaiah said, Let the ungodly man be taken away, that he may not see the glory of the Lord. Let him be taken away, that he may not see the form of God. The form of Man then they shall see. Who when He was in the form of God, equal with God: this the ungodly shall not see. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: this the ungodly shall not see. For if the Word is God, and, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; but the ungodly are impure in heart: beyond doubt they shall not see God. And wherefore is it, They shall look on Him Whom they pierced, except because it appears that they will see the form of Man, that they may be judged, the form of God none will see, but those who shall be separated to the right hand? For when they are separated on the right hand, this shall be said unto them: Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you, from the beginning of the world. But what to the ungodly on the left? Go into everlasting fire, which My Father hath prepared for the devil and his angels. But when the judgment is ended,

how did He finish? So the wicked shall go into everlasting burning; but the righteous into life eternal. Then from the sight of the form of Man those shall go on to the sight of the form of God. For this, He saith, is eternal life, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent: thou understandest, Himself also the only true God: because the Father and the Son are One True God: so that is the sense, that they may know Thee, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent, One True God. For they shall not go on to the sight of the Father without therein seeing the Son also. If the Son also were not in the vision of His Father, the Son Himself would not say unto His disciples, that the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son. The disciples say to Him: Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. He saith unto them, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known Me, Philip? he who hath seen Me hath seen the Father. You see that in the vision of the Father there is also the vision of the Son: and in the vision of the Son there is also the vision of the Father. Therefore He adds a consequence, and says; Know ye not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? that is, both in Me seen the Father is seen, and in the Father seen the Son too is seen. The vision of the Father and the Son cannot be separated: where nature and substance is not separated, there vision cannot be separated. For that ye may know that the heart ought to be made ready for that place, to see the Divinity of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, in Which though not seen we believe, and by believing cleanse the heart that there may be able to be sight: the Lord Himself saith in another place, He that hath My commands and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father: and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him. Did they not see Him, with whom He was talking? They both saw Him, and did not see Him? they saw something, they believed something: they saw Man, they believed in God. But in the Judgment they shall see the same Lord Jesus Christ as Man, together with the wicked: after the Judgment, they shall see God, apart from the wicked. Give power unto Thy servant.

22. And save the Son of Thine handmaid. The Lord is the Son of the handmaid. Of what handmaid? Her who when He was announced as about to be born of her, answered and said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to Thy word. He saved the Son of His handmaid, and

His own Son: His own Son, in the Form of God; the Son of His handmaid in the form of a servant. Of the handmaid of God, therefore, the Lord was born in the form of a servant; and He said, Save the Son of Thine handmaid. And He was saved from death, as ye know, His flesh, which was dead, being raised again. But that ye may see that He is God, and that He was not so raised by the Father as that He was not raised by Himself, ye have it said in the Gospel, that He Himself raised His own flesh; Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again: and lest we should suspect any other meaning, the Evangelist goes on to say, But this He said concerning the temple of His Body. Therefore the Son of the handmaid was saved. And each several Christian placed in the Body of Christ may say, Save the son of Thine handmaid. Perhaps he cannot say, Give power unto Thy servant: because it was He, the Son, Who received power. Yet wherefore saith He not this also? Was it not said to servants, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel? and the servants say, Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? Each one therefore of the saints receiveth also power, and each several saint is the son of His handmaid. What if he is born of a pagan mother, and has become a Christian? How can the son of a pagan be the son of His handmaid: He is indeed the son of a pagan mother after the flesh, but the son of the Church after the Spirit. And save the son of Thine handmaid.

23. Ver. 17. Shew me a sign for good. What sign, but that of the Resurrection? The Lord says: This wicked and provoking generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so the Son of Man shall be in the heart of the earth. Therefore in our Head a sign has been shewn already for good; each one of us also may say, Shew me a sign for good: because at the last trumpet, at the coming of the Lord, both the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This will be a sign for good. Shew me a sign for good, that they who hate me may see it, and be ashamed. In the judgment they shall be ashamed unto their destruction, who will not now be ashamed unto their healing. Now therefore let them be ashamed: let them accuse their own ways, let them keep the good way: because none of us liveth without being ashamed, unless he first be ashamed and live anew. Now God grants them the

approach of a healthy shame, if they despise not the medicine of confession: but if they will not now be ashamed, then they shall be ashamed, when their iniquities shall convince them to their face. How shall they be ashamed? When they shall say, These are they whom we had sometimes in derision, and a parable of reproach. We fools counted their life madness: how are they numbered among the children of God! What hath pride profited us? Then shall they say this: let them say it now, and they say it to their health. For let each one turn humbly to God, and now say, What hath my pride profited me? and hear from the Apostle, For what glory had ye in those things of which ye are now ashamed? Ye see that there is even now a wholesome shame while there is a place of penitence: but then one which will be late, useless, fruitless. What hath pride profited us? or what good hath the vaunting of riches brought us? All are passed away like a shadow. What? When thou livedst here, didst thou not see that all those things were passing away like a shadow? Then thou wouldest leave the shadow, and be in the light; nor wouldest thou afterwards say, All things are passed away like a shadow, when thou wert about to go into darkness from the shadow. Shew me a sign for good, that those who hate me may see it, and be ashamed.

24. For Thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me. Hast holpen me, in struggle; and comforted me, in sorrow. For no one seeketh comfort, but he who is in misery. Would ye not be consoled? Say that ye are happy, and ye hear, My people, (now ye answer, and I hear a murmur, as of persons who remember the Scriptures. May God, Who hath written this in your hearts, confirm it in your deeds. Ye see, brethren, that those who say unto you, Ye are happy, seduce you, O My people, they that call you happy cause you to err, and disturb the way of your feet. So also from the Epistle of the Apostle James: Be afflicted, and mourn: let your laughter be turned to mourning. Ye see what ye have heard read: when would such things be said unto us in the land of security? This surely is the land of offences, and temptations, and of all evils, that we may groan here, and deserve to rejoice there; here to be troubled, and there to be comforted, and to say, For Thou hast delivered mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling: I will please the Lord in the land of the living. This is the land of the dead. The land of the dead passeth, the land of the living cometh. In the land of the dead is labour, grief, fear,

tribulation, temptation, groaning, sighing: here are false happy ones, true unhappy, because happiness is false, misery is true. But he that owneth himself to be in true misery, will also be in true happiness: and yet now because thou art miserable, hear the Lord saying, Blessed are they that mourn. O blessed they that mourn! Nothing is so akin to misery as mourning: nothing so remote and contrary to misery as blessedness: Thou speakest of those who mourn, and Thou callest them blessed! Understand, He saith, what I say: I call those who mourn blessed. Wherefore blessed? In hope. Wherefore mourning? In act. For they mourn in this death, in these tribulations, in their wandering: and because they own themselves to be in this misery, and mourn, they are blessed. Wherefore do they mourn? The blessed Cyprian was put to sorrow in his passion: now he is comforted with his crown; now though comforted, he was sad. For our Lord Jesus Christ still intercedeth for us: all the Martyrs who are with Him intercede for us. Their intercessions pass not away, except when our mourning is passed away: but when our mourning shall have passed away, we all with one voice, in one people, in one country, shall receive comfort, thousands of thousands joined with Angels playing upon harps, with choirs of heavenly powers living in one city. Who mourneth there? Who there sigheth? Who there toileth? Who there needeth? Who dieth there? Who there sheweth mercy? Who breaketh bread to the hungry there, where all are satisfied with the bread of righteousness? No one saith unto thee, Receive a stranger; there no one will be a stranger to thee: all live in their own country. No one saith unto thee, Set at one thy friends disputing; in everlasting peace they enjoy the Face of God. No one saith unto thee, Visit the sick; health and immortality abide for ever. No one saith unto thee, Bury the dead; all shall be in everlasting life. Works of mercy stop, because misery is found not. And what shall we do there? Shall we perhaps sleep? If now we fight against ourselves, although we carry about a house of sleep, this flesh of ours, and keep watch with these lights, and this solemn feast gives us a mind to watch; what wakefulness shall that day give unto us! Therefore we shall be awake, we shall not sleep. What shall we do? There will be no works of mercy, because there will be no misery. Perhaps there will be these necessary works which there are here now, of sowing, ploughing, cooking, grinding, weaving? None of these, for there will be no want. Thus there will be no works of mercy, because misery is past away: where there is no want

nor misery, there will be neither works of necessity nor of mercy. What will be there? What business shall we have? What action? Will there be no action, because there is rest? Shall we sit there, and be torpid, and do nothing? If our love grow cold, our action will grow cold. How then will that love resting in the face of God, for Whom we now long, for Whom we sigh, how will it inflame us, when we shall have come to Him? He for Whom while as yet we see Him not, we so sigh, how will He enlighten us, when we shall have come to Him? How will He change us? What will He make of us? What then shall we do, brethren? Let the Psalm tell us: Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house. Why? They shall praise Thee for ever and ever. This will be our employment, praise of God. Thou lovest and praisest. Thou wilt cease to praise, if thou cease to love. But thou wilt not cease to love, because He Whom thou seest is such an One as offends thee not by any weariness: He both satisfies thee, and satisfies thee not. What I say is wonderful. If I say that He satisfies thee, I am afraid lest as though satisfied thou shouldest wish to depart, as from a dinner or from a supper. What then do I say? doth He not satisfy thee? I am afraid again, that if I say, He doth not satisfy thee, thou shouldest seem to be in want: and shouldest be as it were empty, and there should be in thee some void which ought to be filled. What then shall I say, except what can be said, but can hardly be thought? He both satisfies thee, and satisfies thee not: for I find both in Scripture. For while He said, Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be filled; it is again said of Wisdom, Those who eat Thee shall hunger again, and those who drink shall thirst again. Nay, but He did not say ‘again,’ but he said, still: for, “shall thirst again” is as if once having been filled he departed and digested, and returned to drink. So it is, Those who eat Thee shall still hunger: thus when they eat they hunger: and those who drink Thee, even thus when drinking, thirst. What is it, to thirst in drinking? Never to grow weary. If then there shall be that ineffable and eternal sweetness, what doth He now seek of us, brethren, but faith unfeigned, firm hope, pure charity? and man may walk in the way which the Lord hath given, may bear troubles, and receive consolations.

PSALM 87

A Discourse to the people, perhaps at Carthage, delivered the day after that on the preceding Psalm.

1. The Psalm which has just been sung is short, if we look to the number of its words, but of deep interest in its thoughts. The whole has been read, and you see in how brief a period it has been exhausted. The consideration of this with you, beloved, so far as God deigns to grant, has just been proposed to me by our blessed father here present: and the proposal from its suddenness might alarm me, did not his prayer who proposed it at once support me. Listen, therefore, beloved. The subject of song and praise in that Psalm is a city, whose citizens are we, as far as we are Christians: whence we are absent, as long as we are mortal: whither we are tending: through whose approaches, undiscoverable among the brakes and thorns that entangle them, the Sovereign of the city made Himself a path for us to reach it. Walking thus in Christ, and pilgrims till we arrive, and sighing as we long for a certain ineffable repose that dwells within that city, a repose of which it is promised, that the eye of man hath never seen such, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into his heart to conceive; let us chant the song of a longing heart: for he who truly longs, thus sings within his soul, though his tongue be silent: he who does not, however he may resound in human ears, is voiceless to God. See what ardent lovers of that city were they by whom these words were composed, by whom they have been handed down to us; with how deep a feeling were they sung by those! A feeling that the love of that city created in them: that love the Spirit of God inspired; the love of God, he saith, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Fervent with this Spirit then, let us listen to what is said of that city.

2. Ver. 1, 2. Her foundations are upon the holy hills. The Psalm had as yet said nothing of the city: it begins thus, and says, Her foundations are upon

the holy hills. Whose? There can be no doubt, that foundations, especially among the hills, belong to some city. Thus filled with the Holy Spirit, and with many thoughts of love and longing for that city, as if after long internal meditation, that citizen bursts out, Her foundations are upon the holy hills; as if he had already said something concerning it. And how could he have said nothing on a subject, respecting which in his heart he had never been silent? For how could her foundations have been written, of which nothing had been said before? But, as I said, after long and silent travelling in contemplation of that city in his mind, crying to God, he bursts out into the ears of men thus: Her foundations are upon the holy hills. And, supposing persons who heard to enquire of what city he spoke, he adds, the Lord loveth the gates of Sion. Behold then, a city whose foundations are upon the holy hills, a city called Sion, whose gates the Lord loveth, as he adds, above all the dwellings of Jacob. But what doth this mean, her foundations on the holy hills? What are the holy hills upon which this city is built? Another citizen tells us this more explicitly, the Apostle Paul: of this was the Prophet a citizen, of this the Apostle citizen: and they spoke to exhort the other citizens. But how are these, I mean the Prophets and Apostles, citizens? Perhaps in this sense; that they are themselves the hills, upon which are the foundations of this city, whose gates the Lord loveth. Let then another citizen state this clearly, that I may not seem to guess. Speaking to the Gentiles, and telling them how they were returning, and being, as it were, framed together into the holy structure, built, he says, upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets: and because neither the Apostles nor Prophets, upon whom the foundations of that city rest, could stand by their own power, he adds, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone. That the Gentiles, therefore, might not think they had no relation to Sion: for Sion was a certain city of this world, which bore a typical resemblance as a shadow to that Sion of which he presently speaketh, that Heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Apostle saith, which is the mother of us all; that they might not be said to bear no relation to Sion, on the ground that they did not belong to the Jewish people, he addresses them thus: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Thou seest the structure of so great a city: yet

whereon does all that edifice repose, where does it rest, that it may never fall? Jesus Christ Himself, he saith, being the head corner stone.

3. Perhaps some one will say, if Christ Jesus be the corner stone, in Him the two walls are joined together: for it is only two walls meeting from opposite lines that constitute a corner: just so, the close union of the Jewish and Gentile nations with one another in the peace of Christ, in one faith, one hope, and one love. But if Christ Jesus be the head corner stone, there seems a foundation laid earlier, and a corner stone added later. Some one may say then, that Christ rather rests upon the Prophets and Apostles, not they on Him, if they form the foundation, Himself the corner. But let him who so saith reflect, that there is also a corner in the foundation; and not only where it appears, towering to the top, for it beginneth from the bottom. But that ye may know that Christ is at once the earliest and the highest foundation, the Apostle saith, Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus. How, then, are the Prophets and Apostles foundations, and yet Christ so, than Whom nothing can be higher? How, think you, save that as He is openly styled, Saint of saints, so figuratively Foundation of foundations? Thus if thou art thinking of mysteries, Christ is the Saint of saints: if of a subject flock, the Shepherd of shepherds: if of a structure, the Pillar of pillars. In material edifices, the same stone cannot be above and below: if at the bottom, it cannot be at the top: and vice versâ: for almost all bodies are liable to limitations in space: nor can they be every where or for ever; but as the Godhead is in every place, from every place symbols may be taken for It; and not being any of these things in external properties, It can be every thing in figure. Is Christ a door, in the same sense as the doors we see made by carpenters? Surely not; and yet He said, I am the door. Or a shepherd, in the same capacity as those who guard sheep? though He said, I am the Shepherd. Both these names occur in the same passage: in the Gospel, He said, that the shepherd enters by the door: the words are, I am the good Shepherd; and in the same passage, I am the door: and who is the shepherd who enters by the door? I am the good Shepherd: and what is the door by which Thou, Good Shepherd, enterest? How then art Thou all things? In the sense in which every thing is through Me. To explain: when Paul enters by the door, does not Christ? Wherefore? Not because Paul is Christ: but since Christ is in Paul: and Paul acts through

Christ. The Apostle says, Do ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me? When His saints and faithful disciples enter by the door, does not Christ enter by the door? How are we to prove this? Since Saul, not yet called Paul, was persecuting those very saints, when He called to him from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Himself then is the foundation, and corner stone: rising from the bottom: if indeed from the bottom: for the base of this foundation is the highest exaltation of the building: and as the support of bodily fabrics rests upon the ground, that of spiritual structures reposes on high. Were we building up ourselves upon the earth, we should lay our foundation on the lowest level: but since our edifice is a heavenly one, to Heaven our Foundation has gone before us: so that our Saviour, the corner stone, the Apostles, and mighty Prophets, the hills that bear the fabric of the city, constitute a sort of living structure. This building now cries from your hearts; that you may be built up into its fabric, the hand of God, as of an artificer, worketh even through my tongue. Nor was it without a meaning that Noah's ark was made of square beams, which were typical of the form of the Church. For what is it to be made square? Listen to the resemblance of the squared stone: like qualities should the Christian have: for in all his trials he never falls: though pushed, and, as it were, turned over, he falls not: and thus too, whichever way a square stone is turned, it stands erect. The Martyrs, while beneath the stroke, seemed to be falling: but what is the expression in the Canticle? Though (the just) fall, he shall not be cast away: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. Thus then build yourselves together into a compact square, ready for every temptation: whatsoever chance to thrust you, let it not overthrow you; whatever befall, let it find thee standing: thus art thou built into this fabric with a devoted piety, an earnest religion, faith, hope, and love: and even to be thus built up, is to walk. In earthly cities, one thing is the structure of buildings: another thing are the citizens that dwell therein: that city is builded of its own inmates, who are themselves the blocks that form the city, for the very stones are living: Ye also, says the Apostle, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, words that are addressed to ourselves. Let us then pursue the contemplation of that city.

4. Her foundations are upon the holy hills: the Lord loveth the gates of Sion. I have made the foregoing remarks, that ye may not imagine the gates

are one thing, the foundations another. Why are the Apostles and Prophets foundations? Because their authority is the support of our weakness. Why are they gates? because through them we enter the kingdom of God: for they proclaim it to us: and while we enter by their means, we enter also through Christ, Himself being the Gate. And twelve gates of Jerusalem are spoken of, and the one gate is Christ, and the twelve gates are Christ: for Christ dwells in the twelve gates, hence was twelve the number of the Apostles. There is a deep mystery in this number of twelve: Ye shall sit, says our Saviour, on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If there are twelve thrones there, there will be no room for the judgment-seat of Paul, the thirteenth Apostle, though he says that he shall judge not men only, but even Angels; which, but the fallen Angels? Know ye not, that we shall judge Angels, he writes. The world would answer, Why dost thou boast that thou shalt be a judge? Where will be thy throne? Our Lord spoke of twelve thrones for the twelve Apostles: one, Judas, fell, and his place being supplied by Matthias, the number of twelve thrones was made up: first, then, discover room for thy judgment-seat; then threaten that thou wilt judge. Let us, therefore, reflect upon the meaning of the twelve thrones. The expression is typical of a sort of universality, as the Church was destined to prevail throughout the whole world: whence this edifice is styled a building together into Christ: and because judges come from all quarters, the twelve thrones are spoken of, just as the twelve gates, from the entering in from all sides into that city. Not only therefore have those twelve, and the Apostle Paul, a claim to the twelve thrones, but, from the universal signification, all who are to sit in judgment: in the same manner as all who enter the city, enter by one or the other of the twelve gates. There are four quarters of the globe: East, West, North, and South: and they are constantly alluded to in the Scriptures. From all those four winds; our Lord declares in the Gospel that He will call his sheep from the four winds; therefore from all those four winds is the Church called. And how called? On every side it is called in the Trinity: no otherwise is it called than by Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: four then being thrice taken, twelve are found.

5. Knock, therefore, with all your hearts at these gates: and let Christ cry within you: Open me the gates of righteousness. For He went before us the

Head: He follows Himself in His Body. Remember the words of the Apostle, spoken because Christ suffered within himself: That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh. Remark the words, That I may fill up—what? that which is behind—of what? of the afflictions of Christ—wherein? in my flesh. Were any afflictions wanting in that Man, which the Word of God became, when born of the Virgin Mary? He suffered all that was due from His own will, not by any necessity arising from sin: and it seemeth that He suffered all: for while stretched upon the Cross He received the vinegar at the last, with these words, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the Ghost. What is the meaning of, It is finished? it means, Of the measure of My sufferings nothing is wanting: all that was prophesied of Me has been fulfilled: as if He was waiting in order that they might be fulfilled. Who is the man who departs as He did from the body? Rather, who is he, who had the power of doing so? He, Who had first said, I have power to lay down My soul, and I have power to take it again: no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself, and I take it again. He laid it down, when He willed: He took it again, when He willed: no one stole, no one extorted it from Him. All his sufferings, therefore, were fulfilled: but in the Head: those is His body remained still. Now ye are the body and limbs of Christ: so the Apostle, being one of these limbs, used the words, That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh. Thither accordingly, where Christ preceded us, are we on our way: and Christ is still journeying whither He has gone before; for Christ went before us in the Head, Christ follows in the Body: still Christ is here toiling: here Christ suffered at Saul's hands, when Saul heard the voice, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? So, when the foot is trodden upon, the tongue says, Thou treadest upon me, though no man touched the tongue: it cries out from sympathy, not that it is trodden upon. Still Christ is here in want, Christ here still journeys, Christ here is sick, Christ here is in bonds. In saying this we should wrong Him, had He not told us this truth in His own words, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: and they ask, When saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? and He shall answer, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Let us therefore build ourselves up in Christ on the foundation of the Apostles and

Prophets, Himself being the chief corner stone: For the Lord loveth Sion above all the dwellings of Jacob. But this does not mean that Sion is not among the dwellings of Jacob: where was it, indeed, but in the people of Jacob? for Jacob was the grandson of Abraham, of whom comes the Jewish nation, thence called the people of Israel, since Jacob himself received the appellation of Israel, as ye well know, holy brethren. But as these were merely temporal dwellings, which were emblems of the other, and the Prophet is speaking of a city which he conceives in a spiritual sense, of which that on this earth was the shadow and figure; he says, The Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the dwellings of Jacob. He loveth that spiritual city above all figurative emblems of it, which represent it as a city everlasting, eternally in heaven at rest.

6. Ver. 3, 4. Very excellent things are said of thee, thou city of God. He was, as it were, contemplating that city of Jerusalem on earth: for consider what city he alludes to, of which certain very excellent things are spoken. Now the earthly city has been destroyed: after suffering the enemy's rage, it fell to the earth; it is no longer what it was: it exhibited the emblem, and the shadow hath passed away. Whence then are very excellent things spoken of thee, thou city of God? Listen whence; I will think upon Rahab and Babylon, with them that know Me. In that city, the Prophet, in the person of God, says, I will think upon Rahab and Babylon. Rahab belongs not to the Jewish people; Babylon belongs not to the Jewish people; as is clear from the next verse: For the Philistines also, and Tyre, with the Ethiopians, were there. Deservedly then, very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God: for not only is the Jewish nation, born of the flesh of Abraham, included therein, but all nations also, some of which are named that all may be understood. I will think, he says, upon Rahab: who is that harlot? That harlot in Jericho, who received the spies and conducted them out of the city by a different road: who trusted beforehand in the promise, who feared God, who was told to hang out of the window a line of scarlet thread, that is, to bear upon her forehead the sign of the blood of Christ. She was saved there, and thus represented the Church of the Gentiles: whence our Lord said to the haughty Pharisees, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. They go before, because they do violence: they push their way by faith, and to faith a way is made,

nor can any resist, since they who are violent take it by force. For it is written, The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Such was the conduct of the robber, more courageous on the cross than in the place of ambush. I will think upon Rahab and Babylon. By Babylon is meant the city of this world: as there is one holy city, Jerusalem; one unholy, Babylon: all the unholy belong to Babylon, even as all the holy to Jerusalem. But he slideth from Babylon to Jerusalem. How, but by Him who justifieth the ungodly: Jerusalem is the city of the saints; Babylon of the wicked: but He cometh Who justifieth the ungodly: since it is said, I will think not only upon Rahab, but upon Babylon, but with whom? with them that know Me. For this reason Scripture says somewhere, Pour out thine indignation upon the heathen that have not known Thee, and elsewhere, Continue forth Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee. And that ye may be assured that by Rahab and Babylon the Gentiles are meant, if the purport of this verse, I will think upon Rahab and Babylon with them that know Me, be asked, the next explains it, as follows, ‘behold the Philistines also,’ i.e. they too belong to Rahab, belong to Babylon, and they of Tyre. But to what extent are the Gentiles included in this allusion? To the ends of the earth. For He called a people from the ends of the earth: and the people of the Ethiopians, they were there. If then Rahab, and Babylon, and the Philistines, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians, are in that city, deservedly it is said, Very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God.

7. Ver. 5. Listen now to a deep mystery. Rahab is there through Him, through Whom also is Babylon, now no longer Babylon, but beginning to be Jerusalem. The daughter is divided against her mother, and will be among the members of that queen to whom is said, Forget thine own people, and thy father’s house, so shall the king have pleasure in thy beauty. For how could Babylon aspire to Jerusalem? How could Rahab reach those foundations? How could the Philistines, or Tyre, or the people of the Ethiopians? Listen to this verse, “Sion, my mother,” a man shall say. There is then a man who saith this: through whom all those I have mentioned make their approach. Who is this man? It tells if we hear, if we understand. It follows, as if a question had been raised, through whose aid Rahab, Babylon, the Philistines, Tyre, and the Morians, gained an entrance. Behold,

through whom they come; Sion, my mother, a man shall say; and a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her. What, my brethren, can be clearer? Truly, because very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God. Lo, Sion, O mother, a man shall say. What man? He who was born in her. It is then the man who was born in her, and He Himself hath founded her. Yet how can He be born in the city which He himself founded? It had already been founded, that therein He might be born. Understand it thus, if thou canst: Mother Sion, he shall say; but it is a man that shall say, Mother Sion; yea, a man was born in her: and yet he hath founded her, (not a man, but,) the Most high. As He created a mother of whom He would be born, so He founded a city in which He would be born. What hope is ours, brethren! On our behalf the Most High, Who founded the city, addresses that city as a mother: and He was born in her, and the Most High hath founded her.

8. Ver. 6. As though it were said, How do ye know this? All of us have sung these Psalms: and Christ, Man for our sake, God before us, sings within us all. But is this much to say, before us, of Him, Who was before heaven and earth and time? He then, born for our sakes a man, in that city, also founded her when He was the Most High. Yet how are we assured of this? The Lord shall rehearse it when He writeth up the people, as the following verse has it. Mother Sion, a man shall say, and a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her. The Lord shall declare, when He writeth up the people, and their princes. What princes? Those who were born in her; those princes who, born within her walls, became therein princes: for before they could become princes in her, God chose the despised things of the world to confound the strong. Was the fisherman, the publican, a prince? They were indeed princes: but because they became such in her. Princes of what kind were they? Princes come from Babylon, believing monarchs of this world, came to the city of Rome, as to the head of Babylon: they went not to the temple of the Emperor, but to the tomb of the Fisherman. Whence indeed did they rank as princes? God chose the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things He hath chosen, and things which are not as though they were, that things which are may be brought to nought. This He doth Who from the ground raises the helpless, and from the dunghill exalts the poor. For what purpose! That He

may set him with the princes, even with the princes of His people. This is a mighty deed, a deep source of pleasure and exultation. Orators came later into that city, but they could never have done so, had not fishermen preceded them. These things are glorious indeed, but where could they take place, but in that city of God, of whom very excellent things are spoken?

9. Ver. 7. So thus, after drawing together and mingling every source of joyous exultation, how doth he conclude? The dwelling as of all that shall be made joyous is in Thee. As if all made joyous, all rejoicing, shall dwell in that city. Amid our journeyings here we suffer bruises: our last home shall be the home of joy alone. Toil and groans shall perish: prayers pass away, hymns of praise succeed. There shall be the dwelling of the happy; no longer shall there be the groans of those that long, but the gladness of those who enjoy. For He will be present for Whom we sigh: we shall be like Him, as we shall see Him as He is: there it will be our whole task to praise and enjoy the presence of God: and what beyond shall we ask for, when He alone satisfies us, by Whom all things were made? We shall dwell and be dwelt in; and shall be subject to Him, that God may be all in all. Blessed, then, are they that dwell in Thy house. How blessed? Blessed in their gold, and silver, their numerous slaves, and multiplied offspring? Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Blessed in that sole labour which is rest! Let this then be the one and only object of our desire, my brethren, when we shall have reached this pass. Let us prepare ourselves to rejoice in God: to praise Him. The good works which conduct us thither, will not be needed there. I described, as far as I could, only yesterday, our condition there: works of charity there will be none, where there will be no misery: thou shalt not find one in want, one naked, no one will meet you tormented with thirst, there will be no stranger, no sick to visit, no dead to bury, no disputants to set at peace. What then wilt thou find to do? Shall we plant new vines, plough, traffic, make voyages, to support the necessities of the body? Deep quiet shall be there; all toilsome work, that necessity demands, will cease: the necessity being dead, its works will perish too. What then will be our state? As far as possible, the tongue of a man thus told us. As it were, the dwelling of all who shall be made perfect is in Thee. Why does he say, as it were? Because there shall be such joy there as we know not here. Many pleasures do I

behold here, and many rejoice in this world, some in one thing, others in another; but there is nothing to compare with that delight, but it shall be as it were being made joyful. For if I say joyfulness, men at once think of such joyfulness as men use to have in wine, in feasting, in avarice, and in the world's distinctions. For men are elated by these things, and mad with a kind of joy: but there is no joy, saith the Lord, unto the wicked. There is a sort of joyfulness which the ear of man hath not heard, nor his eye seen, nor hath it entered into his heart to conceive. As it were, the dwelling of all who shall be made joyful is in Thee. Let us prepare for other delights: for a kind of shadow is what we find here, not the reality: that we may not expect to enjoy such things there as here we delight in: otherwise our self-denial will be avarice. Some persons, when invited to a rich banquet, where there are many and costly dishes yet to come on, abstain from breaking their fast: if you ask the reason, they tell you that they are fasting: which is indeed a great work, a Christian work. Yet be not hasty in praising them: examine their motives: it is their belly, not religion, that they are consulting. That their appetite may not be palled by ordinary dishes, they abstain till more delicate food is set before them. This fast then is for the gullet's sake. Fasting is undoubtedly important: it fights against the belly and the palate; but sometimes it fights for them. Thus, my brethren, if ye imagine that we shall find any such pleasures in that country to which the heavenly trumpet urges us on, and on that account abstain from present enjoyments, that ye may receive the like more plentifully there, ye imitate those I have described, who fast only for greater feasting, and abstain only for greater indulgence. Do not ye like this: prepare yourselves for a certain ineffable delight: cleanse your hearts from all earthly and secular affections. We shall see something, the sight of which will make us blessed: and that alone will suffice for us. What then? Shall we not eat? Yes: we shall eat: but that shall be our food, which will ever refresh, and never fail. In Thee is the dwelling of all who shall be, as it were, made joyful. He has already told us how we shall be made joyful. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Let us praise the Lord as far as we are able, but with mingled lamentations: for while we praise we long for Him, and as yet have Him not. When we have, all our sorrows will be taken from us, and nothing will remain but praise, unmixed and everlasting. Now let us pray.

PSALM 88

Dictated after the exposition of Psalm 41, and perhaps after that of Psalm 68.

The Title of this eighty-seventh Psalm contains a fresh subject for enquiry: the words occurring here, for Melech to respond, being no where else found. We have already given our opinion on the meaning of the titles *Psalmus Cantici* and *Canticum Psalmi*: and the words, sons of Core, are constantly repeated, and have often been explained: so also to the end; but what comes next in this title is peculiar. For Melech we may translate into Latin for the chorus, for chorus is the sense of the Hebrew word Melech. What other meaning then can we attach to the words, for the chorus to respond, but this, that the choir is to make responses with the singer? And thus we must suppose that not this only, but other Psalms were chanted, though they have received different titles, probably for the sake of variety to relieve weariness: for this Psalm was not the only one held worthy of choral responses, since it is not the only one which relates to our Lord's Passion. If indeed there is any other reason for so great a variety in the titles, by which it can be shewn that all the Psalms which are distinguished in their titles are so marked, as that the title of no one of them can be fitted to another; I must confess that I could not discover it, though I tried long; and whatever I have read on the subject in the works of my predecessors has not satisfied my hopes, or, perhaps, my slowness of apprehension. I will therefore explain in allusion to what mystery the words, for the choir to respond, that is, that the singer should be answered by a choir, seem to me to be used. The Passion of our Lord is here prophesied. Now the Apostle Peter saith, Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps; this is the meaning of 'to respond.' The Apostle John also saith, As Christ laid down His life for us, so ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren; this also is to respond. But the choir signifies concord, which

consists in charity: whoever therefore in imitation of our Lord's Passion gives up his body to be burnt, if he have not charity, does not answer in the choir, and therefore it profiteth him nothing. Further, as in Latin the terms Precentor and Succentor are used to denote in music the performer who sings the first part, and him who takes it up; just so in this song of the Passion, Christ going before is followed by the choir of martyrs unto the end of gaining crowns in Heaven. This is sung by the sons of Core, that is, the imitators of Christ's Passion: as Christ was crucified in Calvary, which is the interpretation of the Hebrew word Core. This also is the understanding of Aëman the Israelite: words occurring at the end of this title. Aëman is said to mean, his brother: for Christ deigns to make those His brethren, who understand the mystery of His Cross, and not only are not ashamed of it, but faithfully glory in it, not praising themselves for their own merits, but grateful for His grace: so that it may be said to each of them, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile, just as holy Scripture says of Israel himself, that he was without guile. Let us therefore now hear the voice of Christ singing before us in prophecy, to whom His own choir should respond either in imitation, or in thanksgiving.

2. Ver. 1. O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before Thee.

Ver. 2. O let my prayer enter into Thy presence, incline Thine ear unto my calling. For even our Lord prayed, not in the form of God, but in the form of a servant; for in this He also suffered. He prayed both in prosperous times, that is, by day, and in calamity, which I imagine is meant by night. The entrance of prayer into God's presence is its acceptance: the inclination of His ear is His compassionate listening to it: for God has not such bodily members as we have. The passage is however, as usual, a repetition: the words, O let my prayer enter into Thy presence, being equivalent to, Incline Thine ear unto my calling.

3. Ver. 3. For my soul is filled with evils, and my life draweth nigh unto hell. Dare we speak of the Soul of Christ as filled with evils, when the passion had strength as far as it had any, only over the body? whence Himself exhorting His brethren to the endurance of suffering, and, as it were, urging his choir to respond, saith, Fear not them which kill the body,

but are not able to kill the soul. Can then the soul be filled with evils by the persecutors, though it cannot be killed? if so, we must enquire what sort of evils. It cannot be with vices, through which iniquity prevails over man, that we can say that Soul was filled: but perhaps with griefs, in which the soul suffers with its own flesh in its suffering: for even what we call bodily pain cannot exist without the soul, but sorrowfulness, which is the pain of the soul only, precedes it when inevitably impending. The soul therefore may feel pain without the body: but without the soul the body cannot. Why therefore should we not say that the Soul of Christ was full of the evils of humanity, though not of human sins? Another Prophet says of Him, that He grieved for us: and the Evangelist says, And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy: and our Lord Himself saith unto them of Himself, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. The Prophet who composed this Psalm, foreseeing that this would happen, introduces Him saying, My soul is full of evils, and My life draweth nigh unto hell. For the very same sense is here expressed in other words, as when He said, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. The words, 'My soul is sorrowful,' are like these, My soul is full of evils: and what follows, "even unto death," like, my life draweth nigh unto hell. These feelings of human infirmity our Lord took upon Him, as He did the flesh of human infirmity, and the death of human flesh, not by the necessity of his condition, but by the free will of His mercy, that He might transfigure into Himself His own body, which is the Church, (the head of which He deigned to be,) that is, His members in His holy and faithful disciples: that if amid human temptations any one among them happened to be in sorrow and pain, he might not therefore think that he was separated from His favour: that the body, like the chorus following its leader, might learn from its Head, that these sorrows were not sin, but proofs of human weakness. We read of the Apostle Paul, a chief member in this body, and we hear him confessing that his soul was full of such evils, when he says, that he feels great heaviness and continual sorrow in heart for his brethren according to the flesh, who are Israelites. And if we say that our Lord was sorrowful for them also at the approach of His Passion, in which they would incur the most atrocious guilt, I think we shall not speak amiss.

4. Lastly, the very thing said by our Saviour on the Cross, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, is expressed in this Psalm below,

Ver. 4. I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit: by them who knew not what they were doing, when they imagined that He died like other men, subjected to necessity, and overcome by it. The word pit is used for the depth of woe or of Hell.

5. I have been as a man that hath no help.

Ver. 5. Free among the dead. In these words our Lord's Person is most clearly shewn: for who else is free among the dead but He, Who though in the likeness of sinful flesh is alone among sinners without sin? Hence He saith to those who in their folly deemed themselves free, Every man who committeth sin is the servant of sin: and because through Him Who had no sin it behoved them to be freed from sin, He saith, If the Son hath freed you, then indeed ye shall be free. He therefore, free among the dead, Who had it in His power to lay down His life, and again to take it; from Whom no one could take it, but He laid it down of His own free will; Who could revive His own flesh, as a temple destroyed by them, at His will; Who, when all had forsaken Him on the eve of His Passion, remained not alone, because, as He testifies, His Father forsook Him not; was nevertheless by His enemies, for whom He prayed, who knew not what they did, and said, He saved others, Himself He cannot save; if He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; He was by them counted as one who hath no help; like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave. But he adds, Whom thou dost not yet remember: and in these words there is to be remarked a distinction between Christ and the rest of the dead. For though He was wounded, and when dead laid in the tomb, yet they who knew not what they were doing, or who He was, regarded Him as like others who had perished from their wounds, and who slept in the tomb, who are as yet out of remembrance of God, that is, whose hour of resurrection has not yet arrived. For thus the Scripture speaks of the dead as sleeping, because it wishes them to be regarded as destined to awake, that is, to rise again. But He, wounded and asleep in the tomb, awoke on the third day, and became like a sparrow that sitteth alone on the housetop, that is, on the right

hand of His Father in Heaven: and now dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him. Hence He differs widely from those whom God hath not yet remembered to cause their resurrection after this manner: for what was to go before in the Head, was kept for the Body in the end. God is then said to remember, when He does an act: then to forget, when He does it not: for neither can God forget, as He never changes, nor remember, as He can never forget. I am counted then, by those who know not what they do, as a man that hath no help: while I am free among the dead, I am held by these men like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave. Yet those very men, who account thus of Me, are further said to be cut away from Thy hand, that is, when I was made so by them, ‘they were cut away from Thy hand;’ they who believed Me destitute of help, are deprived of the help of Thy hand: for they, as he saith in another Psalm, have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves. I prefer this interpretation to that which refers the words, they are cut away from Thy hand, to those who sleep in the tomb, whom God hath not yet remembered: since the righteous are among the latter, of whom, even though God hath not yet called them to the resurrection, it is said, that their souls are in the hands of God, that is, that they dwell under the defence of the Most High; and shall abide under the shadow of the God of Heaven. But it is those who are cut away from the hand of God, who believed that Christ was cut off from His hand, and thus accounting Him among the wicked, dared to slay Him.

6. Ver. 6. They laid Me in the lowest pit, that is, the deepest pit. For so it is in the Greek. But what is the lowest pit, but the deepest woe, than which there is none more deep? Whence in another Psalm it is said, Thou broughtest me out also of the pit of misery.

In a place of darkness, and in the shadow of death, whiles they knew not what they did, they laid Him there, thus deeming of Him; they knew not Him Whom none of the princes of this world knew. By the shadow of death, I know not whether the death of the body is to be understood, or that of which it is written, They that walked in darkness and in the land of the shadow of death, a light is risen on them, because by belief they were brought from out of the darkness and death of sin into light and life. Such an one those who knew not what they did thought our Lord, and in their

ignorance accounted Him among those, whom He came to help, that they might not be such themselves.

7. Ver. 7. Thy indignation lieth hard upon Me, or, as other copies have it, Thy anger; or, as others, Thy fury: the Greek word θυμὸς having undergone different interpretations. For where the Greek copies have ὀργή, no translator hesitated to express it by the Latin ira: but where the word is θυμὸς, most object to rendering it by ira, although many of the authors of the best Latin style, in their translations from Greek philosophy, have thus rendered the word in Latin. But I shall not discuss this matter further: only if I also were to suggest another term, I should think indignation more tolerable than fury, this word in Latin not being applied to persons in their senses. What then does this mean, Thy indignation lieth hard upon Me, except the belief of those, who knew not the Lord of Glory? who imagined that the anger of God was not merely roused, but lay hard upon Him, Whom they dared to bring to death, and not only death, but that kind, which they regarded as the most execrable of all, namely, the death of the Cross: whence saith the Apostle, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree. On this account, wishing to praise His obedience which He carried to the extreme of humility, he says. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death; and as this seemed little, he added, even the death of the Cross; and with the same view, as far as I can see, he says in this Psalm, And all thy suspensions, or, as some translate waves, others tossings, Thou hast brought over Me. We also find in another Psalm, All thy suspensions and waves are come in upon Me, or, as some have translated better, have passed over Me: for it is διῆλθον in Greek, not εἰσῆλθον: and where both expressions are employed, waves and suspensions, one cannot be used as equivalent to the other. In that passage we explained suspensions as threatenings, waves as the actual sufferings: both inflicted by God's judgment: but in that place it is said, All have passed over Me, here, Thou hast brought all upon Me. In the other case, that is, although some evils took place, yet, he said, all those which are here mentioned passed over; but in this case, Thou hast brought them upon Me. Evils pass over when they do not touch a man, as things which hang over him, or when they do touch him, as waves. But when he uses the word suspensions, he does not say

they passed over, but, Thou hast brought them upon Me, meaning that all which impended had come to pass. All things which were predicted of His Passion impended, as long as they remained in the prophecies for future fulfilment.

8. Ver. 8. Thou hast put Mine acquaintance far from Me. If we understand by acquaintance those whom He knew, it will be all men; for whom knew He not? But He calls those acquaintance, to whom He was Himself known, as far as they could know Him at that season: at least so far forth as they knew Him to be innocent, although they considered Him only as a man, not as likewise God. Although He might call the righteous whom He approved, acquaintance, as He calls the wicked unknown, to whom He was to say at the end, I know you not. In what follows, and they have set Me for an abhorrence to themselves; those whom He called before acquaintance, may be meant, as even they felt horror at the mode of that death: but it is better referred to those of whom He was speaking above as His persecutors. I was delivered up, and did not get forth. Is this because His disciples were without, while He was being tried within? Or are we to give a deeper meaning to the words, I cannot get forth as signifying, 'I remained hidden in My secret counsels, I shewed not Who I was, I did not reveal Myself, was not made manifest?' And so it follows,

Ver. 9. My eyes became weak from want. For what eyes are we to understand? If the eyes of the flesh in which He suffered, we do not read that His eyes became weak from want, that is, from hunger, in His Passion, as is often the case; as He was betrayed after His supper, and crucified on the same day: if the inner eyes, how were they weakened from want, in which there was a light that could never fail? But He meant by His eyes those members in the body, of which He was Himself the head, which, as brighter and more eminent and chief above the rest, He loved. It was of this body that the Apostle was speaking, when he wrote, taking his metaphor from our own body, If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are there many members, yet but one body. The eye cannot say unto the hands, I have no need of you: and if the hand shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of

the body; is it therefore not of the body? What he wished understood by these words, he has expressed more clearly, by adding, Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. Wherefore as those eyes, that is, the holy Apostles, to whom not flesh and blood, but the Father Which is in Heaven had revealed Him, so that Peter said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, when they saw Him betrayed, and suffering such evils, saw Him not such as they wished, as He did not come forth, did not manifest Himself in His virtue and power, but still hidden in His secresy, endured every thing as a man overcome and enfeebled, they became weak for want, as if their food, their Light, had been withdrawn from them.

9. He continues, And I have called upon Thee. This indeed He did most clearly, when upon the Cross. But what follows? All the day I have stretched forth My hands unto Thee, must be examined how it must be taken. For if in this expression we understand the tree of the Cross, how can we reconcile it with the whole day? Can He be said to have hung upon the Cross during the whole day, as the night is considered a part of the day? But if day, as opposed to night, was meant by this expression, even of this day, the first and no small portion had passed by at the time of His crucifixion. But if we take 'day' in the same sense of time (especially as the word is used in the feminine, a gender which is restricted to that sense in Latin, although not so in Greek, as it is always used in the feminine, which I suppose to be the reason for its translation in the same gender in our own version,) the knot of the question will be drawn tighter: for how can it mean for the whole space of time, if He did not even for one day stretch forth His hands on the Cross? Further, should we take the whole for a part, as Scripture sometimes uses this expression, I do not remember an instance, in which the whole is taken for a part, when the word whole is expressly added. For in the passage of the Gospel where the Lord saith, The Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, it is no extraordinary licence to take the whole for the part, the expression not being for three whole days and three whole nights: since the one intermediate day was a whole one, the other two were parts, the last being part of the first day, the first part of the last. But if the Cross is not meant here, but the prayer, which we find in the Gospel that He poured forth in the form of a servant to God the Father, where He is said to have prayed long before His

Passion, and on the eve of His passion, and also when on the Cross, we do not read any where that He did so throughout the whole day. Therefore by the stretched out hands throughout the whole day, we may understand the continuation of good works in which He never ceased from exertion.

10. But as His good works profited only the predestined to eternal salvation, and not all men, nor even all those among whom they were done, he adds,

Ver. 10. Dost thou shew wonders among the dead? If we suppose this relates to those whose flesh life has left, great wonders have been wrought among the dead, inasmuch as some of them have revived: and in our Lord's descent into Hell, and His ascent as the conqueror of death, a great wonder was wrought among the dead. He refers then in these words, Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead? to men so dead in heart, that such great works of Christ could not rouse them to the life of faith: for he does not say that wonders are not shewn to them because they see them not, but because they do not profit them. For, as he says in this passage, the whole day have I stretched forth My hands to Thee: because He ever refers all His works to the will of His Father, constantly declaring that He came to fulfil His Father's will: so also, as an unbelieving people saw the same works, another Prophet saith, I have spread out my hands all day unto a rebellious people, that believes not, but contradicts. Those then are dead, to whom wonders have not been shewn, not because they saw them not, but since they lived not again through them. The following verse, Shall physicians revive them, and shall they praise Thee? means, that the dead shall not be revived by such means, that they may praise Thee. In the Hebrew there is said to be a different expression: giants being used where physicians are here: but the Septuagint translators, whose authority is such that they may deservedly be said to have interpreted by the inspiration of the Spirit of God owing to their wonderful agreement, conclude, not by mistake, but taking occasion from the resemblance in sound between the Hebrew words expressing these two senses, that the use of the word is an indication of the sense in which the word giants is meant to be taken. For if you suppose the proud meant by giants, of whom the Apostle saith, Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? there is no incongruity in calling them physicians, as if by their own unaided skill they promised the salvation of

souls: against whom it is said, Of the Lord is safety. But if we take the word giant in a good sense, as it is said of our Lord, He rejoiceth as a giant to run his course; that is Giant of giants, chief among the greatest and strongest, who in His Church excel in spiritual strength. Just as He is the Mountain of mountains; as it is written, And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be manifested in the top of the mountains: and the Saint of saints: there is no absurdity in styling these same great and mighty men physicians. Whence saith the Apostle, if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. But even such physicians, even though they cure not by their own power, (as not even of their own do those of the body,) yet so far forth as by faithful ministry they assist towards salvation, can cure the living, but not raise the dead: of whom it is said, Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead? For the grace of God, by which men's minds in a certain manner are brought to live a fresh life, so as to be able to hear the lessons of salvation from any of its ministers whatever, is most hidden and mysterious. This grace is thus spoken of in the Gospel. No man can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him: and a little after this is still more openly repeated: The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life: but there are some of you that believe not. The Evangelist here interposes the remark, that Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him: and joining with this the Lord's own words, he adds, And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father. He had above said, that there were some of them who believed not: and He adds the last quoted verse as an explanation of the cause of this unbelief: in order to shew, that the very faith by which the soul believes, and springs into fresh life from the death of its former affections, is given us by God. Whatever exertions, then, the best preachers of the word, and persuaders of the truth through miracles, may make with men, just like great physicians: yet if they are dead, and through Thy grace have not a second life, Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead, or shall physicians raise them? and shall they whom they raise praise Thee? For this confession declares that they live: not, as it is written elsewhere, Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not.

11. Ver. 11. Shall one shew Thy lovingkindness in the grave, or Thy faithfulness in destruction? The word shew is of course understood as if repeated, Shall any shew Thy faithfulness in destruction? Scripture loves to connect lovingkindness and faithfulness, especially in the Psalms. Destruction also is a repetition of the grave, and signifies them who are in the grave, styled above the dead, in the verse, Dost thou shew wonders among the dead? for the body is the grave of the dead soul; whence our Lord's words in the Gospel, Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

12. Ver. 12. Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten? the dark answers to the land of forgetfulness: for the unbelieving are meant by the dark, as the Apostle saith, For ye were sometimes darkness; and the land where all things are forgotten, is the man who has forgotten God; for the unbelieving soul can arrive at darkness so intense, that the fool saith in his heart, There is no God. Thus the meaning of the whole passage may thus be drawn out in its connection: Lord, I have called upon Thee, amid My sufferings; all day I have stretched forth my hands unto Thee, that is, I have never ceased to stretch forth My works to glorify Thee. Why then do the wicked rage against Me, unless because Thou shewest not wonders among the dead? because those wonders move them not to faith, nor can physicians restore them to life that they may praise Thee, because Thy hidden grace works not in them to draw them unto believing: because no man cometh unto Me, but whom Thou hast drawn. Shall then Thy loving kindness be shewed in the grave? that is, the grave of the dead soul, which lies dead beneath the body's weight: or Thy faithfulness in destruction? that is, in such a death as cannot believe or feel any of these things. For how then in the darkness of this death, that is, in the man who in forgetting Thee has lost the light of his life, shall Thy wondrous works and Thy righteousness be known.

13. But a question occurs as to what may be the use of these dead ones, what may be the advantage imparted by the Almighty to the body of Christ, that is, the Church, by means of these; namely, that in them may be

displayed the grace of God towards the predestined who are called according to His purpose. Of this it is that in a former Psalm the Church exclaims, My God, His mercy shall prevent me; and God shall shew unto me in mine enemies; and so it goes on here in the next verse, and says, Unto Thee I also have cried, O Lord: in which we must suppose our Lord speaking in the words of the Church, His own body; for what means, I also, but that we also were at one time the children of wrath naturally, like the rest. But, unto Thee have I cried, that I might be saved. For who distinguishes me from other children of wrath, when I hear the Apostle's terrible reproof of the ungrateful; For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Salvation is the Lord's: for there is no giant that can be saved by the greatness of his strength: but as it is written, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call upon Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things? They are the physicians who heal the man wounded by the thieves: but it is the Lord Who brought him to the inn: they themselves are the labourers in the Lord's vineyard: but yet he who plants, and he who waters, is nought, but the Lord Who giveth the increase. Thus then I too have cried unto the Lord, that is, I have invoked the help of God for my salvation. But how could I invoke, unless I believed? how could I believe, did I not hear? But He it was Who drew me to believe what I heard; for it was not any chance physician that aroused me to life from the death of the soul, but He Himself working in secret. For many have heard; Since their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world: but, All men have not faith: and, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And then I could not even have believed, had not the lovingkindness of God prevented me; and, because He calls the dead to life, and calls things that are not as things that are, by calling me in secret ways, by moving me, and drawing me to Him, had brought me at last to the light of faith. He therefore says, And early shall my prayers prevent Thee. It is morning, when the night and darkness of infidelity have passed away. Thy lovingkindness hath prevented

me, that this morning might dawn upon me: but as that day of light is still to come, when the hidden things of darkness shall be revealed, and the thoughts of the heart be made manifest, and every one shall have praise of Thee: yet now in this life, in this wandering, in this light of faith, which compared with the darkness of infidelity seems already day, but compared with the day, when we shall see Him face unto face, is still night, shall my prayer prevent Thee.

14. Ver. 13. But that those prayers, the blessings of which surpass all words, may be more fervent and more constant, the gift that shall last unto eternity is deferred, while transitory evils are allowed to thicken. And so it follows;

Ver. 14. Lord, why hast Thou cast off my prayer? which may be compared with another Psalm; My God, My God, look upon me; why hast Thou forsaken me? The reason is made matter of question, not as if the wisdom of God were blamed as doing so without a cause; and so here. Lord, why hast Thou cast off my prayer? But if this cause be attended to carefully, it will be found indicated above; for it is with the view that the prayers of the Saints are, as it were, repelled by the delay of so great a blessing, and by the adversity they encounter in the troubles of life, that the flame, thus fanned, may burst into a brighter blaze.

15. For this purpose he briefly sketches in what follows the troubles of Christ's body. For it is not in the Head alone that they took place, since it is said to Saul too, Why persecutest thou Me? and Paul himself, as if placed as an elect member in the same body, saith, "That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh." Why then, Lord, hast Thou cast off my soul? why hidest Thou Thy face from me?

Ver. 15. I am poor, and in toils from my youth up: and when lifted up, I was thrown down, and troubled.

Ver. 16. Thy wraths went over me: Thy terrors disturbed me.

Ver. 17. They came round about me all day like water: they compassed me about together.

Ver. 18. A friend Thou hast put far from me: and mine acquaintance from my misery. All these evils have taken place, and are happening in the limbs

of Christ's body, and God turns away His face from their prayers, by not hearing as to what they wish for, since they know not that the fulfilment of their wishes would not be good for them. The Church is poor, as she hungers and thirsts in her wanderings for that food with which she shall be filled in her own country: she is in toils from her youth up, as the very Body of Christ saith in another Psalm, Many a time have they overcome me from my youth. And for this reason some of her members are lifted up even in this world, that in them may be the greater lowliness. Over that Body, which constitutes the unity of the Saints and the faithful, whose Head is Christ, go the wraths of God: yet abide not: since it is of the unbelieving only that it is written, that the wrath of God abideth upon him. The terrors of God disturb the weakness of the faithful, because all that can happen, even though it actually happen not, it is prudent to fear; and sometimes these terrors so agitate the reflecting soul with the evils impending around, that they seem to flow around us on every side like water, and to encircle us in our fears. And as the Church while on pilgrimage is never free from these evils, happening as they do at one moment in one of her limbs, at another in another, he adds, all day, signifying the continuation in time, to the end of this world. Often too, friends and acquaintances, their worldly interests at stake, in their terror forsake the Saints; of which saith the Apostle, all men forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge. But to what purpose is all this, but that early in the morning, that is, after the night of unbelief, the prayers of this holy Body may in the light of faith prevent God, until the coming of that salvation, which we are at present saved by hoping for, not by having, while we await it with patience and faithfulness. Then the Lord will not repel our prayers, as there will no longer be any thing to be sought for, but every thing that has been rightly asked, will be obtained: nor will He turn His face away from us, since we shall see Him as He is: nor shall we be poor, because God will be our abundance, all in all: nor shall we suffer, as there will be no more weakness: nor after exaltation shall we meet with humiliation and confusion, as there will be no adversity there: nor bear even the transient wrath of God, as we shall abide in His abiding love: nor will His terrors agitate us, because His promises realized will bless us: nor will our friend and acquaintance, being terrified, be far from us, where there will be no foe to dread.

PSALM 89

sermon i. on the first part of the psalm

Delivered in the morning, on the festival of some Martyrs.

1. Understand, beloved, this Psalm, which I am about to explain, by the grace of God, of our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be of good cheer, because He Who promised, will fulfil all, as He has fulfilled much: for it is not our own merit, but His mercy, that gives us confidence in Him. He Himself is meant, in my belief, by the understanding of Æthan the Israelite: which has given this Psalm its title. You see then, who is meant by Æthan: but the meaning of the word is strong. No man in this world is strong, except in the hope of God's promises: for as to our own deservings, we are weak, in His mercy we are strong. Weak then in himself, strong in God's mercy, the Psalmist thus begins.

2. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, for ever: with my mouth will I make known Thy truth unto all generations.

Let my limbs, he saith, serve the Lord: I speak, but it is of Thine I speak. With my mouth will I make known Thy truth: if I obey not Thee, I am not Thy servant: if I speak on my own part, I am a liar. To speak then from Thee, and in my own person, are two things: one mine, one Thine: Truth Thine, language mine. Let us hear then what faithfulness he maketh known, what mercies he singeth.

3. (2.) For Thou hast said, Mercy shall be built up for ever. It is this that I sing: this is Thy truth, for the making known of which my mouth serveth. In such wise Thou sayest, I build, as not to destroy: for some Thou destroyest and buildest not; and some whom Thou destroyest Thou dost rebuild. For unless there were some who were destroyed to be rebuilt, Jeremiah would not have written, See, I have this day set thee to throw down and to build.

And indeed all who formerly worshipped images and stones could not be built up in Christ, without being destroyed as to their old error. While, unless some were destroyed not to be built up, it would not be written, He shall destroy them, and not build them up. On their account therefore who are destroyed and built up, that they might not conceive their being built up merely temporary, as the previous ruin was in which they were destroyed, the Psalmist, through whose mouth is made known the truth of God, held to the truth. Therefore will I make it known, therefore do I declare it, because Thou hast said: I that am man declare it in full confidence, for Thou God hast said: for even if I wavered in my own words, in Thine should I be confirmed. What saidst Thou? Mercy shall be built up for ever: Thy truth shalt Thou establish in the very Heavens. As He had said in the former place, I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, for ever: with my mouth will I make known Thy truth to all generations. In what follows, he joins these two words, mercy and faithfulness; For Thou hast said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: Thy truth shall be established in the Heavens: in which mercy and truth are repeated, for all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, for truth in the fulfilment of promises could not be shewn, unless mercy in the remission of sins preceded. Next, as many things were promised in prophecy even to the people of Israel that came according to the flesh from the seed of Abraham, and that people was increased that the promises of God might be fulfilled in it; while yet God did not close the fountain of His goodness even to the Gentiles, whom He had placed under the rule of the Angels, while He reserved the people of Israel as His own portion: the Apostle expressly mentions the Lord's mercy and truth as referring to these two parties. For he calls Christ a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. See how God deceived not; see how He cast not off His people, whom He foreknew. For while the Apostle is treating of the fall of the Jews, to prevent any from believing them so far disowned of God, that no wheat from that floor's fanning could reach the granary, he saith, God hath not cast away His people, whom He foreknew; for I also am an Israelite. If all that nation are thorns, how am I who speak unto you wheat? So that the truth of God was fulfilled in those Israelites who believed, and one wall from the circumcision is thus brought to meet the corner stone. But this stone would not form a corner, unless it received another wall from the Gentiles: so that

the former wall relates in a special manner to the truth, the latter to the mercy of God. Now I say, says the Apostle, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. Justly then is it added, Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the Heavens: for all those Israelites who were called to be Apostles became as Heavens which declare the glory of God: as it is written by them, The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork. To assure you that this is the meaning of the Heavens, it is more expressly added, There is neither speech nor language, whereof their voices are not heard. If you ask, whose voices? there is nothing to refer it to but the Heavens. If therefore those whose voice is heard in all languages are the Apostles, it is also of them that it is said, Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world. Since, although they were taken up from hence before the Church filled the whole world, yet as their words reached to the ends of the world, we are right in supposing this which we have just read, Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the Heavens, fulfilled in them.

4. Ver. 3. I have made a covenant with My chosen. ‘Thou hast said,’ you understand, is to be carried on: Thou hast said, I have made a covenant with My chosen. What covenant, but the new, by which we are renewed to a fresh inheritance, in our longing desire and love of which we sing a new song. I have made a covenant with My chosen, saith the Psalmist: I have sworn unto David My servant. How confidently does he speak, who understands, whose mouth serves truth! I speak without fear; since Thou hast said. If Thou makest me fearless, because Thou hast said, how much more so dost Thou make me, when Thou hast sworn! For the oath of God is the assurance of a promise. Man is justly forbidden to swear: lest by the habit of swearing, since a man may be deceived, he fall into perjury. God alone swears securely, because He alone is infallible.

5. Let us see then what God hath sworn. (Ver. 4.) I have sworn, He saith, to David My servant; thy seed will I establish for ever. But what is the seed of David, but that of Abraham. And what is the seed of Abraham? And to thy seed, He saith, which is Christ. But perhaps that Christ, the Head of the Church, the Saviour of the body, is the seed of Abraham, and therefore of

David; but we are not Abraham's seed? We are assuredly; as the Apostle saith, And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. In this sense, then, let us take the words, brethren, Thy seed will I stablish for ever, not only of that Flesh of Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, but also of all of us who believe in Christ, for we are limbs of that Head. This body cannot be deprived of its Head: if the Head is in glory for ever, so are the limbs, so that Christ remains entire for ever. Thy seed will I stablish for ever: and set up thy throne to generation and generation. We suppose he saith, for ever, because it is to generation and generation: since he has said above, with my mouth will I ever be shewing Thy truth to generation and generation. What is 'to generation and generation?' To every generation: for the word needed not as many repetitions, as the coming and passing away of the several generations. The multiplication of generations is signified and set forth to notice by the repetition. Are possibly two generations to be understood, as ye are aware, my beloved brethren, and as I have before explained? for there is now a generation of flesh and blood: there will be a future generation in the resurrection of the dead. Christ is proclaimed here: He will be proclaimed there: here He is proclaimed, that He may be believed in: there, He will be welcomed, that He may be seen. I will set up Thy throne from one generation to another. Christ hath now a throne in us, His throne is set up in us: for unless he sate enthroned within us, He would not rule us: but if we were not ruled by Him, we should be thrown down by ourselves. He therefore sits within us, reigning over us: He sits also in another generation, which will come from the resurrection of the dead. Christ will reign for ever over His Saints. God has promised this; He hath said it: if this is not enough, God hath sworn it. As then the promise is certain, not on account of our deservings, but of His pity, no one ought to be afraid in proclaiming that which he cannot doubt of. Let that strength then inspire our hearts, whence Ætham received his name, 'strong in heart:' let us preach the truth of God, the utterance of God, His promises, His oath; and let us, strengthened on every side by these means, glorify God, and by bearing Him along with us, become Heavens.

6. Ver. 5. O Lord, the very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works. The Heavens will not praise their own merits, but thy wondrous works, O Lord. For in every act of mercy on the lost, of justification of the unrighteous,

what do we praise but the wondrous works of God? Thou praisest Him, because the dead have risen: praise Him yet more, because the lost are redeemed. What grace, what mercy of God! Thou seest a man yesterday a whirlpool of drunkenness, to-day an ornament of sobriety: a man yesterday the sink of luxury, to day the beauty of temperance: yesterday a blasphemer of God, to-day His praiser: yesterday the slave of the creature, to-day the worshipper of the Creator. From all these desperate states men are thus converted: let them not look at their own merits: let them become Heavens, and praise the wondrous works of Him by Whom they were made Heavens. For “I will consider,” he saith, “Thy Heavens, even the works of Thy fingers.” O Lord, the very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works! And that you may understand who the Heavens are, let us see what follows: and Thy truth in the congregation of the Saints. There can therefore be no doubt, that by the Heavens are meant the preachers of the word of truth, and where will the Heavens praise Thy wondrous works, and Thy truth? In the congregation of the Saints. May the Church receive the dew of the Heavens: may the Heavens rain upon the parched soil, and may the earth as it receives the rain give birth to fruitful blossoms, good works: may it not give thorns for genial rain, and thus expect the fire instead of the barn! The very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works, O Lord: and Thy truth in the congregation of the Saints. The Heavens shall then praise Thy wondrous works, and Thy truth. All that the Heavens proclaim is of Thee, and from Thee: and therefore they preach fearlessly: for they know Whom they preach of, since they cannot blush for Him of Whom they preach.

7. What do the Heavens preach? What shall they praise in the congregation of the saints?

Ver. 6. For who is he among the clouds, who shall be compared unto Thee, Lord! Is this to be the praise of the Heavens, is this to be their rain? What? are the preachers confident, because none among the clouds shall be compared unto the Lord? Does it appear to you, brethren, a high ground of praise, that the clouds cannot be compared with their Creator? If it is taken in its literal, not in its mystical meaning, it is not so: what? are the stars that are above the clouds to be compared with the Lord? what? can the Sun, Moon, Angels, Heavens, be even compared with the Lord? Why is it then

that he says, as if he meant some high praise, For who is he among the clouds, that shall be compared unto the Lord? We understand, my brethren, those clouds, as the Heavens, to be the preachers of truth; Prophets, Apostles, the announcers of the word of God; for that all these kinds of preachers are called clouds we learn from that prophecy, where God in His anger against His vineyard said, I will command the clouds that they rain no shower upon it: and the meaning of this vine the prophet explains most clearly in the following verse, for the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel. That you may not understand the vineyard otherwise, and missing the men who are signified by it, think of the earth; The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, he says, is the house of Israel. Let the house of Israel understand that she and no other is My vineyard: that it is she who has given Me thorns instead of grapes, she who has become ungrateful to her Planter and Cultivator, ungrateful to Him that watered her. If then the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, what said He in His anger? I will command the clouds that they rain no more upon it. And so indeed He did: the Apostles were sent like clouds to rain upon the Jews, and when they rejected the word of God, because they yielded thorns for grapes, the Apostles said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. From that time the clouds ceased to pour rain upon that vineyard. If therefore the clouds are the preachers of the truth, let us first enquire why they are clouds. For the same men are Heavens and clouds: Heavens from the brightness of the truth, clouds from the hidden things of the flesh: for all clouds are obscure, owing to their mortality: and they come and go. It is on account of these very obscurities of the flesh, that is, of the clouds, that the Apostle saith, Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness. You see at this moment what a man is saying; but what he has in his heart, you cannot see: what is forced from the cloud, you see, what is kept within the cloud, you see not. For whose eyes pierce the cloud? The clouds therefore are the preachers of the truth in the flesh. The Creator of all things Himself came in the flesh. But who is he among the clouds, who shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? No one then among the sons of God shall be like unto the Lord. He Himself is called the Son of God, and we are called the sons of God: but

who among the sons of God will be like unto the Lord? He is the only Son, we are many: He is one, we in Him are one: He is born, we are adopted: He is the Son begotten from everlasting according to nature: we are made so in time through grace: He without any sin, we freed from sin by Him. Who, then, among the clouds shall be compared unto the Lord? or what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? We are called clouds on account of the flesh, and we are preachers of the truth on account of the showers of the clouds: but our flesh comes in one way, His by another. We too are called sons of God, but He is the Son of God in another sense. His cloud comes from a Virgin, He is the Son from eternity, co-eternal with the Father. Who is he then among the clouds, that shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? Let the Lord Himself say whether He can find one like unto Himself. Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? Because I appear, because I am seen, because I walk among you, and perhaps at present I am become common; say, whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? Surely when they see a son of man, they see a cloud; but say, Whom do men say that I am? In answer they gave Him the reports of men; Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Many clouds and sons of God are here mentioned: for because they were righteous and holy, as the sons of God, Jeremias, Elias, and John, are called also sons of God: in their character of preachers of God, they are styled clouds. Ye have said what clouds men imagine Me to be: do ye too say, Whom say ye that I am? Peter replying in behalf of all, one for those who were one, answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

For who is he among the clouds that shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;” not like those sons of God who are not made equal to Thee: Thou hast come in the flesh: but not as the clouds, who are not to be compared unto Thee.

8. For Who art Thou, to Whom it is answered, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God: Whom other men not righteous, not holy, supposed he be one of the Prophets, either Elias, or Jeremias, or John the Baptist; Who then

art Thou? Hear what follows: (ver. 7.) God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous. Who then is he among the clouds, that shall be compared unto the Lord? or what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord, since that God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous? Since they cannot be equal unto Him, let it be their counsel to believe in Him; as they who are clouds and sons of God cannot be His equals, this act of wisdom is left to human weakness, that he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous, and to be had in dread of all them that are round about Him. God is every where; who therefore are round about Him, Who is every where? For if He has some round about Him, He is represented as finite on every side. Moreover, if it is truly said to God and of God, of His greatness there is no end; who remain, who are round about Him, except because He Who is every where, chose to be born of the flesh on one spot, to dwell among one nation, in one place to be crucified, from one spot to rise again and ascend into Heaven. Where He did this, the Gentiles are round about Him. If He remained where He did these things, He would not be great, and be had in dread of all them that are round about Him; but since He preached when there in such a manner as to send preachers of His own name through all nations over the whole world; by working miracles among his servants, he is become great, and to be had in dread of all them that are round about Him.

9. Ver. 8. O Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee? Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side. Great is Thy power: Thou hast made Heaven and earth, and all things that in them are: but greater still is thy loving-kindness, which has shewn forth Thy truth to all around Thee. For if Thou hadst been preached only on the spot where Thou didst deign to be born, to suffer, to rise again, to ascend; the truth of that promise of God would have been fulfilled, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: but the promise, that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy, would not have been fulfilled, had not that truth been explained, and diffused to those around Thee from the spot where Thou didst deign to appear. On that spot Thou didst thunder out of Thy own Cloud: but to scatter rain upon the Gentiles round about, Thou hast sent other clouds. Truly in Thy power hast Thou fulfilled what Thou hast said, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man

sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven.” Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.

10. But when Thy truth began to be preached on every side, the heathen furiously raged together, and the people imagined a vain thing: the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed. Verily, when Thy truth had begun to be preached in Thy circuit, as if Thou wert coming to marry a wife among the alien-born, the roaring lion meets Thee, and is strangled by Thee. For this was prefigured in Samson: and you, my brethren, would not have applauded these words of mine, before I mentioned Samson by name, unless ye recognised the type; for ye have heard, like men accustomed to the watering of the clouds of God, Thy truth then is in the circuit of Thee. But when without persecutions, when without opposition, since it is said, that He was born for a sign which shall be spoken against? Since then that nation, where Thou didst deign to be born, and to dwell, was as a land separated from the waves of the heathen, so that it appeared dry and ready for watering with rain, while the rest of the nations were as a sea in the bitterness of their sterility; what do Thy preachers who scatter Thy truth in circuit of Thee, when the waves of that sea rage furiously? (Ver. 9.) Thou rulest the power of the sea. For what was the result of the sea raging thus, but the day which we are now keeping holy? It slew Martyrs, scattered seeds of blood, the harvest of the Church sprang up. Safely then let the clouds go forth: let them diffuse Thy truth in circuit of Thee, let them not fear the savage waves. Thou rulest the power of the sea. The sea swells, buffets, and roars: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what ye are able: and so, Thou stillest the waves thereof when they rise.

11. Lastly, what hast Thou done in the sea itself, to pacify its rage, and to weaken it? (Ver. 10.) Thou hast humbled the proud as one that is wounded. There is a certain proud serpent in the sea, of which another passage of Scripture speaks, I will command the serpent, and he shall bite him; and again, There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to mock him, whose head He bruises above the water. Thou, he says, hast humbled the proud, as one that is wounded. Thou hast humbled thyself, and the proud was humbled: for the proud held the proud ones through pride: but the great one

is humbled, and by believing in Him become small. While the little one is nourished by the example of one who from greatness descended to humility, the devil has lost what he held: because the proud held only the proud. When such an example of humility was displayed before them, men learned to condemn their own pride, and to imitate the humility of God. Thus also the devil, by losing those whom he had in his power, has even himself been humbled; not chastened, but thrown prostrate. Thou hast humbled the proud like one that is wounded. Thou hast been humbled, and hast humbled others: thou hast been wounded, and hast wounded others: for Thy blood, as it was shed to blot out the handwriting of sins, could not but wound him. For what was the ground of his pride, except the bond which he held against us. This bond, this handwriting Thou hast blotted out with Thy blood: him therefore hast Thou wounded, from whom Thou hast rescued so many victims. You must understand the devil wounded, not by the piercing of the flesh, which he has not, but by the bruising of his proud heart. Thou hast scattered Thine enemies abroad with Thy mighty arm.

12. Ver. 11. The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine. From Thee, over Thy earth, they rain. Thine are the heavens, by whom is preached Thy truth in circuit of Thee; Thine is the earth, which has received Thy truth in circuit of Thee; and what has resulted from that rain? Thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is. (Ver. 12.) Thou hast created the north and the seas. For nothing has any power against Thee, against its Creator. The world indeed may rage through its own malice, and the perversity of its will; does it nevertheless pass over the bound laid down by the Creator, Who made all things? Why then do I fear the north wind? Why do I fear the seas? In the north indeed is the devil, who said, I will sit in the sides of the north; I will be like the Most High; but Thou hast humbled, as one wounded, the proud one. Thus what Thou hast done in them has more force for Thy dominion, than their own will has for their wickedness. Thou hast created the north and the seas.

13. Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name. Those mountains are here understood, but they have a meaning. Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name. Thabor, when interpreted, signifies an approaching light. But whence comes the light of which it is said, Ye are the light of the world,

unless from Him concerning Whom it is written, That was the true light, which lighteth every man coming into the world? The light then which is the light of the world comes from that light which is not kindled from any other source, so that there is no fear lest it be extinguished. The light then comes from Him, Who is that candle Which is not set beneath the bushel, but on a candlestick, Thabor the coming light. Hermon means his curse. Justly the light comes and is made the curse of him. Of whom but the devil, the wounded one, the proud one? Our illumination then is given from Thee; that he is held accursed of us, who kept us in his own error and pride, is from Thee. Thabor and Hermon, therefore, shall rejoice, not in their own merits, but in Thy name. For they shall say, Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give the praise, on account of the raging sea: lest the heathen say, Where is now their God?

14. Ver. 13. Thou hast a mighty arm. Let no man arrogate any thing to himself. Thou hast a mighty arm: by Thee we were created, by Thee we have been defended. Thou hast a mighty arm: strong be Thy hand, and high be Thy right hand.

15. Ver. 14. Righteousness and judgment are the preparation of Thy seat. Thy righteousness and judgment will appear in the end: they are now hidden. Of thy righteousness it is treated in another Psalm, “on the hidden things of the Son.” There will then be a manifestation of Thy righteousness and judgment: some will be set on the right, others on the left hand: and the unbelieving will tremble, when they see what now they mock at, and believe not: the righteous will rejoice, when they shall see what they now see not, yet believe. Righteousness and judgment are the preparation of Thy seat: especially in the Day of Judgment. What then now? mercy and truth go before Thy face. I should fear the preparation of Thy seat, Thy justice, and Thy coming judgment, did not mercy and truth go before Thee: why should I at the end fear Thy righteousness, when with Thy mercy going before Thee Thou blottest out my sins, and by shewing forth Thy truth fulfillst Thy promises? Mercy and truth go before Thy face. For all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.

16. In all these things shall we not rejoice? or shall we contain our joy? or shall words suffice for our gladness? or shall the tongue be able to express

our rejoicing? If therefore no words suffice, (ver. 15.) Blessed is the people, O Lord, that knoweth glad shouting. O blessed people! dost thou conceive aright, dost thou understand, glad shouting? For except thou understand glad shouting, thou canst not be blessed. What do I mean by understanding glad shouting? Whether thou knowest the source of that rejoicing which is beyond words to express. For this joy is not of thyself, since he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Rejoice not then in thy own pride, but in God's grace. See that that grace is such, that the tongue fails to express its greatness, and then thou understandest glad shouting.

17. Finally, if thou hast understood the jubilant rejoicing in grace, hear the praise of that grace. Blessed indeed is the people, that knoweth glad shouting. See if this joy be not entirely of grace, of God, and not of thyself. They shall walk in the light of Thy countenance, O Lord. That Thabor, the coming light, if he walk not in the light of Thy countenance, is extinguished as a candle by the blast of pride. O Lord, they shall walk in the light of Thy countenance. (Ver. 16.) They shall rejoice in Thy name all the day. That Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name: all day shall they rejoice, if they will, in Thy name; but if they will rejoice in their own name, they shall not rejoice all day: for they shall not continue in their joy, when they shall delight in themselves, and fall through pride. That they may rejoice all day, therefore, they shall rejoice in Thy name, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. Not in their own, but in Thine: lest they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For some are noted by the Apostle, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own, and not rejoicing in Thy light, and thus not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God. And why? because they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. But the people who knoweth glad shouting, (for the former err from want of knowledge, but blessed is the people not that knoweth not, but that knoweth glad shouting,) whence ought it to shout, whence to rejoice, but in Thy name, walking in the light of Thy countenance? And it shall deserve to be exalted, but in Thy righteousness: let every man take away altogether his own righteousness, and be humbled: the righteousness of God shall come, and he shall be exalted, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

18. Ver. 17. For Thou art the glory of their strength: and in Thy good pleasure Thou shalt lift up our horns: because it has seemed good to Thee, not because we are worthy.

19. Ver. 18. For of the Lord is our taking up. For I was moved like a heap of sand, that I might fall; and I should have fallen, had not the Lord taken me up. For of the Lord is (our) taking up; and of the Holy One of Israel our King. Himself is thy taking up, himself thy illumination: in His light thou art safe, in His light thou walkest, in His righteousness thou art exalted. He took thee up, He guards thy weakness: He gives thee strength of Himself, not of thyself.

20. Ver. 19. Thou spakest sometime in vision unto Thy sons, and saidst. Thou spakest in Thy vision. Thou didst reveal this to Thy Prophets. For this reason Thou spakest in vision, that is, in revelation: whence Prophets were called seers. They saw something within, which they were to speak without: and secretly they heard what they preached openly. Then Thou spakest in vision unto Thy sons, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty. Ye understand Who is meant by mighty? I have exalted One chosen out of the people. And Who is meant by chosen? One Who, ye rejoice, is already exalted.

21. Ver. 20. I have found David My servant: that David from David's seed: with My holy oil have I anointed Him: for it is said of Him, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

22. Ver. 21. My hand shall hold Him fast, and My arm shall strengthen Him: because there was a taking up of man; because flesh was assumed in the Virgin's womb, because by Him Who in the form of God is coequal with the Father, the form of a servant was taken, and He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

23. Ver. 22. The enemy shall not be able to do Him violence. The enemy rages indeed: but he shall not be able to do Him violence: he is wont to hurt, but he shall not hurt. How then shall he afflict Him? he will exercise Him, but he shall not hurt Him. There shall be profit in his raging; for those against whom he rages shall be crowned in their conquering. For how is he conquered, if he rages not against us? or where is God our helper, if we

fight not? The enemy therefore shall do what is in his power; but he shall not be able to do Him violence: the son of wickedness shall not come nigh to hurt Him.

24. Ver. 23. I will cut in pieces His enemies before His face. They are cut in pieces from their conspiracy, and in that they believe they are cut in pieces; for they believe by degrees; as when the calf's head was ground small, they will come to be the drink of God's people. For Moses ground down the calf's head, and sprinkled it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink it. All the unbelieving are ground: they believe by degrees; and they are drunk by the people of God, and pass into Christ's body. I will cut in pieces His foes before His face: and put to flight them that hate Him. That they hurt Him not. But possibly some of those put to flight say, Whither shall I go then from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I go then from Thy presence? And seeing that they cannot fly from the Almighty, turning they fly to Him. And I will put to flight them that hate Him.

25. Ver. 24. My truth also and My mercy is with Him. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Remember, as much as ye can, how often these two attributes are urged upon us, that we render them back to God. For as He shewed us mercy that He might blot out our sins, and truth in fulfilling His promises; so also we, walking in His path, ought to give back to Him mercy and truth; mercy, in pitying the wretched; truth, in not judging unjustly. Let not truth rob you of mercy, nor mercy hinder truth: for if through mercy you shall have judged contrary to truth, or by rigorous truth shall have forgotten mercy, you will not be walking in the path of God, where "mercy and truth meet together." And in My name shall His horn be exalted. Why should I say more? Ye are Christians, recognise Christ.

26. Ver. 25. I will set His hand also in the sea: that is, He shall rule over the Gentiles; and His right hand in the floods. Rivers run into the sea: avaricious men roll onwards into the bitterness of this world: yet all these kinds of men will be subject to Christ.

27. Ver. 26. He shall call me, Thou art My Father, and the lifter up of My salvation.

Ver. 27. And I will make Him my first-born; higher than the kings of the earth. Our Martyrs, whose birthdays we are celebrating, shed their blood on account of these things, which were believed though not yet seen; how much more brave ought we to be, as we see what they believed? For they had not yet seen Christ raised on high among the kings of the earth: as yet princes were taking counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed: what follows in the same Psalm was not then fulfilled, Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be learned, ye that are judges of the earth. Now indeed Christ has been exalted among the kings of the earth.

28. Ver. 28. My mercy will I keep for Him for ever: and my Testament faithful with Him. On His account, the Testament is faithful: in Him the Testament is mediated: He is the Sealer, the Mediator of the Testament, the Surety of the Testament, the Witness of the Testament, the Heritage of the Testament, the Coheir of the Testament.

29. Ver. 29. His seed will I make to endure world without end. Not only for this world, but unto the world without end: whither His seed, which is His heritage, the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, will pass. But if ye are Christ's, ye are also Abraham's seed: and if ye are destined His heirs for ever, He will establish His seed unto world without end: and His throne as the days of Heaven. The thrones of earthly kings are as the days of earth: different are the days of Heaven from those of earth. The days of Heaven are those years of which it is said, Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. The days of the earth are soon overtaken by their successors: those which precede are shut out from us: nor do those which succeed remain: but they come that they may go, and are almost gone before they are come. Such are the days of earth. But the days of Heaven, which are also the 'One day' of Heaven, and the never failing years, have neither beginning nor end: nor is any day there narrowed between yesterday and to-morrow: no one there expects the future, nor loses the past: but the days of Heaven are always present, where His throne shall be for ever and ever. Let us, if you please, reserve what remains; since the Psalm is a long one, and we have yet some farther opportunity of speaking with you in Christ's name. Refresh your strength therefore: I do not mean that of your mind, for in mind I see that you are incapable of fatigue; but on account of the slaves of the soul,

that your bodies may be sustained in their service, refresh yourselves for a little, and being refreshed return to your meal.

PSALM 89

Second Discourse on the second part of the Psalm. Delivered on the same day with the former Discourse.

1. Attend now to the rest of the Psalm, of which we spoke in the morning, and require the pious debt: since He will repay through me, Who made both me and you. In the former part of the Psalm our Lord Christ was announced according to God's promise, and He is still announced in these words, of which I am about to treat. A little above, it had been said of Him amongst other truths, (ver. 27–29.) And I will make Him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for Him for evermore, and My Testament faithful with Him. His seed also will I establish unto world without end: and His throne as the days of Heaven. I have said what was in my power on these words and all above, from the very beginning.

2. It goes on, (ver. 30.) If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; (ver. 31.) if they profane My statutes, and keep not My commandments; (ver. 32.) I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. (ver. 33.) Nevertheless, My mercy will I not utterly take from him: nor will I hurt in My truth. (ver. 34.) My Testament will I not profane, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. This is a strong pledge of the promise of God. The sons of this David, are the children of the Bridegroom: all Christians therefore are called His sons. But it is much indeed that God promises, that if Christians, that is, His children, forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; I will not spurn them, nor will I send them away from Me in perdition: but what will I do? I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. It is not the mercy of one that calls them only; but also that chastises and scourges them. Let therefore thy Father's hand be upon thee, and if thou art a good son, repel not chastening; for what son is there, to whom his father giveth not chastening? Let Him chasten

him, so long as He takes not from him His mercy: let Him beat him when obstinate, as long as He does not disinherit him. If thou hast well understood the promises of thy Father, fear not to be scourged, but to be disinherited; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth: and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Does the sinful son spurn chastening, when he sees the only Son without sin scourged? I will visit their offences with the rod. Thus too the Apostle threatens: What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod? Let not pious sons say, if Thou art coming with a rod, come not at all. For it is better to be taught with the Father's rod, than to perish in the caresses of the robber.

3. I will visit, He saith, their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, My mercy will I not utterly take from Him. From whom? From that David to Whom I gave these promises, Whom I anointed with My holy oil of gladness above His fellows. Do you recognise Him from Whom God will not utterly take away His mercy? That no one may anxiously say, since He speaks of Christ as Him from Whom He will not take away His mercy, What then will become of the sinner? Did He say any thing like this, "I will not take My loving-kindness utterly from them?" I will visit, He saith, their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Thou didst expect for thy own security, I will not utterly take My loving-kindness from them. And indeed this is the reading of some books, but not of the most accurate: though, where they have it, it is a reading by no means inconsistent with the real meaning. For how can it be said that He will not utterly take His mercy from Christ? Has the Saviour of the body committed aught of sin either in Heaven or in earth, Who sitteth even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us? Yet it is from Christ: but from His members, His body which is the Church. For in this sense He speaks of it as a great thing that He will not take away His mercies from Him, supposing us not to recognise the only Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father; for there the Man is not counted for His Person, but the One Person is God and Man. He therefore does not utterly take His mercies from Him, when He takes not His mercy from His body, His members, in which, even while He was enthroned in Heaven, He was still suffering persecutions on earth; and when He cried from Heaven, Saul, Saul, not why persecutest thou My servants, nor why persecutest thou My saints, nor My disciples,

but, why persecutest thou Me? As then, while no one persecuted Him when sitting in Heaven, He cried out, “Why persecutest thou Me?” when the Head recognised its limbs, and His love allowed not the Head to separate Himself from the union of the body: so, when He taketh not away His mercies from Him, it is surely that He taketh it not from us, who are His limbs and body. Yet ought we not on that account to sin without apprehension, and perversely to assure ourselves that we shall not perish, be our actions what they may. For there are certain sins and certain offences, to define and discourse of which it is either impossible for me, or if it were possible, it would be too tedious for the time we have at present. For no man can say that he is without sin; for if he says so, he will lie; if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Each one therefore is needfully scourged for his own sins; but the mercy of God is not taken away from him, if he be a Christian. Certainly if thou committest such offences as to repel the hand of Him Who chasteneth, the rod of Him Who scourgeth thee, and art angry at the correction of God, and fliest from thy Father when He chasteneth thee, and wilt not suffer Him to be thy Father, because He spares thee not when thou dost sin; thou hast estranged thyself from thy heritage, He has not thrown thee off; for if thou wouldest abide being scourged, thou wouldest not abide disinherited. Nevertheless, My mercies I will not take utterly from him: nor will I do hurt in My truth. For His mercy in setting free shall not be taken away, lest His truth in taking vengeance do harm.

4. Ver. 34. My covenant will I not profane, nor reject the thing that is gone out of my lips. Because his sons sin, I will not on this account be found false: I have promised; I will do. Suppose they choose to sin even as past hope, and so fall into sins as to offend their father’s countenance, and deserve to be disinherited; is it not still God Himself, of Whom it is said, From these stones He will raise up sons to Abraham? Therefore I tell you, brethren, many Christians sin venially, many are scourged and so corrected for their sin, chastened, and cured; many turn away altogether, striving with a stiff neck against the discipline of the Father, even wholly refusing God as their Father, though they have the mark of Christ, and so fall into such sins, that it can only be announced against them, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Nevertheless, Christ shall not be

destitute of an inheritance on their account: not for the chaff's sake shall the wheat also perish: nor on account of bad fish shall nothing be cast into the vessels from that net. The Lord knows them that are His. For He Who predestined us before we were born, promised undoubtingly: For whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Let desperate sinners sin as far as they choose: let the members of Christ reply, If God is with us, who shall be against us? God will not therefore do hurt in His truth, nor will He 'profane His Testament.' His Testament remains immovable, because in His foreknowledge He predestined His heirs; and "He will not reject the thing that is gone out of His lips."

5. Ver. 34–37. Listen for thy confirmation in hope, for thy security, if thou knowest thyself to be among the members of Christ. (Ver. 35.) I have sworn once by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. Dost thou wait till God swear a second time? How often is He to swear, if in one oath He is false? One oath He made for our life, Who sent His Only One to die for us. I have sworn once by My holiness, that I will not lie unto David. (Ver. 36.) His seed shall endure for ever. His seed endures for ever; because the Lord knows them that are His. And His seat is like as the sun before me: (Ver. 37.) And as the moon perfect for evermore: and the faithful witness in heaven. They are His seat, in whom He sits and reigns. But if His seat, His members also; because even our members are the seat of our head. See how all our other members sustain our head: but the head supports nothing above itself, but is itself supported by the rest of our limbs, as if the whole body of a man were the seat of his head. His seat, therefore, all in whom God reigns, 'shall be like as the sun before Me,' He saith: because the righteous in the kingdom of My Father shall shine like the sun. But the sun is meant in a spiritual, not a bodily sense, as that which shines from Heaven, which He maketh to rise upon the just and unjust. Finally, that sun is not before men's eyes only, but even those of cattle and the smallest insects; for which of the vilest animals sees not that sun? What does he say to distinguish the sun meant here? Like as the sun before Me. Not before men, before the flesh, before mortal animals, but before Me, and as the moon. But what moon? one that is perfect for evermore. For although that moon which we know becomes perfect, the next day she begins to wane,

after her orb is full. He shall be as the moon perfect for evermore, He saith. His seat shall be made perfect as the moon, but that moon is one which will be perfect for evermore. If as the sun, why also as the moon? the Scriptures usually signify by the moon the mortality of this flesh, because of its increasings and decreasings, because of its transitory nature. The moon is also interpreted as Jericho: one who was descending from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers: for he was descending from immortality to mortality. Similar then is the flesh to that moon, which every month suffers increase and decrease: but that flesh of ours will be perfect in the resurrection: and a faithful witness in heaven. Thus then, if it was our mind only that would be perfected, he would compare us only to the sun: if our body only, to the moon; but as God will perfect us in both, in respect of the mind it is said, like as the sun before Me, because God only seeth the mind: and as the moon, so is the flesh: which shall be made perfect for evermore, in the resurrection of the dead: and a faithful witness in Heaven, because all that was asserted of the resurrection of the dead was true. I beseech you, hear this again more clearly, and remember it: for I know that some understand, while others are yet enquiring perhaps what I meant. There is no article of the Christian faith which has encountered such contradiction as that of the resurrection of the flesh. Finally, He Who was born for a sign that should be spoken against, resumed His own flesh after death to meet the caviller; and He Who could have so completely cured His wounds that their scars would have entirely vanished, retained those scars in His body, that He might cure the wounds of doubt in the heart. Indeed nothing has been attacked with the same pertinacious, contentious contradiction, in the Christian faith, as the resurrection of the flesh. On the immortality of the soul many Gentile philosophers have disputed at great length, and in many books they have left it written that the soul is immortal: when they come to the resurrection of the flesh, they doubt not indeed, but they most openly deny it, declaring it to be absolutely impossible that this earthly flesh can ascend to Heaven. Thus that moon shall be perfect for evermore, and shall be the faithful witness in heaven against all gainsayers.

6. These promises, so sure, so firm, so open, so unquestioned, were made concerning Christ. For although some are mysteriously veiled, yet some are so clear, that all that is obscure is easily revealed by them. Such being the

case, see what follows. (Ver. 38.) But Thou hast approved and brought to nothing and forsaken Thine Anointed. (Ver. 39.) Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant, and profaned His holiness on the ground. (Ver. 40.) Thou hast broken down all His hedges, and made His strongholds a terror. (Ver. 41.) All they that go by the way spoil Him, and He is become a reproach to His neighbours. (Ver. 42.) Thou hast set up the right hand of His enemies, and made all His adversaries to rejoice. (Ver. 43.) Thou hast taken away the help of His sword, and givest Him not help in the battle. (Ver. 44.) Thou hast set Him free from cleansing, and cast His throne down to the ground. (Ver. 45.) The days of His seat hast Thou shortened, and covered Him with dishonour. How is this? Thou hast promised all those things: and Thou hast brought to pass their reverse. Where are now the promises which but a little before filled us with delight? which we so joyfully applauded, which we so fearlessly made our boast of? It is as if one promised, and another destroyed. And this is the mystery: for the words are not another, but Thou, Thou Who didst promise, Who didst even swear in condescension to human doubt, Thou hast promised this, and done thus! Whence shall I get Thy oath, where shall I find Thy promise fulfilled? Would then God promise, or swear thus falsely? and yet why then these promises, and these acts? I answer, that He acted thus in fulfilment of those promises. But who am I, to say this? Let us see therefore whether it is the language of the Truth; what I say will not then be without foundation. It was David to whom the fulfilment of these promises in his seed, that is, in Christ, was promised: and as they were addressed to David, men expected their completion in David. Further, lest when any Christian asserted these promises to have referred to Christ, another by applying them to David, because he descried the fulfilment of all of them in David, might thus err; He cancelled them in David, thus obliging us when we see them unfulfilled in David, to look to another quarter for their fulfilment. Thus also in the case of Esau and Jacob, we find the elder worshipped by the younger, though it is written, The elder shall serve the younger; so when you see it unfulfilled in those two brothers, you look for two peoples in whom to discover the completion of what God in His truth deigns to promise. From the fruit of thy body, saith the Lord unto David, shall I set upon thy seat. He promised from his seed something for evermore: and Solomon, born to him, became master of such wisdom, that the promise of God respecting the fruit

of David's body was believed to have been fulfilled in him; but Solomon fell, and gave room for hoping for Christ; that since God can neither be deceived nor deceive, He might not make His promise to rest in one who He knew would fall, but you might after the fall of Solomon look back to God, and demand His promise. Hast Thou, O Lord, deceived? Hast Thou failed to fulfil Thy promise? Dost Thou not exhibit what Thou hast sworn? Perhaps God might reply, I swore and promised: but Solomon would not persevere. What then? Didst not Thou, Lord God, know beforehand that he would not persevere? Indeed Thou didst know. Why then didst Thou promise me what should be eternal in one who would not persevere? Hast Thou not answered; But if his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they keep not My statutes, and profane My testament; yet My promise shall remain, and My oath shall be fulfilled: I have sworn once in My Holiness, within, in a certain mystery, in the very spring whence the Prophets drank, whence they burst forth to us of these things, I have sworn once that I will not fail David. Shew forth then what Thou hast sworn, give us what Thou hast promised. The fulfilment is taken from that David, that it might not be looked for in that David: wait therefore for what I have promised.

7. Even David himself knew this. Consider his words; Thou hast rejected and brought him down to nothing. Where then is Thy promise? Thou hast put off Thine anointed. This expression cheers us, among much that is sorrowful: for the promise of God is still valid; for Thou hast put off Thine Anointed, not taken Him away. See then what was the fate of that David, in whom the ignorant hoped for the fulfilment of the promises of God, in order that those promises might be more firmly relied upon for their fulfilment in another. Thou hast put off Thine Anointed: Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant. For where is the Old Testament of the Jews? where that land of promise, in which they sinned while they dwelt in it, on the overthrow of which they wandered afar? Ask you for the kingdom of the Jews; it exists not: you ask for the altar of the Jews; it is not: you ask for the sacrifice of the Jews; it is not: you ask for the priesthood of the Jews; it is not. Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant, and profaned his holiness on the earth. Thou hast shewn that what they thought holy, was earthly. Thou hast broken down all his hedges, with which Thou hadst

entrenched him: for how could he have been spoiled unless his hedges had been broken down? Thou hast made his strongholds a terror. Why terror? That it should be said to the sinners, For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee.

All they that go by the way have spoiled him: that is, all the heathen that go by the way, meaning, all who pass through this life, have spoiled Israel, have spoiled David. First of all, see his fragments in all nations: for it is of the Jews that it is said, They shall be a portion for foxes. For the Scripture calls wicked, crafty, and cowardly kings, whom another's virtue terrifies, foxes. Thus when our Lord Himself was speaking of the threatening Herod, He said, Go ye, and tell that fox. The king who fears no man, is not a fox: like that Lion of Judah, of Whom it is said, Stooping down Thou didst rise up, and didst sleep as a lion. At Thy will Thou didst stoop down, at Thy will didst rise; because Thou wouldest, Thou didst sleep. And thus in another Psalm he says, I slept. Was not the sentence complete, "I slept, and took rest, and rose up again, because the Lord shall uphold Me?" Why is the word ego added? and thus with a strong emphasis on the word I, they raged against Me, they troubled Me: but had I not willed, I had not slept. Those then concerning whom it was declared that they should be a portion for foxes, are now spoken of as follows; All they that go by have spoiled him: and he is become a reproach to his neighbours. (Ver. 42.) Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies, and made all his adversaries to rejoice. Look at the Jews, and see all things fulfilled that were predicted. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword. How they were used to fight few in number, and to strike down many. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword, and Thou givest him not victory in the battle. Naturally then is he conquered, naturally taken prisoner, naturally made an outcast from his kingdom, naturally scattered abroad: for he lost that land, for which he slew the Lord. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword, and hast not given him victory in the battle. (Ver. 43.) Thou hast loosed him from cleansing. What is this? Amongst all the evils, this is a matter for great fear; for howsoever God may beat, howsoever He may be wroth, howsoever He may flog and scourge, yet let Him scourge him bound, whom He is to cleanse, not 'loose him from cleansing.' For if He loose him from being purified, he becomes incapable of cleansing, and must be an outcast. From what cleansing then is

the Jew loosed? From faith; for by faith we live: and it is said of faith, purifying their hearts by faith: and as it is only the faith of Christ that cleanses; by disbelief in Christ, they are loosed from purification. Thou hast loosed him from cleansing, and cast his throne down to the ground. And so Thou hast broken it. (Ver. 44.) The days of his seat hast Thou shortened. They imagined that they should reign for ever. And covered him with confusion. All these things happened to the Jews, Christ yet not being taken away, but His advent deferred.

8. Let us therefore see whether God fulfils His promises. After these stern penalties which have been recorded as having been inflicted upon this people and kingdom, that God might not be supposed to have fulfilled His promises in it, and so not to grant another kingdom in Christ, of which kingdom there shall be no end; the Prophet addresses Him in these words, (ver. 45.) Lord, how long wilt Thou hide Thyself unto the end? For possibly it was not from them and to the end; because blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved. But in the mean while shall Thy wrath burn like fire.

9. Ver. 46, 47. O remember what my substance is. That David, who was placed among the Jews in the flesh, in Christ in hope, speaks; Remember what is my substance. For not because the Jews fell away, did my substance fail: for from that people came the Virgin Mary, and from her the flesh of Christ; that Flesh sins not, but purifies sins; there, saith David, is my substance. O remember what my substance is. For the root has not entirely perished; the seed shall come to whom the promise was made, ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator. Remember what my substance is. For Thou hast not made all the sons of men for nought. Lo! all the sons of men have gone into vanity: yet Thou hast not made them for nought. If then all went into vanity, whom Thou hast not made for nought; hast Thou not reserved some instrument to purify them from vanity? This which Thou hast reserved to Thyself to cleanse men from vanity is Thy Holy One, in Him is my substance: for from Him are all, whom Thou hast not made for nought, purified from their own vanity. To them it is said, O ye sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart? Wherefore have ye such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing? Perhaps they might become anxious, and turn from

their vanity, and when they found themselves polluted with it, might seek for purification from it: then help them, make them secure. Know this also, that the Lord hath made wonderful His Holy One. He has made His Holy One to be admired: thence He has purified all from their vanity: there, saith David, is my substance: O remember it! For Thou hast not made all the sons of men for nought. Thou hast therefore reserved something to purify them: and who is He Whom Thou hast reserved? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? This man then who shall live and not see death, shall purify them from nothingness. For He made not all men for nought, nor can He Who made them so despise His own creatures, as not to convert and purify them.

10. Ver. 48. What man is he that shall live, and shall not see death? For being raised from the dead He dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him. And as in another Psalm it is said, Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hell, neither shalt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption, the Apostolic teaching takes up this testimony, and in the Acts of the Apostles thus argues against the unbelieving; Men and brethren, we know that the patriarch David is dead and buried, and his flesh hath seen corruption. Therefore it cannot be said of him, neither shalt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. Of whom then is it said? What man is he that shall live, and shall not see death? Perhaps there is no man such. Nay, but who is it? is said to make thee enquire, not despair. But perhaps there may be some man that shall live, and shall not see death, and yet perhaps he did not speak of Christ, Who died? There is no man that shall live, and shall not see death, except Him Who died for mortals. That thou mayest be assured that it is said of Him, consider the sequel; What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Did He never die then? He did. How then shall He live, and never see death? He shall deliver His own soul from the hands of Hell. He is spoken of alone indeed, in that He alone of all others shall live, and shall not see death: He shall deliver His own soul from the hand of Hell, because although the rest of His faithful shall rise from the dead, and shall themselves live for evermore, without seeing death; yet they shall not themselves deliver their own souls from the hands of Hell. He Who delivers His own soul from the hands of Hell, Himself delivers those of His believers: they cannot do so of themselves. Prove that He delivers His own

soul. I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh 'it from Me;' for I Myself slept, but I lay it down of Myself, and take it again, because it is He Himself Who delivers His own soul from the hands of Hell.

11. Ver. 49. But in the very faith in Christ great difficulties occurred, and the heathen in their rage long said, "When shall he die, and his name perish?" On account of these then who have now long believed in Christ, but were destined to doubt for some time, these words follow, Lord, where are Thy old loving-kindnesses? We have now acknowledged Christ our purifier, we now possess Him in Whom Thy promises were to be fulfilled; shew forth in Him what Thou hast promised. It is He Himself that shall live, and not see death: Himself Who delivers His own soul from the hand of Hell: and yet we are still in suffering. Thus spoke the Martyrs, whose birthdays we are celebrating. He shall live, and not see death: He delivers His soul from the hands of Hell: yet "for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain." Lord, where are Thy old loving-kindnesses which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?

12. Ver. 50. Remember, Lord, the rebuke that Thy servants have. Even while Christ was living, and while He was sitting on His Father's right hand, reproaches were cast against the Christians: they long were reproached with the name of Christ. That widowed one who brought forth, and whose children were more than those of the married wife, heard ill names, heard reproaches: but the Church, multiplied as she is, extending right and left, no longer remembers the reproach of her widowhood. Remember, Lord, in the memory of Whom there is abundant sweetness. Remember, forget not. Remember what? the rebuke that Thy servants have: and how I do bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people. I went, saith he, to preach of Thee, and I heard reproaches, and bore them in my bosom, because I was fulfilling the prophecy. Being defamed we entreat: we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. Long the Christians bore reproaches in their bosom, in their heart: nor dared resist their revilers; before, when it was a crime to answer a heathen: it is now a crime to remain a heathen. Thanks be to the Lord! He remembered our rebukes: He raised the horn of His Anointed on high, He

made Him the Wonderful among the kings of the earth. Now no one insults Christians, or if he does, it is not in public: he speaks as if he were still more fearful of being heard, than anxious to be believed. I bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people.

13. Ver. 51. Wherewith Thine enemies have blasphemed Thee, O Lord, both Jews and Pagans. Wherewith they have blasphemed. Wherewith have they blasphemed Thee? With the change of Thine Anointed. They objected that Christ died, and was crucified. Madmen, what is your reproach? Although there is now no one to use it: yet supposing some still remaining that so speak, what is your reproach? that Christ died? He was not destroyed, but changed. He is styled dead on account of the three days. Wherewith then have thine enemies blasphemed Thee? Not with the loss, not with the perdition of Thine Anointed, but with His change. He was changed from temporal to eternal life: He was changed from the Jews to the Gentiles; He was changed from earth to heaven. Let then Thy vain enemies blaspheme Thee still for the change of Thine Anointed. Would that they may be changed: they will not in that case blaspheme the change of Christ, which displeases them, since they themselves will not be changed. For there is no change with them, and they fear not God.

Wherewith Thine enemies have blasphemed Thee, the change of Thine Anointed.

14. They have blasphemed the change of Christ; but what dost thou answer? (Ver. 52.) The blessing of the Lord for evermore. Amen and Amen. Thanks to His mercy, thanks to His grace. We express our thanks: we do not give them, nor return them, nor repay them: we express our thanks in words, while in fact we retain our sense of them He saved us for no reward, He heeded not our impieties: He searched us out when we searched not for Him, He found, redeemed, emancipated us from the bondage of the devil and the power of his wicked angels: He drew us to Him to purify us by that faith, from which He releases those enemies only who believe not, and who for that reason cannot be purified. Let those who still remain infidels say every day what they choose; day by day they shall be fewer and fewer that remain; let them revile, mock, accuse, not the death, but the change of Christ. Do they not see that, when they say these things, they fail in purpose

either by believing or by dying? For their curse is temporal: but the blessing of the Lord for evermore. To confirm that blessing is added, Amen and Amen. This is the signature of the bond of God. Secure then of His promises, let us believe the past, recognise the present, hope for the future. Let not the enemy lead us astray from the way, that He, Who gathers us like chickens under His wings, may foster us: lest we stray from His wings, and the hawk of the air carry us off while yet unfledged. For the Christian ought not to hope in himself: if he hopes to be strong, let him be reared by his mother's warmth. This is the hen who gathers her young together; whence is the reproach of our Saviour against the unbelieving Jerusalem, How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house shall be left unto you desolate. Hence was it said, Thou hast made his strongholds a terror. Since then they would not be gathered together under the wings of this hen, and have given us a warning to teach us to dread the unclean spirits that fly in the air, seeking daily what they may devour; let us gather ourselves under the wings of this hen, the divine Wisdom, since she is weakened even unto death for her chickens. Let us love our Lord God, let us love His Church: Him as a Father, Her as a Mother: Him as a Lord, Her as His Handmaid, as we are ourselves the Handmaid's sons. But this marriage is held together by a bond of great love: no man offends the one, and wins favour of the other. Let no man say, "I go indeed to the idols, I consult possessed ones and fortune-tellers: yet I abandon not God's Church; I am a Catholic." While thou holdest to thy Mother, thou hast offended thy Father. Another says, Far be it from me; I consult no sorcerer, I seek out no possessed one, I never ask advice by sacrilegious divination, I go not to worship idols, I bow not before stones; though I am in the party of Donatus. What does it profit you not to have offended your Father, if he avenges your offended Mother? what does it serve you, if you acknowledge the Lord, honour God, preach His name, acknowledge His Son, confess that He sitteth by His right hand; while you blaspheme His Church? Does not the analogy of human marriages convince you? Suppose you have some patron, whom you court every day, whose threshold you wear with your visits, whom you daily not only salute, but even worship, to whom you pay the most loyal courtesy; if you utter one calumny against his wife, could you re-enter his house? Hold then, most beloved, hold all with one mind to God

the Father, and the Church our Mother. Celebrate with temperance the birthdays of the Saints, that we may imitate those who have gone before us, and that they who pray for you may rejoice over you; that the blessing of the Lord may abide on you for evermore. Amen and Amen.

PSALM 90

1. This Psalm is entitled, The prayer of Moses the man of God, through whom, His man, God gave the law to His people, through whom He freed them from the house of slavery, and led them forty years through the wilderness. Moses was therefore the Minister of the Old, and the Prophet of the New Testament. For all these things, saith the Apostle, happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the world are come. In accordance therefore with this dispensation which was vouchsafed to Moses, this Psalm is to be examined, as it has received its title from his prayer.

2. Ver. 1. Lord, he saith, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another: either in every generation, or in two generations, the old and new: because, as I said, he was the Minister of the Testament that related to the old generation, and the Prophet of the Testament which appertained to the new. Jesus Himself, the Surety of that covenant, and the Bridegroom in the marriage which He entered into in that generation, saith, Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. Now it is not to be believed that this Psalm was entirely the composition of that Moses, as it is not distinguished by any of those of his expressions which are used in his songs: but the name of the great servant of God is used for the sake of some intimation, which should direct the attention of the reader or listener. Lord, he saith, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to the other.

3. He adds, how He became our refuge, since He began to be that, viz. a refuge, to us which He had not been before, not that He had not existed before He became our refuge: (ver. 2.) Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made: and from age even unto age Thou art. Thou therefore Who art for ever, and before we were, and before the world was, hast become our refuge ever since we turned to Thee. But the expression, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the

earth and the world were made, seems to me to contain a particular meaning; for mountains are the higher parts of the earth, and if God was before even the earth were formed, (or, as some books have it, from the same Greek word, framed,) since it was by Him that it was formed, what is the need of saying that He was before the mountains, or any certain parts of it, since God was not only before the earth, but before heaven and earth, and even the whole bodily and spiritual creation? But it may certainly be that the whole rational creation is marked by this distinction; that while the loftiness of Angels is signified by the mountains, the lowliness of man is meant by the earth. And for this reason, although all the works of creation are not improperly said to be either made or formed; nevertheless, if there is any propriety in these words, the Angels are made; for as they are enumerated among His heavenly works, the enumeration itself is thus concluded: He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created; but the earth was formed, that man might thence be created in the body. For the Scripture uses this word, where we read, God made, or God formed man out of the dust of the ground. Before then the noblest parts of the creation (for what is higher than the rational part of the Heavenly creation) were made: before the earth was made, that Thou mightest have worshippers upon the earth; and even this is little, as all these had a beginning either in or with time; but from age to age Thou art. It would have been better, from everlasting to everlasting: for God, Who is before the ages, exists not from a certain age, nor to a certain age, which has an end, since He is without end. But it often happens in the Scripture, that the equivocal Greek word causes the Latin translator to put age for eternity and eternity for age. But he very rightly does not say, Thou wast from ages, and unto ages Thou shalt be: but puts the verb in the present, intimating that the substance of God is altogether immutable. It is not, He was, and Shall be, but only Is. Whence the expression, I am that I am; and, I am hath sent me unto you; and, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Behold then the eternity that is our refuge, that we may fly thither from the mutability of time, there to remain for evermore.

4. But as our life here is exposed to numerous and great temptations, and it is to be feared lest we may be turned aside by them from that refuge, let us

see what in consequence of this the prayer of the man of God seeks for. (Ver. 3.) Turn not Thou man to lowness: that is, Let not man, turned aside from Thy eternal and sublime things, lust for things of time, savour of earthly things. This prayer is what God has Himself enjoined us, in the Prayer, Lead us not into temptation, He adds, Again Thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men. As if he said, I ask of Thee what Thou hast commanded me to ask: giving glory to His grace, that he that glorieth, in the Lord he may glory: without Whose help we cannot by an exertion of our own will overcome the temptations of this life. Turn not Thou man to lowness: again thou sayest, Turn again, ye children of men. But grant what Thou hast enjoined, by hearing the prayer of him who can at least pray, and aiding the faith of the willing soul.

5. Ver. 4. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, which is past by: hence we ought to turn to Thy refuge, where Thou art without any change, from the fleeting scenes around us; since however long a time may be wished for for this life, a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday: not as to-morrow, which is to come: for all limited periods of time are reckoned as having already passed. Hence the Apostle's choice is rather to aim at what is before, that is, to desire things eternal, and to forget things behind, by which temporal matters should be understood. But that no one may imagine a thousand years are reckoned by God as one day, as if with God days were so long, when this is only said in contempt of the extent of time: he adds, and as a watch in the night: which only lasts three hours. Nevertheless men have ventured to assert their knowledge of times, to the pretenders to which our Lord said, It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power: and they allege that this period may be defined six thousand years, as of six days. Nor have they heeded the words, are but as one day which is past by: for, when this was uttered, not a thousand years only had passed, and the expression, as a watch in the night, ought to have warned them that they might not be deceived by the uncertainty of the seasons: for even if the six first days in which God finished His works seemed to give some plausibility to their opinion, six watches, which amount to eighteen hours, will not consist with that opinion.

6. Next, the man of God, or rather the Prophetic spirit, seems to be reciting some law written in the secret wisdom of God, in which He has fixed a limit to the sinful life of mortals, and determined the troubles of mortality, in the following words; (ver. 5.) Their years are as things which are nothing worth: in the morning let it fade away like the grass; in the morning as a herb let it pass by; in the evening let it fall, and be dried up, and withered. The happiness therefore of the heirs of the old covenant, which they asked of the Lord their God as a great boon, attained to receive this Law in His mysterious Providence. Moses seems to be reciting it; Their years shall be things which are esteemed as nothing. Such are those things which are not before they are come: and when come, shall soon not be: for they do not come to be here, but to be gone. (Ver. 6.) In the morning, that is, before they come, as a heat let it pass by; but in the evening, it means after they come, let it fall, and be dried up, and withered. It is to fall in death, be dried up in the corpse, withered in the dust. What is this but flesh, wherein is the accursed lust of fleshly things? For all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness of man as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of the Lord abideth for ever.

7. Making no secret that this fate is a penalty inflicted for sin, he adds at once, (ver. 7.) For we consume away in Thy displeasure, and are troubled at Thy wrathful indignation: we consume away in our weakness, and are troubled from the fear of death; for we are become weak, and yet fearful to end that weakness. Another, saith He, shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not: although not to be punished, but to be crowned, by martyrdom; and the soul of our Lord, transforming us into Himself, was sorrowful even unto death: for the Lord's going out is no other than in death.

8. Ver. 8. Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee: that is, Thou hast not dissembled Thine anger: and our age in the light of Thy countenance. The light of Thy countenance answers to before Thee, and to our misdeeds, as above.

9. Ver. 9. For all our days are failed, and in Thine anger we have failed. These words sufficiently prove, that our subjection to death is a punishment. He speaks of our days failing, either because men fail in them

from loving things that pass away, or because they are reduced to so small a number; which he asserts in the following lines; our years are spent in thought like a spider; (Ver. 10.) The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is more of them but labour and sorrow. These words appear to express the shortness and misery of this life: since those who have reached their seventieth year are styled old men. Up to eighty, however, they appear to have some strength; but if they live beyond this, their existence is laborious through multiplied sorrows. Yet many even below the age of seventy experience an old age the most infirm and wretched: and old men have often been found to be wonderfully vigorous even beyond eighty years. It is therefore better to search for some spiritual meaning in these numbers. For the anger of God is not greater on the sins of Adam, (through whom alone “sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men,”) because they live a much shorter time than the men of old; since even the length of their days is ridiculed in the comparison of a thousand years to yesterday that is past, and to three hours: especially since at the very time when they provoked the anger of God to send the deluge in which they perished, their life was at its longest span.

10. Moreover, seventy and eighty years equal a hundred and fifty; a number which the Psalms clearly insinuate to be a sacred one. One hundred and fifty have the same relative signification as fifteen, the latter number being composed of seven and eight together: the first of which points to the Old Testament through the observation of the Sabbath; the latter to the New, referring to the resurrection of our Lord. Hence the fifteen steps in the Temple. Hence in the Psalms, fifteen “songs of degrees.” Hence the waters of the deluge overtopped the highest mountains by fifteen cubits: and many other instances of the same nature. Our years are passed in thought like a spider. We were labouring in things corruptible, corruptible works we were weaving together: which, as the prophet Isaiah saith, by no means covered us: the days of our years are in themselves threescore and ten: but if in their strength they come to fourscore years. A distinction is here made between themselves and their strength: in themselves, that is, in the years or days themselves, may mean in temporal things, which are promised in the Old Testament, signified by the number seventy; but if not in themselves, but in

their strength, refers not to temporal things, but to things eternal, fourscore years, as the New Testament contains the hope of a new life and resurrection for evermore: and what is added, that if they pass this latter period, their strength is labour and sorrow, intimates that such shall be the fate of him who goes beyond this faith, and seeks for more. It may also be understood thus: because although we are established in the New Testament, which the number eighty signifies, yet still our life is one of labour and sorrow, while we groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; for we are saved by hope; and if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. This relates to the mercy of God, of which he proceeds to say, Since thy mercy cometh over us, and we shall be chastened: for “the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,” and to some mighty ones He giveth a thorn in the flesh, to buffet them, that they may not be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, so that strength be made perfect in weakness. Some copies read, we shall be taught, instead of chastened, which is equally expressive of the Divine Mercy; for no man can be taught without labour and sorrow; since strength is made perfect in weakness.

11. Ver. 11. For who knoweth the power of Thy wrath: and for the fear of Thee to number Thine anger? It belongs to very few men, he saith, to know the power of Thy wrath; for when Thou dost spare, Thy anger is so far heavier against most men; that we may know that labour and sorrow belong not to wrath, but rather to Thy mercy, when Thou chastenest and teachest those whom Thou lovest, to save them from the torments of eternal punishment: as it is said in another Psalm, “The sinner hath provoked the Lord: He will not require it of him according to the greatness of His wrath.” Who then knoweth the power of Thy wrath, or for the fear of Thee how to number Thine anger? With this also is understood, ‘Who knoweth?’ Such is the difficulty of finding any one who knoweth how to number Thine anger by Thy fear, that he adds this, meaning that it is to the purpose that Thou appearest to spare some, with whom Thou art more angry, that the sinner may be prospered in his path, and receive a heavier doom at the last. For when the power of human wrath hath killed the body, it hath nothing more to do: but God hath power both to punish here, and after the death of the

body to send into Hell, and by the few who are thus taught, the vain and seductive prosperity of the wicked is judged to be greater wrath of God. This he knew not, whose feet were almost gone, because he was grieved at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity, but he learnt it when he went into the sanctuary of God, and understood concerning the last things: that sanctuary which few enter, there to learn how to number the anger of God by His fear: and to reckon the prosperity of the wicked in the number of their punishments.

12. Ver. 12. Make Thy right hand so well known. This is the reading of most of the Greek copies: not of some in Latin, which is thus, Make Thy right hand well known to me. What is, make Thy right hand so well known, but Thy Christ, of Whom it is said, And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Make Him so well known, that Thy faithful may learn in Him to ask and to hope for those things rather of Thee as rewards of their faith, which do not appear in the Old Testament, but are revealed in the New: that they may not imagine that the happiness derived from earthly and temporal blessings is to be highly esteemed, desired, or loved, and thus their feet slip, when they see it in men who honour Thee not: that their steps may not give way, while they know not how to number Thine anger. Finally, in accordance with this prayer of the Man that is His, He has made His Christ so well known, as to shew by His sufferings that not those rewards which seem so highly prized in the Old Testament, where they are shadows of things to come, but things eternal, are to be desired. The right hand of God may also be understood in this sense, as that by which He will separate His saints from the wicked: because that hand becomes well known, when it scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, and suffers him not, in greater anger, to prosper in his sins, but in His mercy, scourgeth him with the left, that He may place him purified on His right hand. The reading of most copies, make Thy right hand well known to me, may be referred either to Christ, or to eternal happiness: for God has not a right hand in bodily shape, as He has not that anger which is aroused into violent passion.

13. But what he addeth, and those fettered in heart in wisdom; other copies read, instructed, not fettered: the Greek verb, expressing both senses, only differing by a single syllable. But since these also, as it is said, put their

“feet in the fetters” of wisdom, are taught wisdom, (he means the feet of the heart, not of the body,) and bound by its golden chains depart not from the path of God, and become not runaways from him; whichever reading we adopt, the truth in the meaning is safe. Them thus fettered, or instructed in heart in wisdom, God makes so well known in the New Testament, that they despised all things for the Faith which the impiety of Jews and Gentiles abhorred; and allowed themselves to be deprived of those things which in the Old Testament are thought high promises by those who judge after the flesh.

14. Ver. 13. And as when they became so well known, as to despise these things, and by setting their affections on things eternal, gave a testimony through their sufferings, (whence they are called witnesses or martyrs in the Greek,) they endured for a long while many bitter temporal afflictions. This man of God giveth heed to this, and the prophetic spirit under the name of Moses continues thus, Return, O Lord, how long? and be softened concerning Thy servants. These are the words of those, who, enduring many evils in that persecuting age, become known because their hearts are bound in the chain of wisdom, so firmly, that not even such hardships can induce them to fly from their Lord to the good things of this world. How long will Thou hide Thy face from me, O Lord? occurs in another Psalm, in unison with this sentence, Return, O Lord, how long? And that they who, in a most carnal spirit, ascribe to God the form of the human body, may know that the turning away and turning again of His countenance is not like those motions of our own frame, let them recollect these words from above in the same Psalm, Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee, and our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. How then does he say in this passage, Return, that God may be favourable, as if He had turned away His face in anger; when as in the former he speaks of God’s anger in such a manner, as to insinuate that He had not turned away His countenance from the misdeeds and the course of life of those He was angry with, but rather had set them before Him, and in the light of His countenance? The word, How long, belongs to righteousness beseeching, not indignant impatience. Be softened, some have rendered by a verb, soften. But be softened avoids an ambiguity; since to soften is a common verb: for he may be said to soften who pours

out prayers, and he to whom they are poured out: for we say, I soften thee, and I soften toward thee; ('deprecor te, et deprecor a te.')

15. Ver. 14, 15. Next, in anticipation of future blessings, of which he speaks as already vouchsafed, he says, We are satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning. Prophecy has thus been kindled for us, in the midst of these toils and sorrows of the night, like a lamp in the darkness, until day dawn, and the Day-star arise in our hearts. For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: then shall the righteous be filled with that blessing for which they hunger and thirst now, while, walking in faith, they are absent from the Lord. Hence are the words, In Thy presence is fulness of joy: and, Early in the morning they shall stand by, and shall look up: and as other translators have said it, We shall be satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; then they shall be satisfied. As he says elsewhere, I shall be satisfied, when Thy glory shall be revealed. So it is said, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us: and our Lord Himself answereth, I will manifest Myself to Zion; and until this promise is fulfilled, no blessing satisfies us, or ought to do so, lest our longings should be arrested in their course, when they ought to be increased until they gain their objects. We have been satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; and we rejoiced and were glad all the days of our life. Those days are days without end: they all exist together: it is thus they satisfy us: for they give not way to days succeeding: since there is nothing there which exists not yet because it has not reached us, or ceases to exist because it has passed; all are together: because there is one day only, which remains and passes not away: this is eternity itself. These are the days respecting which it is written, What man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good days? These days in another passage are styled years: where unto God it is said, But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail: for these are not years that are accounted for nothing, or days that perish like a shadow: but they are days which have a real existence, the number of which he who thus spoke, Lord, let me know mine end, (that is, after reaching what term I shall remain unchanged, and have no further blessing to crave,) and the number of my days, what it is: (what is, not what is not:) prayed to know. He distinguishes them from the days of this life, of which he speaks as follows, Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long, which are not, because they stand not, remain not, but change in quick succession: nor is

there a single hour in them in which our being is not such, but that one part of it has already passed, another is about to come, and none remains as it is. But those years and days, in which we too shall never fail, but evermore be refreshed, will never fail. Let our souls long earnestly for those days, let them thirst ardently for them, that there we may be filled, be satisfied, and say what we now say in anticipation, We have been satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; we have rejoiced and were glad all the days of our life. (Ver. 15.) We have been comforted again now, after the time that Thou hast brought us low, and for the years wherein we have seen evil.

16. But now in days that are as yet evil, let us speak as follows. (Ver. 16.) Look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works. For Thy servants themselves are Thy works, not only inasmuch as they are men, but as Thy servants, that is, obedient to Thy commands. For we are His workmanship, created not merely in Adam, but in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: for it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

And direct their sons: that they may be right in heart, for to such God is bountiful; for God is bountiful to Israel, to those that are right in heart. Unlike him whose feet had well-nigh slipped, because he began to be displeased at God while he looked upon the prosperity of the wicked, as if God Himself knew not, or cared not for, their sins, and would not undertake to govern the human race.

17. Ver. 17. And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us; whence the words, "O Lord, the light of Thy countenance is marked upon us." And, Make Thou straight the works of our hands upon us: that we may do them not for hope of earthly reward: for then they are not straight, but crooked. In many copies the Psalm goes thus far, but in some there is found an additional verse at the end, as follows, And make straight the work of our hands. To these words the learned have prefixed a star, called an asterisk, to shew that they are found in the Hebrew, or in some other Greek translations, but not in the Septuagint. The meaning of this verse, if we are to expound it, appears to me this, that all our good works are one work of love: for love is the fulfilling of the Law. For as in the former verse he had said, And the works of our hands make Thou straight upon us, here he says work, not

works, as if anxious to shew, in the last verse, that all our works are one, that is, are directed with a view to one work. For then are works righteous, when they are directed to this one end: for the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. There is therefore one work, in which are all, faith which worketh by love: whence our Lord's words in the Gospel, This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him Whom He hath sent. Since, therefore, in this Psalm, both old and new life, life both mortal and everlasting, years that are counted for nought, and years that have the fulness of lovingkindness and of true joy, that is, the penalty of the first and the reign of the Second Man, are marked so very clearly; I imagine, that the name of Moses, the man of God, became the title of the Psalm, that pious and rightminded readers of the Scriptures might gain an intimation that the Mosaic laws, in which God appears to promise only, or nearly only, earthly rewards for good works, without doubt contains under a veil some such hopes as this Psalm displays. But when any one has passed over to Christ, the veil will be taken away: and his eyes will be unveiled, that he may consider the wonderful things in the law of God, by the gift of Him, to Whom we pray, Open Thou mine eyes, and I shall see the wondrous things of Thy law.

PSALM 91

first sermon

This Psalm is that from which the devil dared to tempt our Lord Jesus Christ: let us therefore attend to it, that thus armed, we may be enabled to resist the tempter, not presuming in ourselves, but in Him Who before us was tempted, that we might not be overcome when tempted. Temptation to Him was not necessary: the temptation of Christ is our learning, but if we listen to His answers to the devil, in order that, when ourselves are tempted, we may answer in like manner, we are then entering through the gate, as ye have heard it read in the Gospel. For what is to enter by the gate? To enter by Christ, Who Himself said, I am the door: and to enter through Christ, is to imitate His ways. And how are we to imitate the ways of Christ? Are we to imitate Him in the glorious power which He had as God in the flesh? is it to this that He exhorts us, this that He requires of us, that we should work such miracles as He wrought? Or does not our Lord Jesus Christ both now and evermore govern the universe with the Father? Is it to govern heaven and earth, and all that are in them, with Him, that He calls man, or that man too may become a creator, through whom all things may be created, as all things were through Christ? Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ invites you neither to those works, which He did from the beginning, of which it is written, By Him all things were made: nor to those which He performed on earth. He tells you not this: Thou shalt not be My disciple, unless thou hast walked upon the waves, or raised him who was four days dead, or opened the eyes of the born blind. Not this either. What is it then to enter by the door? Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. What He became on thy account, that thou shouldest attend to in Him, that thou mayest imitate Him. Even before He was born of Mary He wrought miracles, for who ever worked them except He of Whom it is said, He only doeth wondrous things. For it was by His power that those, who in former days worked miracles,

were enabled to do so: by the power of Christ, Elias raised the dead. Unless indeed we are to suppose Peter greater than Christ, because Christ with His voice raised the sick; while, when Peter was passing by, the sick were brought out to be touched by his shadow. And yet can it be said that Peter is more mighty than Christ? Why then had Peter such power? Because Christ was in Peter. Hence our Saviour's words, All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; meaning, that those who came on a mission of their own, were not sent by Me, they came without Me, I was not in them, nor did I introduce them; all the miracles therefore wrought either by His predecessors or successors, were the work of the same Lord Christ, Who performed miracles when He was Himself present. Neither then does He exhort us to imitate those miracles which He worked before He became Man: but He urges us to imitate Him in those works which He could not have done had He not been made Man; for how could He endure sufferings, unless He had become a Man? How could He otherwise have died, been crucified, been humbled? Thus then do thou, when thou sufferest the troubles of this world, which the devil, openly by men, or secretly, as in Job's case, inflicts; be courageous, be of long suffering thou shalt dwell under the defence of the Most High, as this Psalm expresses it: for if thou depart from the help of the Most High, without strength to aid thyself, thou wilt fall.

2. For many men are brave, when they are enduring persecution from men, and see them openly rage against themselves: imagining they are then imitating the sufferings of Christ, in case men openly persecute them; but if assailed by the hidden attack of the devil, they believe they are not being crowned by Christ. Never fear when thou dost imitate Christ. For when the devil tempted our Lord, there was no man in the wilderness; he tempted Him secretly; but he was conquered, and conquered too when openly attacking Him. This do thou, if thou wishest to enter by the door, when the enemy secretly assails thee, when he asks for a man that he may do him some hurt by bodily troubles, by fever, by sickness, or any other bodily sufferings, like those of Job. He saw not the devil, yet he acknowledged the power of God. He knew that the devil had no power against him, unless from the Almighty Ruler of all things he received that power: the whole glory he gave to God, power to the devil he gave not. For when the devil

robbed him of all things, these were his words, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; he said not, The Lord gave, and the devil hath taken away: since the devil could have taken nothing from him, had not the Lord permitted him. And for this cause God allowed him, that the man might be tried, and the devil conquered. When he struck him with a blow, it was by God's leave. Even when from head to foot he was wasted by worms, not even then did he attribute any power to the devil: but when his wife, whom alone the devil had left, not as the consoler of her husband, but his own helper, advised him thus, Say some word against God, and die: he replied, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. If we have received good at the hands of God, shall we not endure evil?

3. He then who so imitates Christ as to endure all the troubles of this world, with his hopes set upon God, that he falls into no snare, is broken down by no panic fears, he it is (ver. 1, 2.) who dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, who shall abide under the protection of God, in the words with which the Psalm, which you have heard and sung, begins. You will recognise the words, so well known, in which the devil tempted our Lord, when we come to them. He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my taker up, and my refuge: my God. Who speaks thus to the Lord? He who dwelleth under the defence of the Most High: not under his own defence. Who is this? He dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, who is not proud, like those who ate, that they might become as Gods, and lost the immortality in which they were made. For they chose to dwell under a defence of their own, not under that of the Most High: thus they listened to the suggestions of the serpent, and despised the precept of God: and discovered at last that what God threatened, not what the devil promised, had come to pass in them.

4. (Ver. 3.) Thus then do thou say also, In Him will I trust. For He Himself shall deliver me, not I myself. Observe whether he teaches any thing but this, that all our trust be in God, none in man. Whence shall he deliver thee? From the snare of the hunter, and from a harsh word. Deliverance from the hunter's net is indeed a great blessing: but how is deliverance from a harsh word so? Many have fallen into the hunter's net through a harsh word. What is it that I say? The devil and his angels spread their snares, as hunters

do: and those who walk in Christ tread afar from those snares: for he dares not spread his net in Christ: he sets it on the verge of the way, not in the way. Let then thy way be Christ, and thou shalt not fall into the snares of the devil: when thou wanderest from the way, there is the snare: on this side and that he sets his nooses, on this side and that his snares: among those nooses lies thy path. But dost thou wish to tread in safety? Turn not ever so slightly right or left: and let Him be thy way Who was made thy Way, that through Himself He may lead thee to Himself, and thou shalt not dread the nooses of the hunters.

But what is, from a harsh word? The devil has entrapped many by a harsh word: for instance, those who profess Christianity among Pagans suffer insult from the heathen: they blush when they hear reproach, and shrinking out of their path in consequence, fall into the hunter's snares. And yet what will a harsh word do to you? Nothing. Can the snares with which the enemy entraps you by means of reproaches, do nothing to you? Nets are usually spread for birds at the end of a hedge, and stones are thrown into the hedge: those stones will not harm the birds. When did any one ever hit a bird by throwing a stone into a hedge? But the bird, frightened at the harmless noise, falls into the nets; and thus men who fear the vain reproaches of their calumniators, and who blush at unprovoked insults, fall into the snares of the hunters, and are taken captive by the devil. Yet why, my brethren, do I refrain from saying, what God urges me to say, and what I must not pass unsaid? However you may receive it, God compels me to say it: unless I say it, I fall into the snares of the hunters; for if fear of man's detraction hinder me from stating it, I am myself for fear of a harsh word falling into the snares, while I am admonishing you not to fear the words of men. What is it then that I have to tell you? Just as among the heathen, the Christian who fears their reproaches falls into the snare of the hunter: so among the Christians, those who endeavour to be more diligent and better than the rest, are doomed to bear insults from Christians themselves. What then doth it profit, my brother, if thou occasionally find a city in which there is no heathen? No one there insults a man because he is a Christian, for this reason, that there is no Pagan therein: but there are many Christians who lead a bad life, among whom those who are resolved to live righteously, and to be sober among the drunken, and chaste among the unchaste, and amid

the consulters of astrologers sincerely to worship God, and to ask after no such things, and among spectators of frivolous shows will go only to church, suffer from those very Christians reproaches, and harsh words, when they address such a one, 'Thou art the mighty, the righteous, thou art Elias, thou art Peter: thou hast come from heaven.' They insult him: whichever way he turns, he hears harsh sayings on each side: and if he fears, and abandons the way of Christ, he falls into the snares of the hunters. But what is it, when he hears such words, not to swerve from the way? On hearing them, what comfort has he, which prevents his heeding them, and enables him to enter by the door? Let him say; What words am I called, who am a servant and a sinner? To my Lord Jesus they said, Thou hast a devil. You have just heard the harsh words spoken against our Lord: it was not necessary for our Lord to suffer this, but in doing so He has warned thee against harsh words, lest thou fall into the snares of the hunters.

5. (Ver. 4.) He shall defend thee between His shoulders, and thou shalt hope under His wings. He says this, that thy protection may not be to thee from thyself, that thou mayest not imagine that thou canst defend thyself; He will defend thee, to deliver thee from the hunter's snare, and from an harsh word. The expression, between His shoulders, may be understood both in front and behind: for the shoulders are about the head; but in the words, 'thou shalt hope under His wings,' it is clear that the protection of the wings of God expanded places thee between His shoulders, so that God's wings on this side and that have thee in the midst, where thou shalt not fear lest any one hurt thee: only be thou careful never to leave that spot, where no foe dares approach. If the hen defends her chickens beneath her wings; how much more shalt thou be safe beneath the wings of God, even against the devil and his angels, the powers who fly about in mid air like hawks, to carry off the weak young one? For the comparison of the hen to the very Wisdom of God is not without ground; for Christ Himself, our Lord and Saviour, speaks of Himself as likened to a hen; O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not. That Jerusalem would not: let us be willing. She, when she abandoned her hen's wings, was carried off by the powers of the air, presuming on her own strength, when she was weak: let us, confessing our want of strength, fly to the shelter of God's wings: for

He will be to us as a hen defending her young. There is nothing offensive in the name of the hen: for if you consider other birds, brethren, you will find many that hatch their eggs, and keep their young warm: but none that weakens herself in sympathy with her chickens, as the hen does. We see swallows, sparrows, and storks outside their nests, without being able to decide whether they have young or no: but we know the hen to be a mother by the weakness of her voice, and the loosening of her feathers: she changes altogether from love for her chickens: she weakens herself because they are weak. Thus since we were weak, the Wisdom of God made Itself weak, when the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us, that we might hope under His wings.

6. (Ver. 4–6.) His truth shall surround thee with a shield. What are the wings, the same is the shield: since there are neither wings nor shield. If either were literally, how could the one be the same as the other? can wings be a shield or a shield wings? But all these expressions, indeed, are figuratively used through likenesses. If Christ were really a Stone, He could not be a Lion; if a Lion, He could not be a Lamb: but He is called both Lion, and Lamb, and Stone, and Calf, and any thing else of the sort, metaphorically, because He is neither Stone, nor Lion, nor Lamb, nor Calf, but Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all of us, for these are likenesses, not literal names. His truth shall be thy shield, it is said: a shield to assure us that He will not confound those whose trust is in themselves with those who hope in God. One is a sinner, and the other a sinner: but suppose one that presumes upon himself, is a despiser, confesses not his sins, and he will say, if my sins displeased God, He would not suffer me to live. But another dared not even raise his eyes, but beat upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. Both this was a sinner, and that: but the one mocked, the other mourned: the one was a despiser, the other a confessor, of his sins. But the truth of God, which respects not persons, discerns the penitent from him who denies his sin, the humble from the proud, him who presumes upon himself from him who presumes on God. His truth, then, shall surround thee with a shield.

7. Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the matter that walketh in darkness, nor for the ruin and

the devil that is in the noon-day. These two clauses above correspond to the two below; Thou shalt not fear for the terror by night, from the arrow that flieth by day: both because of the terror by night, from the matter that walketh in darkness: and because of the arrow that flieth by day, from the ruin of the devil of the noon-day. What ought to be feared by night, and what by day? When any man sins in ignorance, he sins, as it were, by night: when he sins in full knowledge, by day. The two former sins then are the lighter: the second are much heavier; but this is obscure, and will repay your attention, if, by God's blessing, I can explain it so that you may understand it. He calls the light temptation, which the ignorant yield to, terror by night: the light temptation, which assails men who well know, the arrow that flieth by day. What are light temptations? Those which do not press upon us so urgently, as to overcome us, but may pass by quickly if declined. Suppose these, again, heavy ones. If the persecutor threatens, and frightens the ignorant grievously, I mean those whose faith is as yet unstable, and know not that they are Christians that they may hope for a life to come; as soon as they are alarmed with temporal ills, they imagine that Christ has forsaken them, and that they are Christians to no purpose; they are not aware that they are Christians for this reason, that they may conquer the present, and hope for the future: the matter that walketh in darkness has found and seized them. But some there are who know that they are called to a future hope; that what God has promised is not of this life, or this earth; that all these temptations must be endured, that we may receive what God hath promised us for evermore; all this they know: when however the persecutor urges them more strenuously, and plies them with threats, penalties, tortures, at length they yield, and although they are well aware of their sin, yet they fall as it were by day.

8. But why does he say, at noon-day? The persecution is very hot; and thus the noon signifies the excessive heat. My beloved brethren, hear me prove this from the Scriptures. When our Lord was speaking of the sower who went forth to sow, and some of the seeds fell by the way-side, some upon stony places, and some among thorns, He condescended to explain the parable Himself; and when He came to the seed which fell on the stony places, He said thus, He that received the seed into stony places, the same are they that hear the word, and for a while rejoice at the word; and when

tribulation ariseth because of the word, by and by they are offended. For what had He said of the seed which fell in these places? When the sun was up, He saith, they were scorched; and because they had no deep root, they withered away. These then are they who for a while rejoice at the word, and when persecution hath arisen because of the word, they wither. Why do they wither? Because they had no firm root. What is that root? Love: in the Apostle's words, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love; for, as the love of money is the root of all evil, so is love the root of all good. This ye know, and I have often repeated it; but why have I wished to call it to mind? That ye may understand this Psalm, in which the demon that is in the noon-day, represents the heat of a furious persecution: for these are our Lord's words, The sun was up; and because they had no root, they withered away: and when explaining it, He applies it to those who are offended when persecution ariseth, because they have not root in themselves. We are therefore right in understanding by the demon that destroyeth in the noon-day, a violent persecution. Listen, beloved, while I describe the persecution, from which the Lord hath rescued His Church. At first, when the emperors and kings of the world imagined that they could extirpate from the earth the Christian name by persecution, they proclaimed, that any one who confessed himself a Christian, should be smitten. He who did not choose to be smitten, denied that he was a Christian, knowing the sin he was committing: the arrow that flieth by day reached him. But whoever regarded not the present life, but had a sure trust in a future one, avoided the arrow, by confessing himself a Christian; smitten in the flesh, he was liberated in the spirit: resting with God, he began peacefully to await the redemption of his body in the resurrection of the dead: he escaped from that temptation, from the arrow that flieth by day. "Whoever professes himself a Christian, let him be beheaded;" was as the arrow that flieth by day. The devil that is in the noon-day was not yet abroad, burning with a terrible persecution, and afflicting with great heat even the strong. For hear what followed; when the enemy saw that many were hastening to martyrdom, and that the number of fresh converts increased in proportion to that of the sufferers, they said among themselves, We shall annihilate the human race, so many thousands are there who believe in His Name; if we kill all of them, there will hardly be a survivor on earth. The sun then began to blaze, and to glow with a terrible heat. Their first edict had been, Whoever shall

confess himself a Christian, let him be smitten. Their second was, Whoever shall have confessed himself a Christian, let him be tortured, and tortured even until he deny himself a Christian. Compare the arrow that flieth by day, and the devil that destroyeth at the noon. What was the arrow flying by day? that any confessing Christian should be smitten. What faithful believer would not avoid the arrow by a speedy death? But the second, viz. If he confess himself a Christian, let him not be slain, but tortured until he deny: if he deny, let him be dismissed: was the demon of the noon. Many therefore who denied not, failed amid the tortures; for they were tortured until they denied. But to those who persevered in professing Christ, what could the sword do, by killing the body at one stroke, and sending the soul to God? This was the result of protracted tortures also: yet who could be found able to resist such cruel and continued torments? Many failed: those, I believe, who presumed upon themselves, who dwelt not under the defence of the Most High, and under the shadow of the God of Heaven; who said not to the Lord, Thou art my lifter up: who trusted not beneath the shadow of His wings, but reposed much confidence in their own strength. They are thrown down by God, to shew them that it is He that protects them, He overrules their temptations, He allows so much only to befall them, as each person can sustain.

9. (Ver. 7.) Many then fell before the demon of the noon-day. Would ye know how many? He goes on, and says, A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. To whom, brethren, but to Christ Jesus, is this said? For our Lord Jesus is not only in Himself, but in us also. Remember those words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? when no one touched Him, and yet He said, why persecutest thou Me? did He not account Himself in us? when He said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me, did He not account Himself as in us? For the members, the body, and the head, are not separate from one another: the body and the head are the Church and her Saviour. How then is it said, A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand by thy right hand? Because they shall fall before the devil, that destroyeth at noon. It is a terrible thing, my brethren, to fall from beside Christ, from His right hand; but how shall they fall from beside Him? Why the one beside Him, the other at His right

hand? Why a thousand beside Him, ten thousand at His right hand? Why a thousand beside Him? Because a thousand are fewer than the ten thousand who shall fall at His right hand. Who these are will soon be clear in Christ's name; for to some He promised that they should judge with Him, namely, to the Apostles, who left all things, and followed Him. Peter said to Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee: and He gave them this promise, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Do not imagine that it was to them alone that this promise was made; for where, in that case, will the Apostle Paul sit, who laboured more abundantly than they all, if only twelve shall sit there? For St. Paul is the thirteenth: since out of the twelve, Judas fell, and in his place Matthias was ordained, as we find in the Acts of the Apostles. Thus the twelve thrones were filled up; but shall not he, who laboured more than all, have a seat? Or is the number twelve the perfection of the tribunal? For thousands shall sit in twelve seats. But some one may possibly ask, How do you prove to me that Paul will be among the judges? Hear his own words; Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? Thus he did not hesitate to account himself in the fulness of his faith among those who shall judge with Christ. Those judges then are the heads of the Church, the perfect. To such He said, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor. What means the expression, if thou wilt be perfect? it means, if thou wilt judge with Me, and not be judged. That young man went away very sorrowful: but many have done, and are doing this command: and these are they who shall judge with Him. But many promise themselves they shall judge with Christ, because they forsake all, and follow Christ: but they have a self-presumption, a certain swelling and pride, which God alone can discern, and they cannot escape the sickness of the noon-day, that is, the fall caused by the glowing heat of a too severe persecution. Many such at that period, who had distributed their all to the poor, and already promised themselves a seat beside Christ in judgment of the nations, failed amid their torments under the blazing fire of persecution, as before the demon of the noon-day, and denied Christ. These are they who have fallen beside Him: when about to sit with Christ for the judgment of the world, they fell.

10. I will now explain who are they who fall on the right hand of Christ. Ye know that when the judgment-seat is described, where those who have

willed to be and actually become perfect, rooted and grounded in love, so that they cannot wither from the sun and the demon of the noon-day, shall judge with Christ, our Lord saith, Before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on the left; and they shall be judged. There will be many who shall judge, but they will be fewer than those who will stand before the tribunal; the latter will be as ten thousand, the former as a thousand. What will He say to those placed on His right hand? I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; it is clear that these words will be addressed to those who have enough of this world's riches to discharge those humane offices. Yet both will reign together: for the one are as soldiers, the other as the provincial pay-masters who give the soldiers their supplies: both the soldier and the provincial, nevertheless, act under the same Emperor. The soldier is brave, the provincial devoted to his duties; the brave soldier fights with his prayers against the devil, the devoted provincial provides the soldier with his pay. Those placed on the right hand shall hear at last these words, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. There were then many, at that time when the sun of persecution and the demon of the noon-day glowed with terrible heat, there were many, who promised themselves that they should judge with Christ; yet they could not sustain the heat of persecution, and fell from beside Him; there were others there, who did not promise themselves the judicial seat; but through their works of charity promised themselves a place on the right hand of Christ, among those to whom He would say, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And because many have fallen from that hope of being judges, but yet many, many more from that of being on His right hand, the Psalmist thus addresses Christ, A thousand shall fall beside Thee, and ten thousand at Thy right hand. And since there shall be many, who regarded not all these things, with whom, as it were with His own limbs, Christ is one, he adds, But it shall not come nigh Thee. Were these words addressed to the Head alone? Surely not; surely neither (doth it come nigh) to Paul, nor Peter, nor all the Apostles, nor all the Martyrs, who failed not in their torments. What then do the words, it shall not come nigh, mean? Why were they thus tortured? The

torture came nigh the flesh, but it did not reach the region of faith. Their faith then was far beyond the reach of the terrors threatened by their torturers. Let them torture, terror will not come nigh; let them torture, but they will mock the torture, putting their trust in Him who conquered before them, that the rest might conquer. And who conquer, except they who trust not in themselves? Attend, my beloved; for all he has said above refers to this. He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my upholder and my refuge: and in Him will I trust. For He shall deliver me from the snare of the hunter. "He shall deliver me," not I myself. He shall defend thee between His shoulders: but when? when thou shalt trust beneath His wings: His truth shall encompass thee with a shield. Because, then, thou hast trusted in Him, and reposed all thy hopes in Him, what follows? Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the matter that walketh in darkness, nor for the downfall and the devil that is in the noon-day. Who will not fear? He who trusts not in himself, but in Christ. But those who trust in themselves, although they even hope to judge at the side of Christ, although they hoped they should be at His right hand, as if He said to them, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; yet the devil that is at noon overtook them, the raging heat of persecution, terrifying with violence; and many fell from the hope of the seat of judgment, of whom it is said, A thousand shall fall beside thee; many too fell from the hope of reward for their duties, of whom it was said, And ten thousand at thy right hand. But this downfall and devil that is at noon-day shall not come nigh thee, that is, the Head and the body; for the Lord knows who are His.

11. Ver. 8. Nevertheless, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly. What is this? Why nevertheless? Because the wicked were allowed to tyrannize over Thy servants, and to persecute them. Will they then have been allowed to persecute Thy servants with impunity? Not with impunity, for although Thou hast permitted them, and Thine own have thence received a brighter crown, nevertheless, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly. For the evil which they willed, not the good they unconsciously were the agents of, will be recompensed them. All that is wanting is the eye of faith, by which we may see that they are raised for a time only, while they shall mourn for evermore; and to those

into whose hands is given temporal power over the servants of God, it shall be said, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. But if every man have but eyes in the sense in which it is said, With thine eyes shalt thou behold, it is no unimportant thing to look upon the wicked flourishing in this life, and to have an eye to him, to consider what will become of him in the end, if he fail to reform his ways: for those who now would thunder upon others, will afterwards feel the thunderbolt themselves. Nevertheless, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly.

12. Ver. 9. For Thou, Lord, art my hope. He has now come to the power which rescues him from falling by the downfall and the devil of the noon-day. For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thy house of defence very high. What do the words very high mean? For many make their house of defence in God a mere refuge from temporal persecution; but the defence of God is on high, and very secret, whither thou mayest fly from the wrath to come. Within Thou hast set thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil happen unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. For He shall give His Angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. They shall bear Thee in their hands: that Thou hurt not Thy foot against a stone. These are the very words which the devil said to our Lord when he tempted Him; but as they demand very careful consideration, let us defer them and the latter part of this Psalm until to-morrow, (as we owe you a discourse for to-morrow also,) to begin again at the same place, in order to avoid fatiguing you; lest, when we are anxious to clear up an obscure passage, any haste on our part may hinder your understanding it.

second discourse

1. I doubt not that you remember, beloved, such of you as were present yesterday at my sermon, that the shortness of time prevented my concluding the exposition of the Psalm, a part of which was thus deferred until this day. You who were here yesterday, remember this; you who were not, may now know it. On this account I have caused to be read to you the chapter in the Gospel, wherein our Lord was tempted from the words of this Psalm. On this account Christ was tempted, that the Christian may not be overcome by the tempter: He, as the Master, willed to be tempted in all things, because

we are tempted: just as He willed to die, because we die: as He willed to rise again, since we too shall rise again. For all those works which He shewed forth in humanity, Who was made Man for us, He shewed forth on our account, since He was God, through Whom we were made. And we have often impressed upon you, beloved, what we do not fear to reiterate frequently: in order that, since many of you possibly cannot read, either because they have no leisure, or know not letters, at least by constantly listening they may not forget their healthful faith. Certainly, by repeating them we may appear troublesome to some, while however we may be building up others. For we are well assured that there are many of retentive memory, and careful reading in Holy Writ, who know what we are about to say; and perhaps they wish us to say what they do not know. But if they are quicker, let them see that they are travelling with others not so quick; for when two persons of different speed are travelling in company, it is in the power of the quicker, and not of him who is more slow, to give or to deny his company; because if the swifter is pleased to do his utmost, the slower will not keep up with him, and so he must needs rein in his own speed, in order not to leave his fellow-traveller behind. What I have so often said, and now repeat, the Apostle says, To write the same things to you is not grievous, but for you it is safe,—is this. Our Lord Jesus Christ is as one whole perfect Man, both Head and Body: we acknowledge the Head in that Man Who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried, arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, whence we await His coming as Judge of the quick and the dead. This is the Head of the Church. The Body of this Head is the Church; not the Church of this country only, but of the whole world as well: not that of this age only, but from Abel himself down to those who shall to the end be born and believe in Christ, the whole assembly of the Saints, belonging to one city; which city is Christ's body, of which Christ is the Head. There, too, dwell the Angels, who are our fellow-citizens: we toil, because we are as yet pilgrims: while they within that city are awaiting our arrival. Letters have reached us too from that city, apart from which we are wandering: those letters are the Scriptures, which exhort us to live well. Why do I speak of letters only? The King himself descended, and became a path to us in our wanderings: that walking in Him, we may neither stray, nor faint nor fall among robbers, nor be caught in the snares which are set near our path. This

character, then, we recognise in the whole Person of Christ, together with the Church: Himself alone born of the Virgin, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, Mediator between God and man: Mediator for this purpose, that He may reconcile by Himself those who had fallen back: for a mediator is only between two persons. We had fallen away from the Majesty of God, and by our sins offended Him; His Son was sent as our Mediator, who by His blood might atone for our sins, by which we were separated from God: and placing Himself between us and the Almighty, might restore and reconcile us to Him, having turned away from Whom, we were held bound in our sins. He Himself is our Head, He is God, co-equal with the Father, the Word of God, by Whom all things were made: but God to create, Man to renew; God to make, Man to restore. Looking upon Him, then, let us hear the Psalm. Listen, beloved. This is the teaching and doctrine of this school, which may enable you to understand, not this Psalm only, but many, if ye keep in mind this rule. Sometimes a Psalm, and all prophecy as well, in speaking of Christ, praises the Head alone, and sometimes from the Head goes to the Body, that is, the Church, and without apparently changing the Person spoken of: because the Head is not separate from the Body, and both are spoken of as one. For observe, beloved, what I say. Clear, assuredly, to all is the Psalm in which it is said of our Lord, They pierced My hands and My feet: they numbered all My bones: they parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Even the Jews when they hear this are confounded: so evidently is it a prophecy of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. But our Lord Jesus Christ had no sins: yet in the commencement of that Psalm it is said, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me; and art so far from my health, and the words of my complaint? Ye see then what is said in the character of the Head, what in that of the Body. The sins belong to us: the suffering for us belongeth to the Head: but on account of His suffering for us, the sins which belong to us are remitted. Thus also it is in this Psalm.

2. I have treated of the first verses yesterday: but let us briefly run over them. (Ver. 1.) Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I took occasion, beloved brethren, to exhort you from these verses to put no trust in yourselves, but all in Him in Whom is our strength, for it is by means of His aid that we conquer, not

by presuming in ourselves. The God of Heaven therefore defends us, if we say to the Lord what follows. (Ver. 2.) He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope and my strong hold: my God, in Him will I trust. (Ver. 3.) For he shall deliver thee from the snares of the hunter: and from a harsh word. I said, that many fearing a harsh word have fallen into the hunter's snares; a man is insulted because he is a Christian, he becomes ashamed of his profession, and by means of a harsh word he falls into the snares of the devil. Again, a man is insulted, because among many Christians he lives a better life than they: and fearing the hard words of his insulting foe, he becomes a prey to the devil's snares, so that he is not wheat on the floor, but rather follows the chaff. But he who trusts in God, is rescued from the snare of the hunters, and from the harsh word. But in what manner does God defend thee? He shall defend thee between His shoulders; that is, He will place thee before His breast, that He may defend thee under His wings: if thou acknowledge thy weakness, in order that as a weak chicken thou mayest fly beneath the wings of thy mother, lest thou be seized by the kite; for the powers of the air, the devil and his angels, are kites, and their wish is to seize upon our weakness. Let us then fly beneath the wings of our Mother the Divine Wisdom, since that Wisdom voluntarily weakened Herself on our behalf, when the Word was made flesh. Just as the hen weakeneth herself together with her chickens, that she may defend them beneath her wings: so our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, in order that He might undergo weakness with us, and protect us under His wings; made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man.

And thou shalt be safe under His wings: His truth shall encompass thee with a shield and buckler. (Ver. 5.) Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night. The temptations of ignorance are the terror by night: the sins of knowledge are the arrow that flieth by day: for ignorance is understood by night, and the making manifest by day. Some sin through ignorance, others with full knowledge: they that sin ignorantly are overthrown by the terror by night: they that sin with knowledge are stricken by the arrow that flieth by day. And as these things happen in the heavier persecutions, the further we advance, as if towards the noon, whoever falls under that heat will fall

as it were by the devil that is at noon-day. And many have fallen by this heat, as I yesterday explained to you, my beloved, because in the heat of the persecution it was proclaimed, Let the Christians be tortured, until they deny themselves Christians. Whereas before when they confessed they were beheaded, they were afterwards tortured to make them deny: and as every one that was accused was tortured, until he denied, the confession of Christians was tortured, their denial acquitted. Great then was the fury of the persecutors. Whoever fell under that temptation, fell by the devil that was of the noon. And how many did fall! Many who were hoping that they might share their Lord's judgment-seat, fell from beside Him. Many too who hoped they should be on His right hand, as provincial paymasters among the holy soldiers of the Cross, to whom it should be said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat, (for there will be many on His right hand,) have fallen from that hope, and more of these than of those who hoped for the judgment-seat. For they are the fewer that shall judge with the Lord, and the more that shall stand before Him. But those who shall stand before Him, will be in different conditions. For some shall be on the left, others on the right: some that they may reign, others that they may be punished: some that they may hear the words, Come, ye blessed of My Father: others, that they may be addressed thus, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Of those then who fall by the downfall and the demon of the noon-day, A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand by thy right hand. But it shall not come nigh thee. What is this? The devil of the noon-day overthrows not thee. What wonder if it overthrow not the Head? But it overthrows not those either who hold so close to the Head, as the Apostle says, The Lord knoweth them that are His. For there are some so predestined, that the Lord knoweth who belong to His own body. Since then that temptation shall not approach them in such force as to overwhelm them, it is said concerning them, but it shall not come nigh thee. But lest those sinners who were allowed to practise such cruelties against the Christians, may be attended to by some weak persons, and lest it be said, Lo, what is the will of God, that such power is given to ungodly and wicked men against His servants? Consider a little with thy eyes, the eyes of faith, and thou shalt see the retribution upon sinners in the end, to whom at present only sufficient power is given to try thy faith. For these

words follow: Yea, with thine eyes thou shalt behold, and see the reward of the ungodly.

3. Ver. 9–12. Because Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil come near unto Thee. These words are addressed to our Lord; Because Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil come near unto Thee: neither shall any scourge come nigh Thy dwelling. Next follow the words which ye have heard spoken by the devil: For He hath given His Angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. They shall bear Thee in their hands, that Thou hurt not Thy foot against a stone. To whom does he say this? To whom did he say For Thou, Lord, art my help? I suppose it is no longer needful to explain to Christians who is the Lord in this passage. If they understand by it God the Father, how shall the Angels bear Him in their hands, lest He hurt His foot against a stone? You see this also, that our Lord Christ, when He was speaking of the body, suddenly begins to speak of the Head. Our Head is spoken of in one passage, in the words, For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. For this cause, Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high, because Thou, Lord, art my hope. What means this? Attend, my beloved: Because Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. We need no longer wonder what the meaning of this is: for in the following verse it is added, that, because Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high, there shall no evil come near unto Thee: neither shall any scourge come nigh Thy dwelling. But we do not read in the Gospel, that at any time the Angels bore our Lord, that He might not hurt His foot against a stone: and yet we understand this. For these things have already past: and were prophesied with reason, since they were to happen. And we cannot say, Christ will come later, so that He may not strike His foot against a stone: for He will come to judge. Wherein then is the prophecy fulfilled? Attend, my beloved.

4. First listen to these verses: For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. The human race knew that man died, but did not know that he arose again: it had therefore reason for fear, but not for hope. In order that He, then, Who for discipline awed them with the fear of death, might give them the hope of resurrection for the reward of eternal

life, our Lord Jesus Christ was the first to rise from the dead. He died after many: He arose before all: He suffered that in dying, which many suffered before Him: He did that in His resurrection, which no one did before Him: for when will the Church receive this, except in the end? What the members are to hope, has gone before in the Head: you know well, my beloved, their way of speaking with one another. Let then the Church say unto her Lord Jesus Christ, let the body say to its Head, For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high: that is, Thou hast risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, that by ascending Thou mightest set Thine house of defence very high, and become my hope, when I despaired on earth, and believed not that I should rise again; I now believe, because my Head has ascended into heaven: where the Head has gone before, the limbs will in course follow. I imagine these words are now clear: they may be more clearly paraphrased thus. Thou hast arisen from the dead before me, that I might have a hope of resurrection which I had not before, so that I might hope I should follow Thee, whither Thou hast gone before me. These are the words of the Church to her Lord, of the body to its Head.

5. Do not then wonder if no evil shall happen unto thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. The flesh is the Lord's tabernacle. The Word dwelt in the flesh, and the flesh became a tabernacle for God: in that very tent our Chief carried on war on our behalf: in that very tent He was tempted by the enemy, lest His soldiers should faint. And because He shewed that very flesh to our eyes, because our eyes rejoice in that light, and are delighted with that visible illumination, because He made His flesh manifest to the eyes of all men, a Psalm says, He hath set His tabernacle in the sun. What is, in the sun? Openly, clearly, in the light of this world; that is, in the light which overspread the earth from heaven, there He hath placed His dwelling. But how could He set His tent there, if He were not as a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber? for this further description follows, He cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course. The tabernacle is the very same as the spouse: the Word the Bridegroom, and the bridal chamber the Virgin's womb. And what saith the Apostle? And they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. And what are our Lord's own words in the Gospel? Wherefore they are no more twain, but

one flesh. One instead of two, of the Word and the flesh, one Man, one God. But this tabernacle of our Lord's felt the scourge in this world, as it is well known, the Lord was scourged. Does It feel the lash in heaven? And wherefore not? Because He hath set His house of defence very high, that He might be our hope; and no evil shall come near unto him; neither shall any plague come nigh His dwelling. He is far above all the heavens: but His feet rest upon the earth: His head is in heaven: His body on earth. But when His feet were being scourged, and trampled down by Saul, the Head cried out, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Lo, no man persecutes the Head: lo, the Head is in heaven: since "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him:" no evil shall come near unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. But that we may not imagine that the Head is cut off from the body: for it is separated in point of place, but joined in feeling; that very communion of feeling cried from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? He prostrated Saul with a voice of reproach, while He raised him by the hand of pity. He who persecuted the body of Christ, became a member of Christ: that thus he might feel therein what he had inflicted before.

6. What then, my brethren, what is said of our Head? For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil come near unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. Of this we have spoken, for He hath given His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. You heard these words but now, when the Gospel was being read; attend therefore. Our Lord, after He was baptized, fasted. Why was He baptized? That we might not scorn to be baptized. For when John said to our Lord, Comest Thou to me to be baptized? I ought to be baptized by Thee; and our Lord replied, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness; He wished to fulfil all humility, so that He should be washed, Who had no defilement. Why this? On account of the pride of those who were to come after Himself. Suppose any catechumen, who perchance in his learning and piety excels many of the faithful: he finds many baptized who are ignorant, many who live not as he does himself, in such continence and chastity: perhaps he does not think of marriage, while he sees another of the faithful, if not in fornication, at least using his marriage license too freely; he may perhaps lift up the neck of

pride, and say, what need have I of baptism, to receive what this man has, whom I already surpass, both in my life and knowledge? To such a one our Lord would say, 'How and how far hast thou surpassed him? as much as I surpass thee? The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. Do not be so puffed up, as to dispense with baptism. Thou shalt seek the baptism of the Lord, I sought that of a servant.' Our Lord, then, was baptized, and after baptism He was tempted; He fasted forty days, a number which has, as I have often mentioned, a deep meaning. All things cannot be explained at once, lest needful time be too much taken up. After forty days He was an hungred. He could have fasted without ever feeling hunger; but then how could He be tempted? or had He not overcome the tempter, how couldest thou learn to struggle with him? He was hungry; and then the tempter said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Was it a great thing for our Lord Jesus Christ to make bread out of stones, when He satisfied so many thousands with five loaves? He made bread out of nothing. For whence came that quantity of food, which could satisfy so many thousands? The sources of that bread are in the Lord's hands. This is nothing wonderful; for He Himself made out of five loaves bread enough for so many thousands, Who also every day out of a few seeds raises up on earth immense harvests. These are the miracles of our Lord: but from their constant operation they are disregarded. What then, my brethren, was it impossible for the Lord to create bread out of stones? He made men even out of stones, in the words of John the Baptist himself, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Why then did He not so? That he might teach thee how to answer the tempter, so that if thou wast reduced to any straits and the tempter suggested, if thou wast a Christian and belongedst to Christ, would He desert thee now? would He not have sent thee help? Possibly the Physician has still the knife in His hand, and therefore leaves thee: yet He does not forsake thee: just as He listened not to the prayers of Paul, because He did listen to him. For Paul says, that he was not heard when he complained of the messenger of Satan, who was a thorn in his flesh, by whom he says he was buffeted. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. As if a man said to his physician, who had given him a blister,

This plaister is troublesome to me: I pray you take it away. And the physician replies, No; you must let it remain for some time; you cannot otherwise recover. The physician did not listen to his patient with a view to consult his pleasure, but his health. Be therefore strong, my brethren: and when ye are tempted by some want, beneath the scourge and the instruction of God, while He is both preparing and keeping for you an eternal inheritance, let not the devil suggest to you, If thou wert righteous, would He not send thee bread by means of the raven, as He did to Elias? Where is that thou hast read, I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread? Do thou answer the devil, The Scripture speaks truth, I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread; for I have a bread of mine own that thou knowest not of. What bread? Listen to our Lord; Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Dost thou think the word of God bread? If the Word of God, through which all things were made, was not bread, He would not say, I am the bread which came down from heaven. Thou hast therefore learnt to answer the tempter, when pressed with hunger.

7. What, if he tempt thee in these words: If thou wast a Christian, thou wouldest do miracles, as many Christians have done? Thou, deceived by a wicked suggestion, wouldest tempt the Lord thy God, so as to say to Him, If I am a Christian, and am before Thine eyes, and Thou dost account me at all in the number of Thine own, let me also do something like the many works which Thy Saints have done? Thou hast tempted God, as if thou wert not a Christian, unless thou didst this. Many who desired such things have fallen. For that Simon the sorcerer desired such gifts of the Apostles, when he wished to buy the Holy Spirit for money. He loved the power of working miracles, but loved not the imitation of humility. Thus, when some disciple, or some one from the crowd, wished to follow the Lord, from witnessing the miracles which He did: the Lord saw that he was proud, and sought not the path of humility, but the puffing up of power, and said, The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. The foxes have holes in thee: the birds of the air have nests in thee. The foxes mean deceit: the birds of the air pride: for as the birds seek the regions above, so do the proud: and as foxes have treacherous holes, so have also all plotters against others. What then was our Lord's answer?

Pride and deceit may dwell in thee: Christ hath not where to dwell in thee: where to lay His head, because the laying of His head is the humility of Christ: unless He laid down His head, thou wouldest not be justified. Even His disciples, when they desired such things, and were already wishing for a seat in His kingdom, before they gained the path of humility, when He was asked by the mother of His disciples, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, the other on Thy left, were seeking power: but through the suffering of humility we come to the power of the kingdom. Our Lord saith, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Why do ye think of the loftiness of the kingdom, and yet imitate not My humility? What then, if he tempt thee thus, “work miracles?” that thou mayest not tempt God, what shouldest thou answer? What our Lord answered. The devil said to Him, Cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His Angels charge concerning Thee; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. If Thou shalt cast Thyself down, Angels shall receive Thee. And it might indeed, my brethren, happen, if our Lord had cast Himself down, the attending Angels would receive our Lord’s flesh; but what does He say to him? It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Thou thinkest Me a man. For the devil came to Him with this view, that he might try whether He were the Son of God. He saw His Flesh; but His might appeared in His works: the Angels had borne witness. He saw that He was mortal, so that he might tempt Him, that by Christ’s temptation the Christian might be taught. What then is written? Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Let us not then tempt the Lord, so as to say, If we belong to Thee, let us work a miracle.

8. Let us return to the words of the Psalm. He hath given His Angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. They shall bear Thee in their hands, lest at any time Thou hurt Thy foot against a stone. Christ was raised up in the hands of Angels, when He was taken up into heaven: not that, if Angels had not sustained Him, He would have fallen: but because they were attending on their King. Say not, Those who sustained Him are better than He Who was sustained. Are then cattle better than men, because they sustain the weakness of men? And we ought not to speak thus either; for if the cattle withdraw their support, their riders fall. But how ought we to speak of it? For it is said even of God, Heaven is My throne. Because then

heaven supports Him, and God sits thereon, is therefore heaven the better? Thus also in this Psalm we may understand it of the service of the Angels: it does not pertain to any infirmity in our Lord, but to the honour they pay, and to their service. But our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead. Wherefore? Hear the Apostle: He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. Also the Gospel saith of the Holy Ghost: The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. What is the glorification of Jesus? He arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Glorified by God by His ascent into heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. But in the Law, in Exodus the book of Moses, from the day when the lamb was slain and eaten, fifty days are numbered; and the Law was given, written by the finger of God on tables of stone. What the finger of God is, the Gospel explaineth to us; for the finger of God is the Holy Ghost. How do we prove this? Our Lord, when answering those who accused Him of casting out devils in the name of Beelzebub, saith, If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God; and another Evangelist, in relating the same saying, saith, If I with the finger of God cast out devils. What therefore is in one stated clearly, is darkly expressed in another. Thou didst not know what was the finger of God, but another Evangelist explains it by terming it the Spirit of God. The Law then written by the finger of God was given on the fiftieth day after the slaughter of the lamb, and the Holy Ghost descended on the fiftieth day after the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The lamb was slain, the Passover was celebrated, the fifty days were completed, and the Law was given. But that Law was to cause fear, not love: but that fear might be changed into love, He Who was truly righteous was slain: of Whom that lamb whom the Jews were slaying was the type. He arose from the dead: and from the day of our Lord's Passover, as from that of the slaying of the Paschal lamb, fifty days are counted; and the Holy Ghost descended, now in the fulness of love, not in the punishment of fear. Why have I said this? For this then our Lord arose, and was glorified, that He might send His Holy Spirit. And I said long ago that this was so, because His head is in heaven, His feet on earth. If His head is in heaven, His feet on earth; what means our Lord's feet on earth? Our Lord's saints on earth. Who are our Lord's feet? The Apostles sent throughout the whole world. Who are our Lord's feet? All the Evangelists, in whom our Lord travelleth over all nations. It was to be feared lest the

Evangelists should be hurt against a stone: for when He was set in Heaven as the head, the feet which were toiling upon the ground might be hurt against a stone. What stone? The Law given on the tables of stone. That they might not therefore be impeached before the Law, not having received grace, and be held accursed in the Law: for this liability to the Law is that very stumbling against the stone: those whom the Law held condemned, the Lord absolved, that they might no more hurt their feet against the Law. That the feet of this Head might not incur guilt of the Law, the Holy Ghost was sent to inspire love, and to release from fear. Fear did not fulfil the Law, love fulfilled it. Men feared, but they fulfilled not: they loved, and they fulfilled. How did they fear, and yet not fulfil? how did they love, and fulfil? Men used to fear, and to plunder others' goods: they loved, and they gave away their own. We need not therefore wonder that our Lord was raised up to heaven by the hands of Angels, that His foot might not dash against a stone: lest those who on earth toiled in his body, while they were travelling over the whole world might become guilty of the Law, He took from them fear, and filled them with love. Through fear Peter thrice denied Him, for he had not yet received the Holy Ghost: afterwards, when he had received the Holy Spirit, he began to preach with confidence. He who at the words of the maid-servant thrice denied, after he had received the Holy Ghost, confessed, amid the stripes of the rulers, Him Whom he had denied. This is no wonder: for the Lord dissolved that threefold fear by threefold love. For when He arose from the dead He said to Peter, Peter, lovest thou Me? He said not, Fearest thou Me? For if he still feared, he would be hurting his feet against the stone. Lovest thou Me? He saith. Peter replies, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Once was enough. Perhaps it might satisfy me, who see not the heart; how much more would it suffice the Lord, Who saw how with his whole soul Peter said, I love Thee. It is not enough for our Lord, to answer once: He asketh a second time, and Peter answereth: He asketh a third time; and now Peter, wearied, as if our Lord doubted of his love, Lord, he saith, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee. But our Lord so dealt with him, as if He said, thrice thou hast denied Me through fear: thrice confess Me through love. With that love and that charity He filled His disciples. Why? Because He hath set His house of defence very high: because when glorified He sent the Holy Ghost, He

released the faithful from the guilt of the Law, that His feet might not dash against a stone.

9. The rest is clear, my brethren, for it has often been treated of. (Ver. 13.) Thou shalt go upon the asp and the basilisk; the lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet. Ye know who the serpent is, and how the Church treadeth upon him, as she is not conquered, because she is on her guard against his cunning. And after what manner he is a lion and a dragon, I believe you know also, beloved. The lion openly rages, the dragon lies secretly in covert: the devil hath each of these forces and powers. When the Martyrs were being slain, it was the raging lion: when heretics are plotting, it is the dragon creeping beneath us. Thou hast conquered the lion; conquer also the dragon: the lion hath not crushed thee, let not the dragon deceive thee. Let us prove that it was the lion, when he openly did rage. Peter exhorting the Martyrs saith, Know ye not that your adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? The lion openly raging sought whom he might devour: how does the dragon plot against us? By means of heretics. In fear of these, Paul, lest the Church should by them be corrupted from her virginity of faith, which she beareth in her heart, saith, I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ; but I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. A few women in the Church have bodily virginity: but the virginity of the heart all the faithful have. In the very matter of faith he feared that the heart's virginity would be corrupted by the devil: and those who have lost it, are uselessly virgins in their bodies. What does a woman who is corrupt in heart preserve in her body? Thus a Catholic married woman is before a virgin heretic. For the first is not indeed a virgin in her body, but the second has become married in her heart; and married not unto God as her husband, but unto the dragon. But what shall the Church do? Thou shalt go upon the asp and the basilisk. The basilisk is the king of serpents, as the devil is the king of wicked spirits. The lion and the dragon thou shalt tread under thy feet.

10. These are the words of God to the Church. (Ver. 14.) Because he hath set his love in me, therefore will I deliver him. Not only therefore the Head,

which now sits in heaven, because He hath set His house of defence very high, to which no evil shall happen, neither shall any plague come nigh His dwelling; but we also, who are toiling on earth, and are still living in temptations, whose steps are feared for, lest they fall into snares, may hear the voice of the Lord our God consoling us, and saying to us, Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up, because he hath known my name.

11. (Ver. 15.) He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble. Fear not when thou art in trouble, as if the Lord were not with thee. Let faith be with thee, and God is with thee in thy trouble. There are waves on the sea, and thou art tossed in thy bark, because Christ sleepeth. Christ slept in the ship, while the men were perishing. If thy faith sleep in thy heart, Christ is as it were sleeping in thy ship: because Christ dwelleth in thee through faith, when thou beginnest to be tossed, awake Christ sleeping: rouse up thy faith, and thou shalt be assured that He deserts thee not. But thou thinkest thou art forsaken, because He rescueth thee not when thou thyself dost wish. He delivered the Three Children from the fire? Did He, Who did this, desert the Maccabees? God forbid! He delivered both of these: the first bodily, that the faithless might be confounded; the last spiritually, that the faithful might imitate them. I am with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

12. (Ver. 16.) With length of days will I satisfy him. What is length of days? Eternal life. Brethren, imagine not that length of days is spoken of in the same sense as days are said to be long in summer, short in winter. Hath he such days to give us? That length is one that hath no end, eternal life, that is promised us in long days. And truly, since this sufficeth, with reason he saith, will I satisfy him. What is long in time, if it hath an end, satisfieth us not: for that reason it should not be even called long. And if we are covetous, we ought to be covetous of eternal life: long for such a life, as hath no end. Lo, a line in which our covetousness may be extended. Dost thou wish money without limit? Long for eternal life without limit. Dost thou wish that thy possession may have no end? Seek for eternal life. With length of days will I satisfy him.

13. I will shew him my salvation. Nor is this, my brethren, to be briefly passed over. I will shew him my salvation: He means, I will shew him Christ Himself. Why? Was He not seen on earth? What great thing hath He to shew us? But He did not appear such as we shall see Him. He appeared in that shape in which those who saw Him crucified Him: behold, those who saw Him, crucified Him: we have not seen Him, yet we have believed. They had eyes, have not we? yea, we too have the eyes of the heart: but, as yet we see through faith, not by sight. When will it be sight? When shall we, as the Apostle saith, see Him face to face? which God promiseth us as the high reward of all our toils. Whatever thou toilest in, thou toilest for this purpose, that thou mayest see Him. Some great thing it is we are to see, since all our reward is seeing; and our Lord Jesus Christ is that very great sight. He Who appeared humble, will Himself appear great, and will rejoice us, as He is even now seen of His Angels. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Listen to the Lord Himself, Who gave this promise, saying in the Gospel, He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him. And as if it were asked of Him, And what wilt Thou give to him who loveth Thee? He answereth, I will manifest Myself to him. Let us long for, and let us love Him: let us burn with love toward Him, if we are His betrothed. Our husband is absent, let us wait for Him: He Whom we are longing for will come. He hath given such a pledge, let not the spouse fear lest she be forsaken by her Husband. He doth not forfeit His pledge. What pledge hath He given? He hath poured out His blood. What pledge hath He given? He hath sent the Holy Ghost. Will the Husband forfeit such pledges? If He loved us not, He would not give such pledges. He loveth us now. O that we could love Him as He doth? "No man hath greater love, that that he lay down his life for his friends:" and how can we lay down our lives for Him? What doth it profit Him, since He hath set His house of defence very high, nor doth any scourge come nigh His dwelling? But what saith John? Even as Christ laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Each man who layeth down his life for his brother, layeth it down for Him: just as in feeding his brother, he is feeding Christ. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me. Let us love and imitate Him: let us run after his ointments, as is said in the Song of Solomon: Because of the savour of thy good ointments, we will run after thee. For He

came, and gave forth a savour that filled the world. Whence was that fragrance? From heaven. Follow then towards heaven, if thou do not answer falsely when it is said, Lift up your hearts, lift up your thoughts, your love, your hope: that it may not rot upon the earth. Thou darest not put wheat on the damp earth, lest it rot; because thou hast toiled and reaped, thou hast threshed and winnowed it. Dost thou seek a spot for thy wheat, and seekest thou not a place for thy heart? seekest thou not a place for thy treasure? Do whatever thou canst on earth; spend, thou shalt not lose, but store up. And who keepeth thy treasure? Christ, Who also keepeth thee. He knoweth how to keep thee; knoweth He not how to keep thy treasure? But why doth He wish that thou change the place of thy treasure, except that thou mayest change the place of thy heart? For no man concerneth himself except about his treasure. How many are there here who are now my listeners, and yet their heart is no where but in their money bags? Ye are on earth, because what ye love is on earth: let that be sent to heaven, and there will be thy heart. For wherever thy treasure is, there will be thy heart also.

PSALM 92

A Sermon to the people, preached on Saturday.

1. Listen to the Psalm: may the Lord grant to us to open the mysteries herein contained: whiles that, for remedy of weariness, they are diversely and variously explained. For God teacheth us no other hymn but that of faith, hope, and charity: that our faith may be firm in Himself, as long as we do not see Him, believing in Him Whom we do not see, that we may rejoice when we see Him, and the appearance of His light may succeed to our faith, when it will no longer be said to us, Believe what thou seest not; but, rejoice that thou seest. Let our hope also be immutable, and fixed in Him, let it not totter and fluctuate, let it not be tossed about; as God Himself, in Whom it is fixed, cannot be tossed. For now it is called hope: but then it will not be hope, but reality. For as long as that which is hoped is not seen, is it called hope, in the Apostle's words, But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Patience then only is needful, until what is promised shall come. But no one is patient in a good estate. When patience is required of a man, he is in adversity: when it is said, Be patient, endure, sustain: it is trouble, under which God wills thee to be courageous, enduring, of long suffering, patient. But does He Who has promised deceive in ought? The physician draws his knife to cut the wound, and says to him whom he is about to cut, Be patient, sustain, endure: in pain he demands patience, but after it he promises health. And he who endures pain under the physician's knife, unless he sets before his mind the health which he has not yet, fails under the pain which he suffers. There are therefore many evils in this world, within, and without: they never cease: stumbling-blocks abound: no one feels them, except he who treads the path of God. He is told in all the pages of divine Scripture to endure the present, hope for the future, love Whom he seeth not, that he may embrace Him

when he seeth Him. For charity, which is joined in the third place to faith and hope, is above faith and hope: because faith is of things which are not seen; but it will be sight, when they shall be seen: and hope is of what is not possessed: which, when the thing itself reaches us, will not be any longer hope, because we shall possess it, not hope for it: but charity knoweth not but to increase more and more. For if we love Whom we see not, how shall we love when we see Him? Let then our longing increase. We are not Christians, except on account of a future life: let no one hope for present blessings, let no one promise himself the happiness of the world, because he is a Christian: but let him use the happiness he hath, as he may, in what manner he may, when he may, as far as he may. When it is present, let him give thanks for the consolation of God: when it is wanting, let him give thanks to the Divine justice. Let him always be grateful, never ungrateful: let him be grateful to his Father, Who soothes and caresses him: and grateful to his Father when He chasteneth him with the scourge, and teacheth him: for He ever loveth, whether He caress or threaten: and let him say what ye have heard in the Psalm: (ver. 1.) It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord; and to sing praises unto Thy Name, Thou Most Highest.

2. This Psalm is entitled, a Psalm to be sung on the Sabbath day. Lo, this day is the Sabbath, which the Jews at this period observe by a kind of bodily rest, languid and luxurious. They abstain from labours, and give themselves up to trifles; and though God ordained the Sabbath, they spend it in actions which God forbids. Our rest is from evil works, theirs from good; for it is better to plough than to dance. They abstain from good, but not from trifling, works. God proclaims to us a Sabbath. What sort of Sabbath? First consider, where it is. It is in the heart, within us; for many are idle with their limbs, while they are disturbed in conscience. Every bad man cannot have a Sabbath: for his conscience is never at rest, he must needs live in turmoil; but he who has a good conscience, is tranquil; and that very tranquillity is the Sabbath of the heart. For it listeneth to the promises of the Lord: and if it toils in the present time, it expands in the hope of the future, and every cloud of sorrow is calmed; as the Apostle saith, Rejoicing in hope. That very joy in the tranquillity of our hope, is our Sabbath. This is the subject of praise and of song in this Psalm, how a

Christian man is in the Sabbath of his own heart, that is, in the quiet, tranquillity, and serenity of his conscience, undisturbed; hence he tells us here, whence men are wont to be disturbed, and he teaches thee to keep Sabbath in thine own heart.

3. The first thing is, that thou thyself, if thou hast made any advancement, praise God for that wherein thou hast advanced, because it is His gift, and not thy deserving. Hence begin the Sabbath, by not attributing these gifts to thyself, as if thou hadst not received what thou hast received: nor excusing thyself for the evil that thou doest, because it is thy own. For perverse and agitated men, who do not keep Sabbath, ascribe their evil deeds to God, their good ones to themselves. If he hath done ought of good, he saith, I did it: if of evil, he seeketh whom he may accuse, that he may not confess to God. And what is this? He seeketh whom he may accuse? If he is not very wicked, he hath Satan at hand to accuse: he saith, Satan did it, he persuaded me: as if Satan had the power of compelling him. He hath indeed cunning in persuading. But if Satan were speaking, and God were silent, thou wouldest have an occasion for self-excuse: but thy ears are between God admonishing, and the serpent suggesting. Why are they turned in one direction, and turned away from the other? Satan ceaseth not to persuade evil: but neither doth God cease to admonish us to good. But Satan doth not compel thee against thy will: it is in thy power to consent, or not to consent. If thou hast done any thing wrong by Satan's persuasion, dismiss Satan, accuse thyself, that by thy self-accusation thou mayest deserve the mercy of God. Dost thou wish to accuse one who hath no pardon? Accuse thyself, and thou receivest indulgence. Besides, many do not accuse Satan, but their fate. My fate led me, saith one: when you ask him, why did you do it? why did you sin? he replies, by my evil fate. Lest he should say, I did it; he points to God as the source of his sin: with his tongue he blasphemes. He saith not this indeed openly as yet, but listen, and see that he saith this. You ask of him, what is fate: and he replies, evil stars. You ask, who made, who appointed the stars; he can only answer, God. It follows, then, that whether he doth so directly or indirectly, still he accuseth God, and when God punisheth sins, he maketh God the author of his own sins. It cannot be that God punishes what He hath wrought: He punisheth what thou doest, that He may set free what He hath wrought. But sometimes, setting aside every

thing else, they attack God directly: and when they sin, they say, God willed this; if God had not willed it, I should not have sinned. Does He warn thee for this, that not only He may not be listened to, to keep thee from sin, but even be accused because thou dost sin? What then doth this Psalm teach us? It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord. What is to confess unto the Lord? In both cases: both in thy sins, because thou hast done them; and in thy good works, confess unto the Lord, because He hath done them. Then shalt thou sing unto the Name of God, the Most Highest: seeking the glory of God, not thine own; His Name, not thine. For if thou seekest the Name of God, He also seeketh thy name; but if thou hast neglected the Name of God, He also doth blot out thine. But how did I say, He seeketh thy name? As He said to His disciples when they came, after He sent them to preach the Gospel. After they had wrought many miracles, and had cast out devils in the Name of Christ, they said on their return, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name. They said, indeed, in Thy Name; but He saw in them that they were rejoicing in their glorification, and were puffing up themselves with pride, because they had power given them to drive out devils. He saw that they were seeking their own glory, and said to them, seeking and indeed keeping in store their names in Himself, In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Behold, where thou hast a name, if thou neglect not the Name of God. Sing, therefore, on the psaltery, unto the Name of God, that thy name may be stablished before God. But what is a psaltery, my brethren? It is a kind of instrument, which has strings. Our work is our song: whoever does good works, playeth with a psaltery unto God: whoever confesses with the mouth, singeth unto God. Sing therefore with thy mouth: play unto him with thy works. For what purpose?

4. Ver. 2. To tell of Thy mercy early in the morning, and of Thy truth in the night season. What is the meaning of this; that the mercy of God is to be told us in the morning, and in the night the truth of God? The morning is, when it is well with us; the night, the sadness of tribulation. What then did he say in brief? When thou art prosperous, rejoice in God, for it is His mercy. Now, perhaps thou wouldest say, If I rejoice in God, when I am prosperous, because it is His mercy; what am I to do when I am in sorrow, in tribulation? It is His mercy, when I am prosperous; is it then His cruelty,

when I am in adversity? If I praise His mercy when it is well with me, am I then to exclaim against His cruelty when it is ill? No. But when it is well, praise His mercy: when ill, praise His truth: because He scourgeth sins, He is not unjust. Daniel was in the night-season, when he was praying: for he was in the captivity of Jerusalem, he was in the power of enemies. Then the Saints suffered many evils: then he himself was cast into the den of lions; then the Three Children were thrown into the fire. The people of Israel suffered these evils in the captivity: it was the night-season. During the night Daniel confessed the truth of God: he said in his prayer, We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee: but unto us confusion of face. He told of the truth of God during the night-season. What is it to tell of the truth of God in the night-season? Not to accuse God, because thou sufferest aught of evil: but to attribute it to thy sins, His correction: to tell of His lovingkindness early in the morning, and of His truth in the night-season. When thou dost tell of His lovingkindness early in the morning, and of His truth in the night-season, thou dost always praise God, always confess to God, and sing unto His Name.

5. Ver. 3. Upon a psaltery of ten strings, with a song, and upon the harp. Ye have not heard of the psaltery of ten strings for the first time: it signifies the ten commandments of the Law. But we must sing upon that psaltery, and not carry it only. For even the Jews have the Law: but they carry it: they sing not. Who are they who sing? Those who work. This is but little: those who work in a sullen spirit, do not yet sing. Who are they who sing? Those who do well with cheerfulness: for there is cheerfulness in singing. And what saith the Apostle? For God loveth a cheerful giver. Whatever thou doest, do with cheerfulness: then thou dost a good work and well. But if thou doest it in sullenness, it is done with thee, thou dost it not: and thou rather carriest the instrument, thou dost not sing. Upon a psaltery of ten strings, with a song, and upon the harp. This means, in word and deed; ‘with a song,’ in word; ‘upon the harp,’ in work. If thou speakest words alone, thou hast, as it were, the song only, and not the harp: if thou workest, and speakest not, thou hast the harp only. On this account both speak well and do well, if thou wouldest have the song together with the harp.

6. (Ver. 4.) For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy works; and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of Thy hands. Ye see what he saith. Thou hast made me living well, Thou hast formed me: if by chance I do aught of good, I will rejoice in the work of Thy hands: as the Apostle saith, For we are His workmanship, created unto good works. For unless He formed thee to good works, thou wouldest not know any works but evil. He who speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: this the Gospel saith. Every sin is a lie; for every thing that is against the law, and against truth, is called a lie. What then doth He say? He that speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; that is, he that sinneth, sinneth of his own. Observe the sentence in converse. For if he who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own: it follows that he who speaketh the truth, speaketh from God. Therefore it is said in another place, let God be true, but every man a liar. Thou art not told in this passage, Go, lie without fear, as thou art a man: nay, behold thyself a man, because thou liest; and that thou mayest be true, drink in truth, that thou mayest break forth of God, and that thou mayest be true. Because thou canst not have truth from thy own self, it remains that thou drink it thence, whence it floweth: as if thou hast gone back from the light, thou art in darkness: as a stone glows not with its own heat, but either from the sun or fire, and if thou withdraw it from the heat, it cools: there it appears, that the heat was not its own; but it became heated either by the sun or by fire: thus thou also, if thou withdraw from God, wilt become cold; if thou approach God, thou wilt warm: as the Apostle saith, fervent in spirit. Also what saith he of the light? If thou approach Him, thou wilt be in light; therefore saith the Psalm, Look upon Him, and be lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed. Because therefore thou canst do no good, unless lightened by the light of God, and warmed by the Spirit of God; when thou shalt see thyself working well, confess unto God, and say what the Apostle saith; say unto thyself, that thou be not puffed up, For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Here therefore he praiseth God, and teacheth us a good confession: Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy works; and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of Thy hands.

7. What are we to say of those who live bad but prosperous lives? For hence he who loveth the Sabbath hath a disturbed mind; he seeth himself daily

engaged in good works, and toiling in narrow circumstances, perhaps in family poverty, perhaps in hunger, thirst, and nakedness, perhaps doing good works in prison, and the man who sent him into prison living a wicked life, and glorying in it; a most wicked thought against God entereth his heart, and he saith, God, wherefore do I serve Thee? why do I obey Thy words? I have not seized another's goods, I have not committed theft, I have not slain a man, I have not coveted any man's possession, I have not borne false witness against any one, I have not done disrespect to my father or mother, I have not bowed down before idols, I have not taken the Lord's Name in vain: I have kept myself from sin. He enumerates the ten strings, that is, the ten precepts of the Law, and questioneth himself in each, and seeth that he hath not sinned, not in one: and he is sorrowful that he suffereth such evils. And those who, I do not say, touch some of the strings, but touch not even the psaltery itself, and work no good, consult idols, and perhaps then appear Christians, when their family suffereth no evil, but when there is any tribulation there, they run to some soothsayer, diviner, or astrologer? Christ's name is repeated before him: he sneers, and screws his mouth. It is said to him, Believer, dost thou consult an astrologer? He replieth, Begone from me: he discovered to me my goods, which I had otherwise lost, and remained in wailing. Good man, dost thou not sign thyself with the cross of Christ? Even the law prohibits all these things. Rejoicest thou that thou hast found thy goods: art thou not sad that thou art thyself lost? How much better would it be that thy coat should perish than thy soul? He sneers at all this: he is insulting to his parents, he hateth his enemy, he pursueth him even unto death: he stealeth when he hath found opportunity, or ceaseth not to bear false witness; he layeth wait against his neighbour's wife, he coveteth his neighbour's goods: he doeth all these things, and flourisheth in riches, in honours, in the good things of this world. That wretched man who doeth good, and suffereth evils, seeth him, becometh disturbed, and saith, O God, the wicked, I imagine, please Thee, and Thou hatest the good, and lovest those who work iniquity. If he is excited, and consenteth to this thought, he will lose the Sabbath from his heart: he now beginneth not to listen to this psaltery; he hath departed thence, he singeth without reason, It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord; and to sing praises unto Thy Name, O Most Highest. The Sabbath being now lost in the inner man, and the tranquillity of his heart being shut

out, and good thoughts repelled, he now beginneth to imitate him whom he seeth flourishing amid his evil deeds; and turneth himself also to evil works. But God is long-suffering, because He is eternal, and He knoweth the day of His own judgment, where He weigheth all things.

8. Teaching us this, what saith he? (ver. 5.) O Lord, how glorious are Thy works: Thy thoughts are made very deep. Verily, my brethren, there is no sea so deep as these thoughts of God, Who maketh the wicked flourish, and the good suffer: nothing so profound, nothing so deep: therein every unbelieving soul is wrecked, in that depth, in that profundity. Dost thou wish to cross this depth? Remove not from the wood of Christ's Cross: thou shalt not sink: hold thyself fast to Christ. What do I mean by this, hold fast to Christ? It was for this reason that He chose to suffer on earth Himself. Ye have heard, while the prophet was being read, how He did not turn away His back from the smiters, and His face from the spittings of men, how He turned not His cheek from their hands; wherefore chose He to suffer all these things, but that He might console the suffering? He could have raised His flesh at the last day: but then thou wouldest not have had thy ground of hope, since thou hadst not seen Him. He deferred not His resurrection, that thou mightest not still be in doubt. Suffer then tribulation in the world with the same end as that which thou hast observed in Christ: and let not those who do evil, and flourish in this life, move thee. Thy thoughts are very deep. Where is the thought of God? Rejoice not as the fish who is exulting in his bait: the fisherman hath not drawn his hook: the fish hath as yet the hook in his jaws. And what seemeth to thee long, is short; all these things pass over quickly. What is the long life of man to the eternity of God? Dost thou wish to be of long-suffering? Consider the eternity of God. For thou regardest thy few days, and in thy few days thou dost wish all things to be fulfilled. What things? The condemnation of all the wicked: and the crowning of all the good: dost thou wish these things to be fulfilled in thy days? God fulfilleth them in His own time. Why dost thou suffer weariness? He is eternal: He waiteth: He is of long-suffering: but thou sayest, I am not of long-suffering, because I am mortal. But thou hast it in thy power to become so: join thy heart to the eternity of God, and with Him thou shalt be eternal. For what is said of temporal things? All flesh is grass: and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, and the

flower fadeth. All things, then, wither and fade: but not that Word: for the Word of our God shall stand for ever. The grass passeth away, the glory of the grass passeth away, but thou hast where to hold thyself fast: “The Word of the Lord abideth for ever.” Say then unto Him, Thy thoughts are very deep. Thou hast laid hold of the wood, thou art crossing that depth. Seest thou any thing there? understandest thou any thing there? I understand, thou sayest. If thou art a Christian, and well instructed, thou sayest: God reserveth all things for His own judgment. The good suffer, because they are chastened as sons: the wicked exult, because they are condemned as strangers. A man hath two sons: the one he chasteneth, the other he dismisseth: the one doeth ill, and he is not punished by his father: the other, as soon as he moves, is beaten with the hand, and scourged. Why is the one dismissed, the other scourged, except because for the one who is beaten, the heritage is preserved, while he who is dismissed is disinherited? He seeth that he hath no hope, and therefore letteth him go that he may do as he pleaseth, but the boy who is punished, if he hath no heart, and is imprudent and foolish, congratulateth his brother who is not beaten: and groaneth for himself, saying in his heart, “My brother doeth so many wicked acts, whatever he pleaseth he doeth against the command of my father, and no one giveth him a hard word: I, as soon as I move, am beaten!” He is foolish, unwise; he attendeth to what he suffereth, but not to what is reserved for the other.

9. For this reason, after saying, (ver. 6, 7.) Thy thoughts are very deep, he at once subjoins: An unwise man doth not well consider this, and a fool doth not understand it. What are the things which an unwise man doth not well consider, and which a fool doth not understand? When the ungodly are green as the grass. What is, as the grass? They flourish when it is winter, but they will wither in the summer. Thou observest the flower of the grass? What more quickly passeth by? What is brighter? What is greener? Let not its verdure delight thee, but fear its withering. Thou hast heard of the ungodly being green as the grass: hear also of the righteous: For lo. In the mean while, consider the ungodly; they flourish as the grass; but who are they who understand it not? The foolish and unwise. When the ungodly are green as the grass, and all men look upon the workers of iniquity. All who in their heart think not aright of God, look upon the ungodly when they are

as green as grass, that is, when they flourish for a time. Why do they look upon them? That they may be destroyed for ever. For they regard their momentary bloom, they imitate them, and wishing to flourish with them for a time, perish for evermore: this is, That they may be destroyed for ever.

10. Ver. 8. But Thou, Lord, art the Most Highest for evermore. Waiting above in Thy eternity until the season of the wicked be past, and that of the just come. For lo. Listen, brethren. Already he who speaketh (for he speaketh in our person, in the person of Christ's body, for Christ speaketh in His own body, that is, in His Church,) hath joined himself unto the eternity of God: as I a little before was saying unto you, God is longsuffering and patient, and alloweth all those evil deeds which He seeth to be done by wicked men. Wherefore? because He is eternal, and seeth what He keepeth for them. Dost thou also wish to be long-suffering and patient? Join thyself to the eternity of God: together with Him wait for those things which are beneath thee: for when thy heart shall have cleaved unto the Most Highest, all mortal things will be beneath thee: say then what follows, For lo, thine enemies shall perish. Those who now flourish, shall afterwards perish. Who are the enemies of God? Brethren, perhaps ye think those only enemies of God who blaspheme? They indeed are so, and those wicked men who neither in tongue nor in thought cease to injure God. And what do they do to the eternal, most high God? If thou strike with thy fist upon a pillar, thou art hurt: and thinkest thou that where thou strikest God with thy blasphemy, thou art not thyself broken? for thou doest nothing to God. But the enemies of God are openly blasphemers, and daily they are found hidden. Beware of such enmities of God. For the Scripture revealeth some such secret enemies of God: that because thou knowest them not in thy heart, thou mayest know in God's Scriptures, and beware of being found with them. James saith openly in his Epistle, Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Thou hast heard. Dost thou wish not to be an enemy of God? Be not a friend of this world: for if thou art a friend of this world, thou wilt be an enemy of God. For as a wife cannot be an adulteress, unless she be an enemy to her own husband: so a soul which is an adulteress through its love of worldly things, cannot but be an enemy to God. It feareth, but loveth not: it feareth punishment, but is not delighted with righteousness. All lovers of the world, therefore, are enemies of God, all the curious after trifles, all

consulters of diviners, astrologers, and evil spirits. Let them enter, or not enter, Churches: they are enemies of God. They may flourish for a season like grass, but they will perish, when He beginneth to visit them, and pronounce His sentence upon all flesh. Join thyself to the Scripture of God, and say with this Psalm, (Ver. 9.) For lo, thine enemies shall perish. Be not found there, where they shall perish. And all the workers of iniquity shall be destroyed.

11. But thou, who now art in toil, what will be thy hope, when God's enemies shall perish, and all the workers of iniquity shall be destroyed? Thou who among these stumbling-blocks, among men's wickednesses dost groan, who art troubled in the flesh, but rejoicest in heart: what will then be thy hope, O Thou Body of Christ? O Christ, Thou Who in heaven sittest on the Father's right hand, but with Thy feet and Thy hands dost toil on earth, and sayest, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? What hope wilt Thou have, when God's enemies shall perish, and all who work iniquity shall be destroyed? What lot will be Thine? (Ver. 10.) But mine horn shall be exalted like the horn of an unicorn. Why did he say, like the horn of an unicorn? Sometimes an unicorn signifies pride, sometimes it means the lifting up of unity; because unity is lifted up, all heresies shall perish with the enemies of God. And mine horn shall be exalted like an unicorn. When will it be so? and mine old age shall be in the fatness of mercy. Why did he say, my old age? He means, my last days; as our old age is the last season in our lives, so the whole of what the body of Christ at present suffereth in labours, in cares, in watchings, in hunger, in thirst, in stumbling-blocks, in wickednesses, in tribulations, is its youth: its old age, that is, its last days, will be in joy. And beware, beloved, that ye think not death meant also, in that he hath spoken of old age: for man groweth old in the flesh for this reason, that he may die. The old age of the Church will be white with good works, but it shall not decay through death. What the head of the old man is, that our works will be. Ye see how the head groweth old, and whiteneth, as fast as old age approacheth. Thou sometimes dost seek in the head of one who groweth old duly in his own course a black hair, yet thou findest it not: thus when our life shall have been such, that the blackness of sins may be sought, and none found, that old age is youthful, is green, and ever will be

green. Ye have heard of the grass of sinners, hear ye of the old age of the righteous: My old age shall be in the fatness of mercy.

12. Ver. 11. And Mine eye hath beheld on mine enemies. Whom doth he call his enemies? All the workers of iniquity. Do not observe whether thy friend be wicked: let an occasion come, and then thou provest him. Thou beginnest to go contrary to his iniquity, and then thou shalt see that when he was flattering thee, he was thy enemy; but thou hadst not yet knocked, not to raise in his heart what was not there, but that what was there might break out. Mine eye also hath looked upon mine enemies: and mine ear shall hear his desire of the wicked that rise up against me. When? In my old age. What is, in old age? In the last times. And what shall our ear hear? Standing on the right hand, we shall hear what shall be said to them that are on the left: Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. The righteous shall not fear for the dreadful hearing. Ye know that it is said in a Psalm, The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance; He will not be afraid of any evil hearing. What evil hearing? Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

And mine ear shall hear upon the wicked that rise up against me.

13. The grass withereth, the flower of sinners dieth away: what of the righteous? (Ver. 12.) The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree. The ungodly are green as grass; The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree. By the palm tree he signifieth height. Possibly he had also this meaning in the palm, that in its extremities it is beautiful: so that thou mayest trace its beginning from the earth, its end in its topmost branches, wherein its whole beauty dwelleth. The rough root appeareth in the earth, the beautiful foliage toward the sky. Thy beauty too, then, shall be in the end. Thy root is fixed fast: but our root is upward. For our root is Christ, Who hath ascended into heaven. Humbled, he shall be exalted; he shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus. See what trees he spoke of: the righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree: and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus. When the sun hath gone forth, doth the palm-tree wither? Doth the cedar die? But when the sun hath been glowing for some hours, the grass drieth up. The judgment, therefore, shall come, that sinners may wither, and the faithful flourish. He shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus.

14. Ver. 12, 13. Such as are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God. They shall be yet more increased in fruitful old age, and shall be quiet, that they may shew it forth. Such is the sabbath, which but a little while ago I commended unto you, whence the Psalm hath its title. They shall be quiet, that they may shew it forth. Wherefore are they quiet that shew it forth? The grass of sinners moveth them not: the cedar and palm-tree not even in tempests are bent. They are therefore quiet, that they may shew it forth: and with reason, since at present they must shew it forth even unto men who mock at it. O wretched men, who are lovers of the world! Those who are planted in the house of the Lord, shew it to you: those who praise the Lord with song and lute, in word and deed, shew it forth to you, and tell you. Be not seduced by the prosperity of the wicked, admire not the flower of grass: admire not those who are happy only for a season, but miserable unto eternity. That happiness which now appeareth outwardly is not true; they are not happy in heart, because they are tortured by a bad conscience. But be thou quiet, trusting in the promises of the Lord thy God. For what wilt thou shew forth in thy quietness? How true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. Listen, my brethren, if ye are planted in the house of the Lord; if ye wish to flourish like a palm-tree, and to spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus, and not to wither like grass when the sun is hot; as those who appear to flourish when the sun is absent. If then ye wish not to be as grass, but as the palm-tree and the cedar, what will ye shew forth? How true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. How is it there is no unrighteousness? A man committeth so great crimes; he is well, he hath sons, a plentiful house, he is full of pride, is exalted by his honours, is revenged on his enemies, and doeth every evil deed; another man, innocent, attending to his own affairs, not robbing another's goods, doing nothing against any one, suffereth in chains, in prison, tosseth and sigheth in poverty. How is it that there is no unrighteousness in Him? Be quiet, and thou shalt know: for thou art disturbed, and in thy chamber thou dost darken thy light. The eternal God doth wish to shine upon thee: do not then make thee cloudy weather from thy own disturbed mind. Be quiet within thyself, and see what I say unto thee. Because God is eternal, because for the present He spareth the bad, bringing them to repentance: He scourgeth the good, instructing them in the way unto the kingdom of

heaven: There is no unrighteousness in Him: fear not. Behold, I have been so much scourged, it is clear, I confess, I have sinned: for I do not call myself righteous. For this is what most say; when any one is by chance in any misery, in pain, thou goest in to console him: and he replieth, I have sinned, I confess, there are sins which I confess to be mine; but have I sinned as deeply as this man hath? I know how great sins he committed: I have sinned, I confess unto God, but less than he hath; and, behold, he suffereth no evil. Be not disturbed, be quiet, that thou mayest know how true the Lord is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. What if He now scourgeth thee, because He is not keeping for thee the flame everlasting? What, if He leaveth this man unpunished now, because he is doomed to hear, Depart into everlasting fire. But when? when thou shalt be placed at the right hand, then shall it be said to those placed on the left, Depart into the everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. Let not therefore those things move thee: Be quiet, keep sabbath, and shew how true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

PSALM 93

A Sermon to the people.

We heard the title of this Psalm, while it was reading: and it is not difficult to understand its meaning from the Scripture of God, that is, from the book of Genesis: for in the title we are, as it were, warned upon the threshold what we are to look for within. It is entitled, The Song of praise of David himself, on the day before the sabbath, when the earth was founded. Remembering then what God did through all those days, when He made and ordained all things, from the first up to the sixth day, (for the seventh He sanctified, because He rested on that day after all the works, which He made very good,) we find that He created on the sixth day (which day is here mentioned, in that he saith, before the Sabbath) all animals on the earth; lastly, He on that very day created man in His own likeness and image. For these days were not without reason ordained in such order, but for that ages also were to run in a like course, before we rest in God. But then we rest if we do good works. As a type of this, it is written of God, God rested on the seventh day, when He had made all His works very good. For He was not wearied, so as to need rest, nor hath He now left off to work, for our Lord Christ saith openly, My Father worketh hitherto. For He saith this unto the Jews, who thought carnally of God, and understood not that God worketh in quiet, and always worketh, and is always in quiet. We also, then, whom God willed then to figure in Himself, shall have rest after all good works. And indeed, our good works, brethren, which we do here in the world before our rest, are in a manner toilsome; and that rest is in hope, it is not attained in its reality: and unless it was in hope, we should fail in our labour; but our toilsome and good works pass over. For what is so good, as to give bread unto the hungred? and what we were listening to just now, whilst the Gospel was reading, what is so good, as that which he advised generally, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and

he that hath meat, let him do likewise? To clothe the naked, is a good work: will this good work be evermore? It hath a little toil in it; but it hath a solace in the hope of future rest. But how much toil hast thou in clothing the naked? A good work doth not toil much: a bad work hath toil. For he who clotheth the naked, if he hath whence to do so, toileth not: if he hath not whence to do so, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. But who counteth how much he toileth who chooseth to despoil one clothed? and yet these things too will pass away, when we shall have reached that rest, where there is no one hungry to be fed, no one naked to be clothed. And because these good works are doomed to pass away, that sixth day also, when those very good works are perfected, hath an evening; but in the Sabbath we find no evening, because our rest shall have no end: for evening is put for end. As therefore God made man in His own image on the sixth day: thus we find that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the sixth age, that man might be formed anew after the image of God. For the first period, as the first day, was from Adam until Noah: the second, as the second day, from Noah unto Abraham: the third, as the third day, from Abraham unto David: the fourth, as the fourth day, from David unto the removal to Babylon: the fifth period, as the fifth day, from the removal to Babylon unto the preaching of John. The sixth day beginneth from the preaching of John, and lasteth unto the end: and after the end of the sixth day, we reach our rest. The sixth day, therefore, is even now passing. And it is now the sixth day, see what the title hath; On the day before the sabbath, when the earth was founded. Let us now listen to the Psalm itself: let us enquire of it, how the earth was made, whether perhaps the earth was then made: and we do not read so in Genesis. When, therefore, was the earth founded? when, unless when that which hath been but now read in the Apostle taketh place: If, he saith, ye are stedfast, immoveable. When all who believe throughout all the earth are stedfast in faith, the earth is founded: then man is made in the image of God. That sixth day in Genesis signifieth this. But how did God make it? How was the earth founded? Christ came, that He might found the earth; For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Of Him therefore the Psalm singeth.

2. Ver. 1. The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and is girded. We see that He hath clothed Himself with two things: beauty and strength. But why? That He might found the earth. So it followeth, He hath made the round world so sure, that it cannot be moved. Whence hath He made it so sure? Because He hath clothed Himself in beauty. He would not make it so sure, if He put on beauty only, and not strength also. Why therefore beauty, why strength? For He hath said both: The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and is girded. Ye know, brethren, that when our Lord had come in the flesh, of those to whom He preached the Gospel, He pleased some, and displeased others. For the tongues of the Jews were divided against one another: Some said, He is a good Man; others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people. Some then spoke well, others detracted from Him, tore Him, bit and insulted Him. Towards those therefore whom He pleased, He put on beauty; towards those whom He displeased, He put on strength. Imitate then thy Lord, that thou mayest become His garment: be with beauty towards those whom thy good works please: shew thy strength against detractors. Hear the Apostle Paul imitating his Lord, how he too had beauty, had strength. We are unto God, he saith, a sweet savour in Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. For those whom goodness pleaseth, are saved: those who detract from what is good, perish. For his own part, he had a sweet savour: yea, was a sweet savour: but, woe to the wretched who perish even in that sweet savour. For he saith not, "To some we are a sweet savour: to others we are an ill savour:" but, we are a sweet savour in Christ, in every place, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. He addeth instantly; to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other, the savour of life unto life. He had clothed himself with beauty to those to whom the savour was that of life unto life: to those with whom it was the savour of death unto death, he had put on strength. But if thou dost rejoice, when men praise thee, and thy good works please them: but when they revile thee, if thou failest in thy good works, and believest as it were that thou hast lost the fruit of thy good works, because thou findest revilers; thou hast not been stedfast: thou dost not belong to the round world that cannot be moved.

The Lord is clothed with strength; and is girded. The Apostle Paul hath another passage on this very beauty and strength: By the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left. See where he speaketh of beauty and strength: By honour and dishonour. In honour He is beautiful: in dishonour, strong. Among some he was proclaimed of to his honour: among others he was despised to his dishonour. He displayed beauty to those whom he pleased, strength against those whom he displeased. And thus he enumerateth all things unto the end, where he saith, As having nothing, and yet possessing all things; when he hath all things, he is beautiful: when he hath nothing, he is strong. It is therefore no wonder, if it followeth, For He hath made the round world so sure, that it cannot be moved. For how cannot the round world be moved? When all the faithful believe in Christ, and are prepared either to rejoice with those who praise, or to be strong toward those who revile Him: not to be softened by the tongues of those who praise Him, nor to be broken down by the tongues of those who revile Him.

3. Perhaps we should enquire respecting this word also, why he said, He is girded. Girding signifieth work: for every man then girdeth himself, when he is about to work. But wherefore did he use the word *præcinctus*, instead of *cinctus*? For he saith in another Psalm, Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most mighty: the people shall fall under Thee: using the word *accingere*, not *cingere*, nor *præcingere*: this word being applied to the act of attaching any thing to the side by girding it. The sword of the Lord, wherewith He conquered the round world by killing iniquity, is the Spirit of God in the truth of the word of God. Wherefore is He said to bind His sword around His thigh? In another place, on another Psalm we have spoken in another manner of girding: but nevertheless, since it hath been mentioned, it ought not to be passed over. What is the girding on of the sword around the thigh? He meaneth the flesh by the thigh. For the Lord would not otherwise conquer the round world, unless the sword of truth came into the flesh. Why therefore is He here said to be girded in front (*præcinctus*)? He who girdeth himself before, placeth something before himself, wherewith he is girded; whence it is said, He girded Himself before with a towel, and began to wash the disciples' feet. Because He was humble when He girded Himself with a towel. He washed the feet of His own disciples. But all strength is in humility: because all pride is fragile:

therefore when He was speaking of strength, he added, He is girded: that thou mayest remember how thy God was girded in humility, when He washed His disciples' feet. Peter was shocked at his Lord, his Master, (why should I say his Master, when I said his Lord?) bending down before his own feet, and washing his feet: he was frightened, and said, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet: Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Peter, who had at first been shocked at the Lord washing his feet, was more shocked at the words, Thou hast no part with Me, and he believed that there was some mystery in the thing, and that it was not without a meaning that our Lord spoke so: therefore he answered, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head; but Jesus said unto him, He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. His washing their feet, therefore, did not refer to any mystery of cleanliness, but was intended as a pattern of humility: for He had said, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Let us see if they knew afterwards, let us see if He opened to them what He was doing, that we may see the Lord girded with strength; because the whole of strength is in humility. After He had washed their feet, again He sat down; He said unto them, Ye call me Lord and Master: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; how ought ye also to do to one another's feet? If therefore strength is in humility, fear not the proud. The humble are like a rock: the rock seems to lie downwards: but nevertheless it is firm. What are the proud? Like smoke: although they are lofty, they vanish. We ought therefore to ascribe our Lord's being girded to His humility, according to the mention of the Gospel, that He was girded, that He might wash His disciples' feet.

4. There is another thing which we may understand in this word. We have said that he who girdeth himself in front, placeth before him what he attacheth to himself, that he may gird himself. Since then those who revile us sometimes do so when we are absent, as if behind our backs: sometimes before our face, as they did to the Lord when He was hanging on the Cross, If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross: thou hast not need of strength, when any one revileth thee in thy absence, because thou dost

not hear, nor dost thou perceive: but if he speaketh to thy face, thou must needs be strong. What does, 'Be thou strong,' mean? That thou mayest bear it: lest perhaps thou think thyself strong, as thou hearest, because thou strikest with thy fist when overcome with reviling. That is not strength, if thou strike when reviled, since thou art overcome by anger: and it is very foolish, to call a conquered man strong, when the Scripture saith, He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city. He calleth the conqueror of his anger better than the conqueror of a city. Thou hast therefore a great adversary in thyself. When on hearing a reproach thy anger hath begun to rise, so that thou mayest return evil for evil, remember the Apostle's words, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing. Remembering these words, thou breakest down thy anger, thou preservest thy strength; and since he railed against thee in thy presence, not behind thy back, thou art 'girt in front' with it.

5. Let us now hear the rest; the Psalm is short. For He hath made the round world sure, which cannot be moved. Ye see, brethren, many believe in Christ, there is a great multitude of them: and yet in this great crowd, ye have just heard while the Gospel was in reading, our Lord will come with His fan in His hand, and will purge His floor: He will gather His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. There are therefore throughout the whole earth both good and bad: the good are the wheat, the bad are the chaff. The threshing machine cometh into the floor: it bruise the chaff, and purgeth the wheat. What then is the round world, which cannot be moved. This He would not mention specially, if there were not also a round world that can be moved. There is a round world that shall not be moved. There is a round world that shall be moved. For the good who are stedfast in the faith are the round world: that no man may say, they are only in part of it; while the wicked who abide not in faith, when they have felt any tribulation, are throughout the whole world. There is therefore a round world moveable: there is a world immoveable: of which the Apostle speaketh. Behold, the round world moveable. I ask thee, of whom speaketh the Apostle in these words, Of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already: and overthrow the faith of some? Did these belong to the round world, that shall not be moved? But they were chaff: and as he saith, they

overthrow the faith of some. He said not, Of all, and if he had said all, we must have understood all who belong to the city of Babylon, which must be condemned together with the devil; yet he said, the faith of some. And as if he were asked, And who can resist them? he addeth immediately, Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure. (Behold thou hast the round world that shall not be moved,) having this seal,—what seal hath it as its sure foundation?—The Lord knoweth them that are His. This is the round world that shall not be moved; The Lord knoweth them that are His. And what seal hath it? And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness. Let him depart from unrighteousness: for he cannot depart from the unrighteous, for the chaff is mixed with the wheat until it is fanned. What say we, brethren? Even in the floor itself, it is a wonderful thing concerning the wheat: it parts from the chaff, when it is stripped, and yet does not leave the floor, when it is threshed. But when will it be altogether separated? When the winnower hath come. As yet therefore the floor is in the round world: it must be that, if thou dost profit thyself, thou live among the unrighteous. From the unrighteous thou canst not depart: from unrighteousness depart. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness, and he will be in the round world that shall not be moved.

6. Ver. 2. Thy throne is established from thence, O Lord. What is, from thence? From that time. As if he said, What is the throne of God? Where doth God sit? In His Saints. Dost thou wish to be the throne of God? Prepare a place in thy heart where He may sit. What is the throne of God, except where God dwelleth? Where doth God dwell, except in His temple? What is His temple? Is it surrounded with walls? Far from it. Perhaps this world is His temple, because it is very great, and a thing worthy to contain God. It contains not Him by Whom it was made. And wherein is He contained? In the quiet soul, in the righteous soul: that is it that containeth Him. A great thing, my brethren! surely God is great; on the strong He is heavy: on the weak, light. Whom do I call strong? The proud, who presume in their own strength; for that weakness that is in humility is a greater strength. Hear the Apostle saying, for when I am weak, then am I strong. This is what I have set forth to you, that the Lord was girt with strength, when He was teaching humility. This therefore is the throne of God, which

in another passage is openly spoken of in the prophet, Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? That is, where shall the Spirit of God rest, but on the throne or abode of God? Hear how he describes this seat. Perhaps you thought to hear of a marble house, large and spacious halls, resplendent and lofty ceilings. Hear what God purposes for Himself: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Upon the humble and the quiet, who trembleth at My words. Behold, thou art humble and tranquil, and God dwelleth in thee. God is exalted, He dwelleth not in thee, if thou shalt choose to be exalted thyself. Surely thou dost wish to be exalted, that He may dwell in thee; be humble, and tremble at His words; and therein He dwelleth. He feareth not a trembling house, since He Himself strengtheneth it. Thy throne is established from thence, O Lord. 'From thence,' that is, 'from then.' This expression signifieth some particular time. From then. From when? Perhaps from the day before the Sabbath: From thence, because the title of the Psalm certifies us from whence; for on the sixth day, that is, in the sixth period of this world, the Lord came in the flesh. Plainly then, it must mean from the time when He came according to His humility, from the time He came from the womb. For what saith another Psalm? In the shining of Saints from the womb; that is, that the saints may be enlightened, that they may see God in the flesh; and that the heart may be cleansed, that He may be seen in the Divine Nature. In the shining of Saints from the womb. But what here followeth? That thou mightest not imagine that Christ had His origin in the womb: Before the morning star I have begotten thee. He subjoined this, after saying, In the shining of saints from the womb, lest thou shouldest think that Christ began with the time of His birth, as Adam, as Abraham, as David began. Before the morning star have I begotten thee; before every thing that is enlightened. For by the morning star, he either signifieth all the stars; and by the stars, the times; because God made the stars for signs of the seasons, that thou mayest see that Christ was born before all seasons: and He who is born before seasons, cannot appear to be born in a season; since the seasons too are God's creation: and indeed, if all things were made by Him, the seasons also were made by Him. Or surely, when he saith of Wisdom, Before the morning star I have begotten thee; he meaneth, before every spirit which is enlightened. Listen, beloved. Since he had said, from the womb, as if with due precaution for our faith, that we might not think that Christ began from the time when He was born from a Virgin's womb:

he instantly subjoined, Before the morning star I have begotten thee: thus here also, when he had said, from thence, that is, from the day before the Sabbath, from that sixth age of the world, when our Lord Christ came, and was born in the flesh, because He deigned to become a man for us, He Who was God, not only before Abraham, but before heaven and earth; He Who said, Before Abraham was, I am: not before Abraham only, but before Adam: not only before Adam, but before all the angels, before heaven and earth; since all things were made through Him: he added, lest thou, attending to the day of our Lord's nativity, mightest think He commenced from that time, Thy throne is established, O God. But what God? Thou art from everlasting: for which he uses *ἀπ' αἰῶνος*, in the Greek version; that word being sometimes used for an age, sometimes for everlasting. Therefore, O Thou Who seemest to be born from thence, Thou art from everlasting! But let not human birth be thought of, but Divine eternity. He began then from the time of His birth; He grew: ye have heard the Gospel. He chose disciples, He replenished them, His disciples began to preach. Perhaps this is what he speaketh of in the following verse.

7. Ver. 3. The floods lift up their voices. What are these floods, which have lift up their voices? We heard them not: neither when our Lord was born, did we hear rivers speak, nor when He was baptized, nor when He suffered; we heard not that rivers did speak. Read the Gospel, ye find not that rivers spoke. It is not enough that they spoke: They have lift up their voice: they have not only spoken, but bravely, mightily, in a lofty voice. What are those rivers which have spoken? We have said, that we do not read of them in the Gospel: nevertheless, let us seek for them therein. For if we find them not there, where shall we find them? I could invent them for you, if I chose: but I should at once be not a faithful steward, but an impertinent fabulist. Let us seek in the Gospel: at the same time, let us ask what are the rivers which have lift up their voices. Jesus stood and cried, it is said in the Gospel. What did He cry? Behold now the head of those rivers crieth out: the very source of life, whence the rivers are to flow, first lifted up His own voice. And what did Jesus stand up and cry? He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. The Evangelist subjoineth, But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus

was not yet glorified. But when Jesus was glorified in His resurrection, and ascension into heaven, as ye know, brethren; after ten days had been fulfilled, on account of some mystery, He sent His Holy Spirit, He filled His disciples. The Spirit itself was a mighty river, whence many rivers were filled. Of that river the Psalmist saith in another passage, The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God. Rivers then were made to flow from the belly of the disciples, when they received the Holy Spirit: themselves were rivers, when they had received that Holy Spirit. Whence did those rivers lift their voices? wherefore did they lift them up? Because at first they feared. Peter was not yet a river, when at the question of the maidservant he thrice denied Christ: I do not know the man. Here he lieth through fear: he lifteth not his voice as yet: he is not yet the river. But when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, the Jews sent for them, and enjoined them not to preach at all, nor to teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. The floods, then, have lift up their voice, from the voices of many waters. What is here written, pertaineth to that very lifting up of the voice; Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea; and the rest of his speech, in which he preacheth Jesus without fear with great confidence. For the floods have lift up their voice, from the voice of many waters. For when the Apostles had been dismissed from the council of the Jews, they came to their own friends, and told them what the priests and elders said unto them: but they on hearing lifted up their voices with one accord unto the Lord, and said, Lord, it is Thou Who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; and the rest which floods lifting up their voices might say, (Ver. 4.) Wonderful are the hangings of the sea. For when the disciples had lifted up their voices unto Him, many believed, and many received the Holy Spirit, and many rivers instead of few began to lift up their voice. Hence there followeth, from the voices of many waters, wonderful are the hangings of the sea; that is, the waves of the world. When Christ had begun to be preached by so powerful voices, the sea became enraged, persecutions began to thicken. When therefore the rivers had lift up their voice, from the voices of many waters, wonderful were the hangings of the sea. To be hung aloft is to be lifted up; when the sea rages, the waves are hung as from

above. Let the waves hang over as they choose; let the sea roar as it chooseth; the hangings of the sea indeed are mighty, mighty are the threatenings, mighty the persecutions; but see what followeth: but yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. Let therefore the sea restrain itself, and sometime become calmed; let peace be granted unto Christians. The sea was disturbed, the vessel was tossed; the vessel is the Church: the sea, the world. The Lord came, He walked over the sea, and calmed the waves. How did the Lord walk over the sea? Above the heads of those mighty foaming waves. Principalities and kings believed; they were subdued unto Christ. Let us not therefore be frightened; because the hangings of the sea are mighty: for yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

8. Ver. 5. Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very surely believed. The Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier than the mighty overhangings of the sea. Thy testimonies are very surely believed. Thy testimonies, because He had said beforehand, These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation. Because the world will give you tribulation, I tell you this. They began to suffer, and verified in themselves our Lord's predictions, and they became stronger. For when they saw that the sufferings were fulfilled in them, they hoped that the crowns would be fulfilled in them also; and hence, mighty are the overhangings of the sea: but yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. That in Me, He saith, ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation. What then are we doing? The sea rageth, the waves arise, and roar in fury; we suffer tribulation; do we not, possibly, fail? Never! The Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. Thus when He was saying, That in Me ye might have peace; but in the world ye shall have tribulation; as if they asked, Dost Thou think the world will not overpower and extinguish us? at once He added, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. If then He saith, I have overcome the world, cling unto Him Who overcame the world, Who overcame the sea. Rejoice in Him, because the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier, and, Thy testimonies are very surely believed. And what is the end of all these? Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord! Thine house, the whole of Thine house, not here and there: but the whole of Thine house, throughout the whole world. Why throughout the whole of the

round world? Because He hath set aright the round world, which cannot be moved. The Lord's house will be strong: it will prevail throughout the whole world: many shall fall: but that house standeth; many shall be disturbed, but that house shall not be moved. Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord! For a short time only? No. Unto length of days.

PSALM 94

Delivered in another's Diocese, at the request of an assembly of Bishops, as appears from the conclusion.

As we listened with much attention, while the Psalm was in reading, so let us listen attentively, while the Lord revealeth the mysteries which He hath deigned to obscure in this passage. For some mysteries in the Scriptures are shut up for this reason, not that they may be denied, but that they may be opened unto those who knock. If therefore ye knock with affection of piety, and sincere heartfelt love, He, Who seeth from what motives ye knock, will open unto you. It is known unto all of us, (and I wish we may not be among their number,) that many murmur against God's long-suffering, and grieve either that impious and wicked men live in this world, or that they have great power; and what is more, that the bad generally have great power against the good, and that the bad often oppress the good; that the wicked exult, while the good suffer; the evil are proud, while the good are humbled. Observing such things in the human race, (for they abound,) impatient and weak minds are perverted, as if they were good in vain; since God averteth, or seemeth to avert, His eyes from the good works of the pious and faithful, and to promote the wicked in those pleasures which they love. Weak men, therefore, imagining that they live well in vain, are induced either to imitate the wickedness of those whom they see flourishing: or if either through bodily or mental weakness they are deterred from doing wrong by a fear of the penal laws of the world; not because they love justice, but, to speak more openly, fearing the condemnation of men among men, they refrain indeed from wicked deeds, but refrain not from wicked thoughts. And among their wicked thoughts, the chief is the wickedness which leadeth them impiously to imagine that God is neglectful, and regardless of human affairs: and that He either holdeth in equal estimation the good and the wicked: or even, and this is a still more pernicious notion, that He

persecuteth the good, and favoureth the wicked. He who thinketh thus, although he doth no harm to any man, doth the greatest to himself, and is impious against himself, and by his wickedness hurteth not God, but slayeth himself. Nor do they hurt men, because they who think thus, are cowards; but nevertheless, God seeth their murders, their adulteries, their deceits and robberies, and punisheth them in their thoughts. For He observeth their real desires, for His eye is not repelled by flesh, that it may not discern the will. Such men, if they find opportunities, do not become evil, but are shewn to be so: so that thou perceivest not the manifestation of a recent growth within them, but dost understand what was lying hid within their hearts. Within these few years, and almost yesterday, men saw this: and even men of slow apprehension acknowledged it. For there was a house here very powerful for a season, of which God had made a scourge for the human race, and the human race was thence chastened; if it would recognise the scourge of the Father, and fear the sentence of the Judge. Now while this house was great, many groaned beneath it, murmured, censured, cursed, blasphemed. How do men narrow themselves, and how many are given up by that Divine Judgment to the lusts of their own hearts! Those who murmured against that house suddenly became members of it: and from them men suffered such inflictions as they themselves before had complained of from men like unto themselves. Righteous therefore is he, who, even when he can do evil, doth it not: of whom it is written, Who might offend, and hath not offended? or done evil, and hath not done it? Who is he? and we will call him blessed; for wonderful things hath he done in his life. The Scripture was speaking of those who have power to do evil, but are innocent. For the wolf wishes to do as much harm as the lion: they do harm in different ways, but they wish to do harm alike. For the lion not only despiseth, but putteth to flight the dog when he barks; and cometh to the fold, and the dogs being struck dumb, he carrieth off what he can: the wolf dareth not to go among the barking of dogs. Did he therefore return more innocent, because he could not, through his fear of the dogs, carry off his prey? God, therefore, teacheth innocence: that every man many be innocent, not from fear of punishment, but from love of justice; for then is he freely innocent, and truly innocent. But he who is innocent from fear, is not innocent, even though he harm not him whom he wisheth to harm; for he doth not hurt another by an evil deed, but himself much, through evil

lusts. Hear the Scripture, as to how he hurteth himself: He who loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. And indeed men greatly err, when they imagine their own wickedness hurteth others, and not themselves. Suppose a man's iniquity reacheth others, so as to hurt the body, to injure property, to get possession of a house, to steal a slave, to take away gold or silver, or any thing else that he has. So far, this wickedness doth affect another. Does, therefore, thy iniquity injure another's body, and not injure thy own soul?

2. Against this simple and true doctrine, by which good men are taught to love justice itself, and by so acting to wish to please God; and to understand, that their soul is by Him enlightened by a certain rational light, so that they may do what is just, and prefer that light of wisdom to all those things which are loved in the world: against this doctrine men murmur as follows; and if they do not murmur aloud, yet they are gnawed in heart. What do they say then? Am I really likely to please God by righteousness? or do those righteous persons please Him, under Whose government the wicked flourish? They commit so much evil: and no harm happeneth unto them. Or if any evil happeneth to them; what do they say unto thee, when thou beginnest to say to them, Behold how great sins hath he done, what a punishment hath he received? what was the end with him? They begin to think of the righteous, to whom evils have happened, and oppose them to us, saying, If some evil happeneth to that man because he was wicked, why did it happen to this man, who lived so righteously? He who hath done so great works of charity, who hath done so many good deeds in the Church, why hath he experienced such a lot? why had he a fate, like that of the man who hath done many evil deeds? They speak thus to shew that they do not evil, because they are not able, or because they dare not. For the tongue witnesseth, what the heart doth will: and, indeed, although the tongue were silent, itself overpowered by fear, God would see within what man was thinking of, even though it should escape another man. This Psalm therefore attempts to heal these silent thoughts, and even those which burst forth into words and acts, if they are disposed to be healed. Let them therefore listen, that they may be healed. And I wish that in the whole of the multitude which is now within these walls, and through us, heareth the word of God, there may be no such wounds that need a cure: I wish there may be none. Yet we are doing nothing superfluous in speaking of them, even if there are

no wounds there. Let hearts be prepared for healing others, when they have begun to hear such things. For I suppose, that in every Christian, when he heareth a man speaking like this, if he is a true believer, and thoroughly trusteth in God, and his hope is in a future life, not in this world, nor in this life, and he heareth not in vain that he is to 'lift up his heart:' he laugheth at, and grieveth for those who murmur thus, and saith unto himself: God knoweth what He doeth, we cannot know His design, why He spareth the wicked for a season, or why the good suffer for a season; yet it is enough for me to know this, that the good suffereth for a time, and the wicked flourisheth for a time also. He therefore who is such, is safe: and he beareth patiently all the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the good, until this life be finished, until iniquity pass away. Such a man is blessed, and God hath taught him from His law, and hath given him patience in time of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. But let him who is not as yet such, hear from us what pleaseth the Lord. But let Him who seeth better the wound which He hath to heal, say more Himself within the heart.

3. The Psalm hath this title, that is, this inscription: A Psalm of David himself, on the fourth day of the week. This Psalm is about to teach patience in the sufferings of the righteous: it enjoineth patience against the prosperity of the wicked, and buildeth up patience. This is the drift of the whole of it, from beginning to end. Wherefore then hath it such a title, on the fourth of the week? The first of the week is the Lord's day: the second, is the second week-day, which people of the world call the Moon's day: the third, is the third week-day, which they term Mars' day. The fourth of the Sabbaths therefore is the fourth week-day, which by Pagans is styled Mercury's day, and also by many Christians; but I would not call it so: and I wish they would change for the better, and cease to do so; for they have a phrase of their own, which they may use. For these terms are not of universal use: many nations have severally different names for them: so that the mode of speech used by the Church better beseemeth the mouth of a Christian. Yet if custom hath induced any person to utter that with his tongue which his heart doth disapprove, let him remember, that all those whose names the stars bear were men, and that the stars did not commence their existence in the sky, when those men began theirs, but were there long before; but on account of some mortal services rendered unto mortals, those

men in their own times, because they had great power, and were eminent in this life, since they were beloved by men, not on account of eternal life, but of temporal services, received divine honours. For then men of the old world, in being deceived and wishing to deceive, pointed to the stars in heaven, to flatter those who had done them any good service in their affection for this life, saying, that that was the star of such a man, this of another; while the man who had not beheld them before, so as to see that those stars were there before the birth of the man, were deceived into a belief: and thus this vain opinion was conceived. This erroneous opinion the devil strengthened, Christ overthrew. According to our mode of speech, then, the fourth of the week is taken for the fourth day from the Lord's day. Attend, therefore, beloved, to what this title meaneth. Here is a great mystery, and a truly hidden one. For most passages of this Psalm sound clearly, move us openly, and are easily understood; but this title, I must confess, hath no slight obscurity: but the Lord will come to our aid, He will clear the cloud, and ye shall see the Psalm, and from its title understand it. For it hath at its commencement the words, A Psalm of David himself, on the fourth of the week. The title is on the threshold, it is fixed upon the door-posts. Men choose to notice the name, and thus to enter the house. Let us therefore recall from the holy Scripture in Genesis, what was created on the first day; we find light: what was created on the second day; we find the firmament, which God called heaven: what was created on the third day; we find the form of earth and sea, and their separation, that all the gathering together of the waters was called sea, and all that was dry, the earth. On the fourth day, the Lord made the lights in heaven: The sun to rule the day: the moon and stars to govern the night: this was the work of the fourth day. What then is the reason that the Psalm hath taken its title from the fourth day: the Psalm in which patience is enjoined against the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the good. Thou findest the Apostle Paul speaking. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. The comparison from the light is applied to the saints, that they may dwell without murmurings in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

4. But that no one may imagine that the lights of heaven are to be worshipped and adored, because a likeness hath from them been drawn to signify the saints: let us first explain, in Christ's name, how unreasonable it is to suppose that thou shouldest adore the sun, moon, stars, or heaven, because some figure of likeness applied to the saints hath been derived from them: since there are many things of which a similitude has been adopted to denote the saints, which are not worshipped. For if thou thinkest that every thing which supplieth a similitude for the saints, ought to be adored; adore the mountains and hills, because it is said, The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep. Thou speakest of the saints: I of Christ Himself. Worship the lion; for it is written, The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed: worship the rock; for it is written, For that rock was Christ. But if thou dost not in Christ worship those earthly things, although they have supplied certain similitudes; from whatever part of creation an emblem may have been drawn to signify the saints, understand thou the likeness in the creature, and worship the Maker of the creature. Our Lord Jesus Christ is called the sun: is it this sun which even the minutest animals discern in common with ourselves? No. But it is that of which it is said, That was the true light, which lighteth every man which cometh into the world. For that light lighteneth not man only, but also beasts of burden, and cattle, and all animals; but that which lighteneth every man, lighteneth him in the heart, where alone he hath understanding.

5. Understand therefore, beloved, when the Apostle said, In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, that is, amid the wicked, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life: in a certain way he hath warned us how to interpret this Psalm, and how to understand its title. For such Saints in whom is the word of life, on account of the conversation which they have in heaven, despise all the iniquities which are happening on earth: and as the heavenly luminaries traverse their onward course by day and by night, and keep their path surely, while so great evils are taking place, nor do the stars fixed above in heaven deviate, engaged in tracking their heavenly paths, as their Creator hath ordered and appointed for them: so ought the Saints, if their hearts are fixed in heaven, if they hear not in vain, and respond that they 'lift up their heart,' if they imitate him who said, for our conversation is in heaven; because then they dwell in the

regions above, and think of things above, as it is said, For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also; from those very thoughts of things above, they become patient; and for all that is going on on earth they care no more, while they are traversing their own course, than the luminaries of heaven care for aught save how they do their work of days and nights, although they see so great evils constantly happening on earth. Yet perhaps it is easy for the righteous to bear those iniquities of the wicked which do not affect themselves: but as they bear those of which others are the victims, so let them bear what is aimed against themselves. For they ought to endure them not only because others are the sufferers: and if they suffer themselves, they ought not to lose their long-suffering. For he who hath lost this, hath fallen from heaven: but he who hath his heart fixed in heaven, it is but his earth that suffereth on earth. How many things do men invent of the luminaries themselves, and yet they bear them with patience; even as the righteous ought to endure all the false charges that can be brought against themselves. For instance, the very thing I spoke of above, that this star is Mercury's, that Saturn's, this again Jupiter's: all this is a reproach unto the stars. What? They when they hear such reproaches, are they moved at all, or do they cease to persevere in their course? Thus then a man who in a nation crooked and perverse hath the word of God, is like a star that shineth in heaven. In what numbers do they who think they are honouring the sun, speak falsely concerning it? They who say, Christ is the sun, lie concerning the sun. The sun knoweth that Christ is its Lord and Creator. And if it can be angry, it is more bitterly indignant against one who falsely honoureth it, than against one who revileth it; for to a good servant injury to his Lord is worse than contumely against himself. How falsely do some speak of the stars themselves? Yet they bear it, they endure, they move not. Why? because they are in heaven. But what is heaven? Let us not pass over even this: what lies do men tell, when they see the moon becoming darkened, and say, the wicked are drawing her down? Since at certain seasons she hath her eclipse according to the appointment of God. Yet she, who is in heaven, regardeth not those words of men. But what is this, in heaven? she is in the firmament of heaven. He therefore, whose heart is in the firmament of the book of God, regardeth not these things. For heaven, that is, the firmament, is figuratively taken for the book of the Law. Thus it is somewhere written, Thou spreadest out the heavens as a skin. If it is spread out like a skin, it is

spread out as a book, that it may be read. But after its season hath elapsed, it is not read. For the law is read, because we have not as yet reached that Wisdom which filleth the hearts and minds of those who look upon it: and there will be no need for us to have any thing read to us when there. For in what is read to us, syllables sound and pass away: that light of Truth passeth not away, but remaining stedfast satisfieth the hearts of those who witness it; as it is said, They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures, as out of the river; for with Thee is the well of life. And behold the well itself: and in Thy light, he addeth, shall we see light. For reading is only necessary, as long as we know in part, and prophesy in part, as the Apostle saith; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For it is not thus in that city of Jerusalem, where the angels dwell, apart from which we are now wandering, and groaning in our pilgrimage; for we groan if we know we are but pilgrims: since a man hateth his country much indeed, if he thinketh himself happy while he wandereth;—is the Gospel, or the Apostle, read in that city wherein are the angels? They feed upon the Word of God: in order for which Word of God to sound forth unto us for a season, The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Nevertheless, the written law itself is our firmament; if our heart be there, it is not plucked up by the wickednesses of men. It is therefore said, Thou spreadest out the heaven as a skin. But when the season of need for the books passeth away, what is written, The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll? He therefore whose heart is on high, hath a light in his own heart: he shineth in heaven, and is not overcome by the darkness. For the darkness is beneath: but iniquity is darkness; not a darkness that cannot change. We have spoken of this yesterday. But those who to-day are darkness, may be, if they choose, to-morrow, light: those who have come here in darkness, may at this moment, if they wish, become light. For the Apostle saith openly, that no man might imagine that sins are natural, and cannot be changed: for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light. Light, he saith, in the Lord, not in yourselves. The heart is therefore in the book: if in the book, it is in the firmament of heaven. If the heart be there, let it shine thence, and it shall not be moved by the wickedness in the world beneath; not because it is there in heaven in the flesh, but because it is there by its conversation, as it is said, but our conversation is in heaven.

Thou canst not imagine that city, because thou seest it not as yet. Dost thou wish to imagine heaven? Think of the book of God. Hear the Psalm; and in His law will he exercise himself day and night. And there he is called blessed, that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners: and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord. Behold a luminary in heaven: and in His law will he exercise himself day and night. Doth he wish to bear all things patiently? Let him not come down from heaven, and let him exercise himself in His law day and night. His heart is then in heaven: if his heart is in heaven, all the wickedness which taketh place for a season upon earth, all the successes of the wicked, all the sufferings of the righteous, to him who exerciseth himself day and night in the law of God, are as nought; patiently he endureth all, and blessed shall he be, instructed by the Lord. How is he in the firmament of heaven? because the law is a firmament. Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him in Thy law; that Thou mayest give him patience in time of adversity: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. Attend therefore to the lights of heaven, how they go forth, and set, and return, and move on in their courses; how they distinguish day from night, revolve years and seasons; while such evils are happening on earth, yet they have rest in heaven. What is it then that God teacheth us? Let us now attend to the Psalm.

7. Ver. 1. The Lord is the God of vengeance; the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently. Dost thou think that He doth not punish? The God of vengeance punisheth. What is, The God of vengeance? The God of punishments. Thou murmurest surely because the bad are not punished: yet do not murmur, lest thou be among those who are punished. That man hath committed a theft, and liveth: thou murmurest against God, because he who committed a theft on thee dieth not. See if thou do not still commit theft: if thou dost not now, see whether thou hast at any time. If thou art now day, remember thy night: if thou art now fixed in heaven, bear in mind thy earth. Perhaps thou findest that thou wast at some time a thief; and perhaps that some other person was incensed, because thou also didst live, though a thief, and hadst not died: but as thou, when thou didst commit the sin, didst live for this reason, that thou mightest not repeat it; do not, because thou hast passed over, wish to overthrow the bridge of God's compassion. Art

thou ignorant that many are yet to pass where thou too hast passed? Wouldest thou now live to murmur, if he who before murmured against thee had been heard against thee? Nevertheless, even now, thou desirest God's vengeance against the wicked, that the thief may die, and thou murmurest against God, because the thief dieth not. Weigh in the balance of equity the thief and the blasphemer; thou now sayest that thou art not a thief, but in murmuring against God, thou art a blasphemer. The thief watcheth for a man's sleep, that he may seize something: and thou sayest that God is asleep, and seeth not man. Therefore, if thou wouldest have another correct his hand, do thou first correct thy tongue: thou wouldest have him correct his heart towards man, correct thy heart towards God; lest perchance, when thou desirest the vengeance of God, if it come, it find thee first. For He will come: He will come, and will judge those who continue in their wickedness, ungrateful for the prolongation of His mercy, for His longsuffering, treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to every man according to his deeds: because, The Lord is the God of vengeance, therefore hath He dealt confidently. For He spared no man, when He was speaking here: the Lord Himself was in the weakness of the flesh, but in strength of speech. He respected not the persons of the Jewish rulers. What words did He address unto them? and, as it is written, truly in confidence, because it is said in the Psalms of Him, Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord. Who are the needy? Who are the poor? Those who have no hope except in Him, in whom alone hope reposed is never deceived. Observe this, my brethren, when the needy are mentioned in Scripture, they do not seem to be meant only who have nothing. For thou findest a poor man, who when he suffereth any injury, applieth to no one but his patron, in whose mansion he perhaps dwells, whose inmate, tenant, client he is; and declareth that he hath suffered an indignity because he belongeth to him: his heart is in the man, his hope is in the man, ashes in ashes. But there are others that are opulent, and supported by the honours of mankind in this life: who yet neither place their hopes in their money, nor place their hopes in their estates, nor place their hope in their household, nor in the splendour of a transitory dignity; but their whole hope they repose in Him, Who hath no successor, Who cannot die, Who cannot be deceived, and cannot

deceive; such men, although they seem to have many things in this life, yet use them well for the support of the indigent; they are counted among the Lord's poor. For they see that they are living in peril in this life; they feel that they are pilgrims; they dwell amid their opulence, like the traveller in the inn, who is to pass onward, not to remain as its possessor. What then saith the Lord? For the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord, and will set him in safety. Our safety is our Saviour: in Him He would place the hope of all the needy and poor. And what saith He? I will deal confidently in Him. What meaneth this? He will not fear, will not spare the lusts and vices of men. Truly, as a faithful physician, with the healing knife of preaching in His hand, He hath cut away all our wounded parts. Therefore such as He was prophesied and preached beforehand, such was He found. He was speaking on the Mount, when He said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. There they are called blessed, who are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs (it is said in this very sermon) is the kingdom of heaven. And that He might make them lights, that is, patiently enduring all those iniquities which are transitory, He added, Blessed shall ye be, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven. Further on in the sermon, when He was beginning to teach them, although the crowd surrounded Him, He said things to His disciples, which would strike the very face of the Pharisees and Jews, who had a kind of supremacy as interpreters of all the Scripture, who appeared to themselves righteous, or imagined that they seemed so, before whose supremacy the people seemed to bow in subjection. He spared them not, saying, When ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men; and so forth. He touched all; He feared no man. And when He had finished the whole sermon, the Gospel concludeth respecting Him thus, It came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes. How great things then did He, of Whom it is said, He taught them as one having authority, say unto them? Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! What great things did He say unto them, before their face? He feared no one. Why? Because He is the God of vengeance.

For this reason He spared them not in words, that they might remain for Him after to spare them in judgment; because if they were unwilling to accept the healing of His word, they would afterwards incur their Judge's doom. Wherefore? Because He hath said, The Lord is the God of vengeance, the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently; that is, He hath spared no man in word. He who spared not in word when about to suffer, will He spare in judgment when about to judge? He who in His humility feared no man, will He fear any man in His glory? From His dealing thus confidently in time past, imagine how He will deal at the end of time. Murmur not then against God, Who seemeth to spare the wicked; but be thou good, and perhaps for a season He may not spare thee the rod, that He may in the end spare thee in judgment. The Lord is the God of vengeance, the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently.

8. Ver. 2. And because He dealt confidently, they endured not His confidence: and because He came humble, and in mortal flesh, and to die, not to do as sinners, but to suffer as sinners: when He had come for these reasons, and had dealt confidently, and they could not bear His confidence of speech, what did they do? They seized Him, they scourged, mocked, buffeted, besmeared Him with spitting, crowned Him with thorns, lifted Him up on the Cross, at last slew Him. And what followed, because He dealt confidently? Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world. Because they imprisoned Him when humble, thinkest thou they will imprison Him when exalted? Because they judged Him when mortal, will they not be judged by Him when immortal? What then saith He? Be exalted, Thou, Who hast dealt confidently, the confidence of Whose word the wicked bore not, but thought they did a glorious deed, when they seized and crucified Thee; they who ought to have seized on Thee with faith, seized Thee with persecution. Thou then Who hast among the wicked dealt confidently, and hast feared no man, because Thou hast suffered, be exalted; that is, arise again, depart into heaven. Let the Church also bear with long-suffering what the Church's Head hath borne with long-suffering. Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving. He will reward them, brethren. For what is this, Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving. This is the prophecy of one who doth predict, not the boldness of one who commandeth. Not because the Prophet said, Be

exalted, Thou Judge of the world, did Christ obey the Prophet, in arising from the dead, and ascending into heaven; but because Christ was to do this, the Prophet predicted it. He seeth Christ abased in the spirit, abased he seeth Him: fearing no man, in speech sparing no man, and he saith, He hath dealt confidently. He seeth how confidently He hath dealt, he seeth Him arrested, crucified, humbled, he seeth Him rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven, and from thence to come in judgment of those, among whose hands He had suffered every evil: Be exalted, he saith, Thou Judge of the world, and reward the proud after their deserving. The proud He will thus reward, not the humble. Who are the proud? Those to whom it is little to do evil: but they even defend their own sins. For on some of those who crucified Christ, miracles were afterwards performed, when out of the number of the Jews themselves there were found believers, and the blood of Christ was given unto them. Their hands were impious, and red with the blood of Christ. He whose blood they had shed, Himself washed them. They who had persecuted His mortal body which they had seen, became part of His very body, that is, the Church. They shed their own ransom, that they might drink their own ransom. For afterwards more were converted. When many miracles were wrought by the Apostles, several thousand men in one day believed: and they were found to be in such close union with one another, that they sold all their possessions, and laid before the Apostles' feet the price of them; to every one was distributed according to his necessity: and they had one heart and one soul in the Lord. This was the case even with the very crucifiers of our Lord. And why were they not rewarded? Because it is said, Render a recompense to the proud: but they chose not to be proud. For when they saw many miracles wrought in the name of Christ, Whom they imagined they had slain: moved by those miracles, they heard from Peter in Whose name they were wrought: for they, as servants, would not assume to themselves the power of their Lord, so as to assert that His work in them was their own work. Those servants then gave the honour to their Lord: they said, that what they wondered at, was wrought in His name Whom they crucified. They then became humble, they were pricked in heart, they were moved to confession of their sin, and asked advice, saying, What shall we do? Not in despair of salvation, but in search of healing. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who repented were

humble: to them therefore recompense was not rendered, because—see what this Psalm saith, Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world, and render recompense to the proud. These then were excepted from among the number of the proud: in them those words of our Lord, spoken as He was hanging on the Cross, availed: Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world, and render a recompense to the proud. Will He then render a recompense? He will: but to the proud.

9. Ver. 3, 4. But when, when will He reward them? In the mean while the wicked triumph, exult, blaspheme, and do all manner of evil. Doth this move thee? Ask the reason in a pious spirit: blame not in thy pride. Doth it move thee? This Psalm sympathiseth with thee, it seeketh with thee, not because it knoweth not; but that thou mayest find in it what thou wast ignorant of; for this reason, it seeketh with thee what it knoweth. Just as he who wisheth to console any man, cannot cheer him unless he grieve with him: he first grieveth with him, and then cheereth him with consolatory words. But if he approacheth him laughing at his sorrow, he hath not what we have just spoken of, as the Apostle telleth us, to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep. That he therefore may rejoice with thee, thou first dost weep with him; thou art sorrowful with him, that thou mayest cheer him: thus this Psalm and the Spirit of God, surely knowing all things, seeketh with thee, as it were in thine own words: Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? They answer, and will speak wickedness, they all will speak that work unrighteousness. What is their saying, but against God, when they say: What profiteth it us that we live thus? What wilt thou reply? Doth God truly regard our deeds? For because they live, they imagine that God knoweth not their actions. Behold, what evil happeneth unto them! If the officers knew where they were, they would arrest them; and they therefore avoid the officer's eyes, that they may escape instant apprehension; but no one can escape the eye of God, since He not only seeth within the closet, but within the recesses of the heart. Even they themselves believe that nothing can escape God: and because they do evil, and are conscious of what they have done, and see that they live while God knoweth, though they would not live if the officer discovered them; they say unto themselves, These things please God: and, in truth, if they displeased Him, as they displease kings, as

they displease judges, as they displease governors, as they displease recorders, yet could we escape the eye of God, as we do escape the eyes of those authorities? Therefore these things please God. Therefore it is said in another Psalm to a sinner, These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue, and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself. What meaneth this, that I will be like thyself? That as thy sins please thyself, so thou dost think that they also please Me. And He threateneth for the future: but I will reprove thee. He then Who said, I held My tongue, is not silent. Though He said, These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue: and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be such as thyself: yet He held not His tongue. For while we are speaking, He is not silent: while the reader readeth, He is not silent: while the Psalm chanteth thus, He is not silent: and all this is the voice of God throughout the round world. How then is He silent? How is He not silent? In speech He is not silent: in vengeance He is silent. What then mean the words, These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue? These things thou hast done, and I have not punished. Thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself. On the very silence, that is, delay of punishment, He saith in another passage, I have long time holden My peace; shall I hold My peace alway? Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? They answer, and will speak unrighteousness; they will speak, all that work unrighteousness? And he signifieth all their works. What meaneth answer? They have a reply to make against the righteous. Some righteous man cometh, and saith, Do not commit iniquity. Wherefore? That thou mayest not die. Behold, iniquity I have committed: why do I not die? That man wrought righteousness: and he is dead: why is he dead? I have wrought iniquity: why hath not God carried me off? Behold, that man did righteously: and why hath He thus visited him? why suffereth He thus? They answer; this is the meaning of the word answer: for they have a reply to make; because they are spared, from the longsuffering of God, they discover an argument for their reply. He spareth them for one reason, they answer for another, because they still live. For the Apostle telleth us wherefore He spareth, he expoundeth the grounds of the longsuffering of God: And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-

suffering; not knowing that the longsuffering of God leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, that is, he who answereth and saith, If I displeased God, He would not spare me, hear what he worketh for himself; hear the Apostle; But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds. He therefore increaseth His longsuffering, thou increasest thine iniquity. His treasure will consist in eternal mercy towards those who have not despised His mercy; but thy treasure will be discovered in wrath, and what thou daily layest up by little and little, thou wilt find in the accumulated mass; thou layest up by the grain, but thou wilt find the whole heap. Omit not to watch thy slightest daily sins: rivers are filled from the smallest drops.

10. Ver. 5, 6. What do they do, who answer, and will speak unrighteousness, because they sin and are spared? They humbled Thy people, O Lord: that is, all those who live righteously, against whom all the wicked like to vent their pride. They have humbled Thy people, O Lord; and have troubled Thine heritage. They have murdered the widow, and the fatherless: and slain the proselyte; that is, the traveller, the pilgrim: the comer from far, as the Psalmist calleth himself. Each of these expressions is too clear in meaning to make it worth while to dwell upon them.

11. Ver. 7. And they have said, The Lord shall not see: He observeth not, regardeth not these things: He careth for other matters, He understandeth not. These are the two assertions of the wicked: one which I have just quoted, These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself. What meaneth, that I will be like thyself? Thou thinkest that I see thy deeds, and that they are pleasing unto Me, because I do not punish them. There is another assertion of the wicked: because God neither regardeth these things, nor observeth that He may know how I live, God heedeth me not. Doth then God make any reckoning of me? or doth He even take account of me? or of men in general? Unhappy man! He cared for thee, that thou mightest exist: doth He not care that thou live well? Such then are the words of these last; and yet they have said, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

12. Ver. 8. Take heed now, ye that are unwise among the people: O ye fools, some time understand! He teacheth His people whose feet might slip: any one among them seeth the prosperity of the wicked, himself living well among the Saints of God, that is, among the number of the sons of the Church: he seeth that the wicked flourish, and work iniquity, he envieth, and is led to follow them in their actions; because he seeth that apparently it profiteth him nothing that he liveth well in humility, hoping for his reward here. For if he hopeth for it in future, he loseth it not; because the time is not yet come for him to receive it. Thou art working in a vineyard: execute thy task, and thou shalt receive thy pay. Thou wouldest not exact it from thy employer, before thy work was finished, and yet dost thou exact it from God before thou dost work? This patience is part of thy work, and thy pay dependeth upon thy work: thou who dost not choose to be patient, chooseth to work less upon the vineyard: since this act of patience belongeth to thy labouring itself, which is to gain thy pay. But if thou art treacherous, take care, lest thou shouldest not only not receive thy pay, but also suffer punishment, because thou hast chosen to be a treacherous labourer. When such a labourer beginneth to do ill, he watcheth his employer's eyes, who hired him for his vineyard, that he may loiter when his eye is turned away; but the moment his eyes are turned towards him, he worketh diligently. But God, Who hired thee, averteth not His eyes: thou canst not work treacherously: the eyes of thy Master are ever upon thee: seek an opportunity to deceive Him, and loiter if thou canst. If then any of you had any such ideas, when ye saw the wicked flourishing, and if such thoughts caused your feet to slip in the path of God; to you this Psalm speaketh: but if perchance none of you be such, through you it doth address others, in these words, Take heed now; since they had said, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Take heed, it saith, now, ye that are unwise among the people: and ye fools, some time understand!

13. Ver. 9, 10. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who enabled thee to hear, shall He not be able Himself to hear? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that made the eye, doth He not consider? or He that instructeth the nations, shall not He reprove? Listen earnestly to this, brethren, He that instructeth the nations, shall not He reprove? This is what God is at present doing: He is instructing the nations: for this reason He

sent His word to man throughout the world: He sent it by Angels, by Patriarchs, by Prophets, by servants, through so many heralds going before the Judge. He sent also His own Word Himself, He sent His own Son in Person: He sent the servants of His Son, and in these very servants His own Son. Throughout the world is every where preached the word of God. Where is it not said unto men, Abandon your former wickedness, and turn yourselves to right paths? He spareth, that ye may correct yourselves: He punished not yesterday, in order that to-day ye may live well. He teacheth the heathen, shall He not therefore reprove? will He not hear those whom He teacheth? will He not judge those to whom He hath beforehand sent and sown lessons of warning? If thou wast in a school, wouldest thou receive a task, and not repeat it? When therefore thou receivest it from thy master, thou art being taught: the Master giveth thy task into thy hands, and shall He not exact it from thee when thou comest to repeat it? or when thou hast begun to repeat it, shalt thou not be in fear of stripes? At present then we are receiving our work: afterwards we are placed before the Master, that we may give up to Him all our past tasks, that is, that we may give an account of all those things which are now being bestowed upon us. Hear the Apostle's words: We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ: that every one may receive according to the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad.

Or He that instructeth the heathen, shall He not reprove? it is He that teacheth man knowledge. Doth He not know, Who maketh thee to know? It is He that teacheth man knowledge.

14. Ver. 11. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain. For although thou knowest not the thoughts of God, that they are righteous; He knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain. Even men have known the thoughts of God: but those to whom He hath become a friend, it is to them He sheweth His counsel. Do not, brethren, despise yourselves: if ye approach the Lord with faith, ye hear the thoughts of God; these ye are now learning, this is told you, and for this reason ye are taught, why God spareth the wicked in this life, that ye may not murmur against God, Who teacheth man knowledge. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain. Abandon therefore the thoughts of man, which are vain: that

ye may take hold on the thoughts of God, which are wise. But who is he who taketh hold on the thoughts of God? He who is placed in the firmament of heaven. We have already chaunted that Psalm, and have expounded this expression therein.

15. Ver. 12, 13. Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord: and teachest him from Thy law; that Thou mayest give him patience in time of malice: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. Behold, thou hast the counsel of God, wherefore He spareth the wicked: the pit is being digged for the sinner. Thou wishest to bury him at once: the pit is as yet being dug for him: do not be in haste to bury him. What mean the words, until the pit be digged up for the sinner? or whom doth He mean by sinner? One man? No. Whom then? The whole race of such that are sinners? No; them that are proud; for he had said before, Reward the proud after their deserving. For that publican, who would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, was a sinner; but since he was not proud, and since God will render a recompense to the proud; the pit is being dug not for him, but for them that are such, until He render a recompense to the proud. In the words then, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly, understand the proud. Who is the proud? He who doth not by confession of his sins do penance, that he may be healed through his humility. Who is the proud? He who chooseth to arrogate to himself those few good things which he seemeth to possess, and who doth detract from the mercy of God. Who is the proud? He who although he doth ascribe unto God his good works, yet insulteth those who do not those good works, and raiseth himself above them. For even that Pharisee said, I thank Thee: he said not, I do these works of my own power. He thanked God for the works which he did: he was therefore conscious that he did well, and that his doing so was of God. Whence then was he rebuked? Because he insulted the publican. Attend to this, that ye may become perfect. There ought to come first, whether in man or woman, a confession of sins, a healthful penitence which may avail to reform the man, not to mock God: but when, after repentance, he hath begun a good life, he hath yet to be careful, that he ascribe not his works to himself, but give thanks to Him, by Whose grace he hath been enabled to live well; for it is He Who called, He Who enlightened him. Is this man then perfect? No. Something is yet wanting to

him. What is that? That he be not proud over those who do not as yet live as he liveth. Such a man is at last safe: the recompense spoken of above is not rendered unto him: he is not among those for whom the pit is being dug. Consider him who said, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, even as this publican. How did he exalt himself, when he said, I am not as this publican? but the other, with downcast eyes, smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner! The one was proud of his good works, the other humble in his bad deeds. See, brethren, that humility in bad works pleased God more than pride in good works: thus God hateth the proud. And therefore He thus concluded, Verily I say unto you, the publican went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee; and He saith why: For every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. My brethren, even hence we learn that Christ hath taught us humility, because God became Man. This is the very humility which displeaseth the pagans; whence they mock us. What manner of God do ye worship, that was born? What manner of God do ye worship, that was crucified? The humility of Christ displeaseth the proud: but if it pleaseth thee who art a Christian, imitate it. If thou hast imitated it, thou wilt not labour: for Himself hath said, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. This then is the Christian doctrine: no man doeth any thing well, except by His grace. A man's bad acts are his own: his good he doth of God's bounty. When he hath begun to do well, let him not ascribe it unto himself: when he hath not attributed it to himself, let him give thanks to Him from Whom he hath received it. But when he doeth well, let him not insult him who doth not as he doth, nor exalt himself above him: for the grace of God is not stayed at him, so that it cannot reach another.

16. That Thou mayest give him patience in days of malice: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. Have patience therefore every one, if thou art a Christian, in time of malice. Days of malice are those in which the ungodly appear to flourish, and the righteous to suffer; but the suffering of the righteous is the rod of the Father, and the prosperity of the ungodly is their own snare. For because God giveth you patience in time of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly, do not think that the Angels are

standing in some place with mattocks, and are digging that great pit which shall be able to contain the whole race of the ungodly; and because ye see that the wicked are many, and say unto yourselves carnally: Truly what pit can contain so great a multitude of the wicked, such a crowd of sinners? where is a pit of such dimensions, as to contain all, dug? when finished? therefore God spareth them. This is not so: their very prosperity is the pit of the wicked: for into that shall they fall, as it were into a pitfall. Attend, brethren, for it is a great thing to know that prosperity is called a pitfall: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. For God spareth him whom He knoweth to be ungodly and impious, in His own hidden justice: and this very sparing of God, causeth him to be puffed up through his impunity. He thinketh himself exalted, and he falleth: in this very thing he falleth, in that he thinketh himself exalted. In this he thinketh that he is treading on high, and God calleth this a pit. A pit tendeth downwards, not heavenwards: but the proud ungodly appear to be ascending towards heaven, while actually they are being sunk beneath the earth. On the contrary, the humble seem to bow themselves down to the ground, but really are ascending into heaven. Have patience then, every believer, if thou hast been taught from the law of God, that thy heart may be in the firmament of heaven: for God made the lights on the fourth day, which is termed the fourth of the week; whence this Psalm hath taken its title. As thou seest the constellations in perfect patience pursue their own courses, without regarding what men say concerning them; so also do thou not regard whatever flesh may have done towards thee. For every man is flesh and blood. For thou art not vile in comparison with another's flesh, by which thou seemest to be oppressed: because He assumed the flesh for thee, and for thee He poured forth His blood, Who will bring both thee and that man before His own judgment; and if He gave thee such blessings when thou wast in thy sins, what doth He reserve for thee, if thou art faithful? Hence take patience. How art thou to take patience? When thou sayest, Because it is the will of God, therefore the wicked flourish: He wisheth to spare the wicked, He leadeth to repentance those whom He spareth; but they do not reform: He knoweth how to judge them. But a man is impatient, when he chooseth to gainsay either the goodness of the Lord, or His long-suffering, or His power, or the justice of his Judge. The proud man raiseth himself up against God: God sinketh him: and he sinketh by the very act of raising himself up against God. For in

another Psalm he thus saith, Thou hast cast them down, while they were being exalted. He said not, Thou hast cast them down, because they were exalted; or, Thou hast cast them down, after they were exalted; so that the period of their exaltation be one, of their casting down another: but in the very act of their exaltation were they cast down. For in proportion as the heart of man is proud, so doth it recede from God; and if it recede from God, it sinketh down into the deep. On the other hand, the humble heart bringeth God unto it from heaven, so that He becometh very near unto it. Surely God is lofty, God is above all the heavens, He surpasseth all the Angels: how high must these be raised, to reach that exalted One? Do not burst thyself by enlarging thyself; I give thee other advice, lest perchance in enlarging thyself thou burst, through pride: surely God is lofty: do thou humble thyself, and He will descend unto thee.

17. Ver. 14. We have heard why He spareth the wicked: this very thing is their pitfall. God saith to thee, How the pit is dug for them, and why it is dug, it is not thine to know; but from My law learn that patience is thy duty, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. And what, thou sayest, of one who suffers, and that among the ungodly themselves? The next verse answereth thee: For the Lord will not cast off His people. He trieth them, He doth not cast them off. For how speaketh Scripture in another passage? For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. He receiveth thee after thou art scourged; and dost thou say, that He casteth thee off? We see men do this in the case of their own sons: sometimes they allow their sons when despaired of to go and live at their own pleasure; those whom they hope for, they scourge; those whom they see to be utterly hopeless and intractable, they leave to live as they choose. The one whom he thus abandons to do as he pleases, he means not to admit to his inheritance: while he scourgeth that son for whom he keepeth the inheritance. But when God scourgeth a son, let him run beneath the hand of his Father while He scourgeth him; because He who scourgeth him, is chastening him in preparation for his heritage. He doth not cast off from the inheritance His son whom He scourgeth: but He scourgeth him, in order that he may receive it. Let him not be so foolish and childish in his thoughts as to say, My father loveth my brother more, whom he alloweth to do whatever he will: I, if I move against my father's orders, find the scourge.

Do thou rejoice beneath the scourge: because the heritage is kept for thee, for the Lord will not cast off His people. He chasteneth for a season, He condemneth not for ever: the others He spareth for a season, and will condemn them for evermore. Make thy choice: dost thou wish temporary suffering, or eternal punishment? temporal happiness, or eternal life? What doth God threaten? Eternal punishment. What doth He promise? Eternal rest. His scourging the good, is temporary: His sparing the wicked, is also temporary. For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance.

18. Ver. 15. Until righteousness, he saith, turn again unto judgment, and all they that have it are right in heart. Listen now, and gain righteousness: for judgment thou canst not yet have. Thou shouldest gain righteousness first; but that very righteousness of thine shall turn unto judgment. The Apostles had righteousness here on earth, and bore with the wicked. But what is said unto them? Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their righteousness therefore shall turn unto judgment. For whoever is righteous in this life, is so for this reason, that he may endure evils with patience: let him suffer patiently the period of suffering, and the day of judging cometh. But why do I speak of the servants of God? The Lord Himself, Who is the Judge of all living and dead, first chose to be judged, and then to judge. Until righteousness turn again unto judgment; and all such as have it are right in heart. Those who have righteousness at present, are not yet judges. For the first thing is to have righteousness, and afterwards to judge: He first endureth the wicked, and afterwards judgeth them. Let there be righteousness now: afterwards it shall turn again unto judgment. And so long He endureth wicked men, as God doth will, as long as God's Church shall endure them, that she may be taught through their wickedness. Nevertheless, God will not cast off His people, until righteousness be turned again unto judgment: all such as have it are right in heart. Who are those who are right in heart? Those whose will is the will of God. He spareth sinners: thou dost wish Him at once to destroy sinners. Thy heart is crooked and thy will perverted, when thy will is one way and the will of God another. God wisheth to spare sinners: thou dost not wish sinners spared. God is of long-suffering to sinners: thou dost not wish to endure sinners. But as I had begun saying, thou wishest one thing, God

willeth another: turn thy heart, and direct it unto God: because the Lord also hath had compassion on the weak. He saw in His body, that is, in His Church, the weak, who first tried to follow their own will, but when they saw that the will of God was different, directed themselves and their heart to undertake and follow the will of God. Wish not to bend the will of God to thy will, but rather correct thy will to His. The will of God is like a rule: behold, suppose, thou hast twisted the rule: whence canst thou be set straight? But the rule itself continueth straight: for it is immutable. As long as the rule is straight, thou hast whither to turn thyself, and straighten thy perversity; thou hast a means of correcting what is crooked in thee. But what do men will? It is not enough that their own will is crooked; they even wish to make the will of God crooked according to their own heart, that God may do what they themselves will, when they ought to do that which God willeth.

19. But how did our Lord unite two wills in one, in the Man which He carried with Him? Prefiguring that in His body, that is, in His Church, there would be some who would wish to do their own will, but would afterwards follow the will of God; because He hath shewn that some weak ones belong unto Himself, and hath prefigured them in Himself. For it was for this reason that He sweated blood from His whole body, because in His body, that is, in His Church, He shewed the blood of Martyrs. From His whole body blood flowed: thus His Church hath her Martyrs, through her whole body is poured forth blood. Prefiguring therefore in Himself, or in His body, some weak persons, in the person of the weak, sympathising with them, He saith, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! He sheweth the will of a man: if He remained in this will, He would then seem to be shewing a heart not right. But if He hath shewn compassion on thee, and in Himself also He freeth thee; imitate what follows, and say, Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou, Father, wilt. If thy human will hath begun to creep on thee, O that God would slay that mine enemy, so that he could not persecute me! O if it could fall out that I might not suffer so much from him! But if thou hast persevered, and hast set thy mind on something, though thou seest that it is not the will of God, thou art wicked in heart, thou hast not righteousness that shall turn again unto judgment: for all who have it, are right in heart. And who are right in heart? Those who are found

as Job was found, who saith, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as the Lord willed, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord. Behold a righteous heart: a second time under a heavy stroke, what said he to his wife, whom the devil had left and had not slain, that he might have an assistant, and not her husband a consoler? For he remembered that Adam was deceived by that Eve, and he thought this Eve was necessary to him. She came to Job, like Eve: but this Adam was happier when he conquered on the dunghill, than the Adam who was conquered in Paradise; for what did he answer unto that woman? Behold a heart prepared, a righteous heart. Did he not suffer persecutions, and those heavy ones? And all Christians suffer them; and if men rage not, yet the devil rageth: and if emperors have become Christians; hath the devil also become a Christian? Attend therefore, holy brethren, to what maketh a righteous heart. She came and said unto him, Say somewhat against God, and die. She counted all his or her own miseries: Say somewhat against God, she said, and die. And he now recognising Eve, wishing to return whence he had fallen, with his heart fixed in God, as a luminary in the firmament, dwelling in his heart in the book of God, saith, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not endure evil? Because his heart was fixed in God, therefore was it right: for because God is right, when thou dost fix thine heart in Him, He becometh thy standard, that thine heart may be right. Fix therefore thine heart in Him, and it will be right. But the human will was beginning to seduce thee. Something of the weakness of the flesh was deceiving thy mind: do not yet despair. The Lord in His weakness prefigured thee, not Himself: for the Lord, Who was to rise again on the third day, feared not to suffer. If He suffered altogether as a man, and was not about to suffer as God, and if He knew that He would rise again in three days, He could not in any way feel dread when about to die, as Paul feared not, knowing that he should rise again at the end of time. For he saith; For I am in a strait betwixt the two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. For it was a weariness to him to remain in the flesh, he felt an ardent longing in two ways; to be released and to be with Christ, he said, was far best. Thus when his martyrdom was close at hand, how did he exult! how did he glory! I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. He rejoiceth when about to be crowned, and yet He who will crown him is sorrowful: the Apostle thus rejoiceth, and our Lord Christ saith, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. But He took upon Himself sorrow, as He did the flesh. For ye must not think, that I assert that our Lord was not sorrowful. For if I asserted that He was not sorrowful, when the Gospel saith, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; it might follow that when the Gospel saith, Jesus slept, He did not sleep: when the Gospel saith, Jesus ate, that He did not eat: the worm of corruption hath thus crept in, and left nothing whole. So that it may be said, that He had not a true body, and had not a true flesh. Whatever therefore is written of Him, brethren, really happened, and is true. Was He therefore sorrowful? Assuredly sorrowful, but with sorrow taken of His own free will, even as He assumed the flesh of His own will; as He of His own will took upon Him true flesh, so did He of His own will take upon Him true sorrow. Thus also of His own will hath He shewn in Himself, that if perchance some weakness hath come over thee, and thou hast begun to wish otherwise than God doth will, thou mayest see how thine own heart hath turned itself aside from the straight rule, thou mayest fix thy heart after the rule, and thy heart which in the man had begun to be crooked, may be directed after God. Thus then the Lord, as a guide to thee, saith: My soul is sorrowful even unto death: and, O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. But say then at once what He said, that He might teach thee: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou, Father, wilt. For if ye do this, ye will have righteousness: if ye follow righteousness, your heart is right; if your heart be right, that righteousness, which now endureth, will turn again unto judgment, and afterwards, when thy Lord judgeth, thou shalt not only not dread evils, but shalt also glory in thy crown. Then shalt thou see how the longsuffering of God hath profited, either for their punishment or for thy crown: at present thou seest not: believe what thou seest not as yet, lest thou be ashamed when thou shalt see. Until righteousness turn again unto judgment: all such as have it are right in heart.

20. Ver. 16. Who will rise up for me against the wicked? or who will take my part against the evil doers? Many persuade us to divers evils: the serpent

ceaseth not to whisper to thee to work iniquity: whichever way thou shalt turn, if perchance thou hast done well, thou seekest to live well with some one, and thou hardly findest any one; many wicked men surround thee, for there are few grains of wheat, and much chaff. This floor hath its grains of corn, but as yet they suffer. Therefore the whole mass of the wheat, when separated from the chaff, will be great: the grains are few, but when compared with the chaff, still many in themselves. When therefore the wicked cry out on every side, and say, Why livest thou thus? Art thou the only Christian? Why dost thou not do, what others also do? Why dost thou not frequent the theatres, as others do? Why dost thou not use charms and amulets? Why dost thou not consult astrologers and soothsayers, even as others do? And thou crossest thyself, and sayest, I am a Christian, that thou mayest repel them, whosoever they are; but the enemy presses on, urges his attacks; what is worse, by the example of Christians he choketh Christians. They toil on, in the midst of heat: the Christian soul suffereth tribulation: yet it hath power to conquer: hath it such power of itself? For this reason remark what he saith. For he answereth, What doth it profit me that I now find charms for myself, and gain a few days? I depart hence from this life, and repair unto my Lord, Who shall send me into the flames; because I have preferred a few days to life eternal, He shall send me into hell. What hell? That of the eternal judgment of God. Is it really so, (the enemy answereth,) unless indeed thou really believest that God careth how men live? And perhaps it is not an acquaintance who speaketh thus to thee in the street, but thy wife at home, or possibly the husband to the faithful and holy wife, her deceiver. If it be the woman to her husband, she is as Eve unto him; if as the husband unto the wife, he is as the devil unto her: either she is herself as Eve unto thee, or thou art a serpent unto her. Sometimes the father would incline his thoughts to his son, and findeth him wicked, utterly depraved: he is in a fever of misery, he wavers, he seeketh how to subdue him, he is almost drawn in, and consenteth: but may God be near him. Hear therefore the Psalm: Who will rise up for me against the wicked? So many are there; wherever I look round, they meet my eyes. Who shall withstand the devil, the prince of iniquity, and his angels, and the men that have been seduced by him?

21. Ver. 17. If the Lord, he saith, had not helped me: within a little my soul had dwelt in hell. I had almost plunged into that pit which is preparing for sinners: that is, my soul had dwelt in hell. Because he already began to waver, and nearly to consent, he looked back unto the Lord. Suppose, for example's sake, he was insulted to tempt him to iniquity. For sometimes the wicked flock together, and insult the good; especially if they are more in number, and if they have taken him alone, as there is often much chaff about one grain of wheat; (though there will not be when the heap hath been fanned;) he is then taken among many wicked ones, is insulted, and surrounded; they wish to place themselves over him, they torment him and insult him for his very righteousness. A great Apostle! say they; Thou hast flown into heaven, as Elias did! Men do these things, so that sometime, when he listeneth to the tongue of men, he is ashamed to be good among the wicked. Let him therefore resist the evil; but not of his own strength, lest he become proud, and when he wishes to escape the proud, himself increase their number. But what should he say? Who will rise up for me against the wicked: or who will take my part against the evil-doers? If the Lord had not helped me, within a little my soul had dwelt in hell.

22. Ver. 18, 19. If I said, My foot hath slipt; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. See how God loveth confession. Thy foot hath slipt, and thou sayest not, my foot hath slipt; but thou sayest thou art firm, when thou art slipping. The moment thou beginnest to slip or waver, confess thou that slip, that thou mayest not bewail thy total fall; that He may help, so that thy soul be not in hell. God loveth confession, loveth humility. Thou hast slipped, as a man; God helpeth thee, nevertheless: yet say, My foot hath slipt. Why dost thou slip, and yet sayest, I am firm? When I said, My foot hath slipt, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up. Just as Peter presumed, but not in strength of his own. The Lord was seen to walk upon the sea, trampling on the heads of all the proud in this life. In walking upon the foaming waves, He figured His own course when He trampleth on the heads of the proud. The Church too doth trample upon them: for Peter is the Church Herself. Nevertheless, Peter dared not by himself walk upon the waters; but what said he? Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. He in His own power, Peter by His order; bid me, he saith, come unto Thee. He answered, Come. For the Church also trampleth on the heads of the proud; but since it is the

Church, and hath human weakness, that these words might be fulfilled, If I said, My foot hath slipt, Peter tottered on the sea, and cried out, Lord, save me! and so what is here put, If I said, My foot hath slipt, is put there, Lord, I perish. And what is here, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up, is there put, And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, saying, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? It is wonderful how God proveth men: our very dangers render Him Who rescueth us sweeter unto us. For see what followeth: because he said, If I said, My foot hath slipt, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up. The Lord hath become especially sweet unto him, in rescuing him from danger; and thus speaking of this very sweetness of the Lord, he exclaimeth and saith, O Lord, in the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul. Many sorrows, but many consolations: bitter wounds, and sweet remedies.

23. Ver. 20. Wilt Thou have any thing to do with the stool of iniquity, Who makest sorrow in learning? He hath said this, No wicked man sitteth with Thee, nor shalt Thou have any thing to do with the stool of iniquity. And he giveth an account whereof he understandeth this, For Thou makest sorrow in learning. For from this, because Thou hast not spared us, do I understand that Thou hast nothing to do with the stool of iniquity. Thou hast this in the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, and for this reason he hath adduced a testimony from the Scripture: for the time is come, he saith, that judgment must begin at the house of God; that is, the time is come for the judgment of those who belong to the house of God. If sons are scourged, what must the most wicked slaves expect? For which reason he added: And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Goopel of God? To which he addeth this testimony: For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? How then shall the wicked be with Thee, if Thou dost not even spare Thy faithful, in order that Thou mayest exercise and teach them? But as He spareth them not, for this reason, that He may teach them: he saith, For Thou makest sorrow in learning. Makest, that is, formest: from whence comes the word figulus (from fingo), and a potter's vessel is called fictile: not in the meaning of fiction, as a falsehood, but of forming so as to give any thing being and some sort of form; as before he said, He that fabricated (finxit) the eye, shall He not see? Is that, 'fabricated the eye' a falsehood? Nay, it is understood He fashioned the eye, made the

eye. And is He not a potter when He makes men frail, weak, earthly? Hear the Apostle: We have this treasure in earthen vessels. But perhaps some one else made these vessels for us? Hear him speaking: What art thou, O man, who answerest against God? Can the vessel say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me so? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make one vessel to honour, another to dishonour? Behold our Lord Himself, how He sheweth Himself a potter. Because He had made man of clay, He anointed him with clay, for whom He had not made eyes in the womb. And so when he saith, Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of wickedness, Who makest grief in learning? let us say it in this sense; Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of wickedness, Who makest grief in learning? Makest, he saith, grief in learning, that is, out of grief makest learning for us, so that grief itself becomes our instruction. How is sorrow our learning? When He scourgeth thee Who died for thee, and Who doth not promise bliss in this life, and Who cannot deceive, and when He giveth not here what thou seekest. What will He give? when will He give? how much will He give, Who giveth not here, Who here teacheth, Who maketh sorrow in learning? Thy labour is here, and rest is promised thee. Thou takest thought that thou hast toil here: but take thought what sort of rest He promiseth. Canst thou conceive it? If thou couldest, thou wouldest see that thy toil here is nothing toward an equivalent. Hear one who had seen it in part, who said, Now I know in part. What saith this Apostle? For our light affliction, which is for the present, and temporal, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, after an incredible measure, and to an incredible measure. What is the, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? For when doth it work? while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. Be not slothful in thy toil for a short space: and thou shalt rejoice without ceasing. God will give thee eternal life: consider with how much toil it should be purchased.

24. Attend, brethren; it is for sale. What I have is for sale, saith God unto thee, buy it. What hath He for sale? I have rest for sale; buy it by thy toil. Attend, that we may be in Christ's name brave Christians: the remainder of the Psalm is but a little, let us not be weary. For how can he be strong in doing, who faileth in hearing? The Lord will help us to expound unto you

the remainder. Attend then: God hath, as it were, proclaimed the kingdom of heaven for sale. Thou sayest unto Him, What is its value? The price is toil: if He were to say, its price is gold, it would not suffice to say this only, but thou wouldest seek to know how much gold; for there is a mass of gold, and half an ounce, and a pound, and the like. He said price, that thou mightest not be at pains to enquire, how long thou shouldest find it. The price of the commodity is toil: how much toil is it? Now seek how much thou shouldest toil for it. Thou art not as yet told how great that toil is doomed to be, or how much toil is required of thee: God saith this unto thee, I shew thee how great that rest will be; do thou judge with what measure of toil it should be bought. Let God therefore say how great that rest is destined to be: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be for ever praising thee. This is eternal rest: this rest will be without end; this joy will be without end, this pleasure will be without end, this incorruptibility will be without end; thou shalt have eternal life; a rest which is without end. What toil is that rest worth which hath no end? If thou wishest to make a true judgment, surely eternal rest is rightly purchased by eternal toil. This is true: but do not fear: God is merciful. For if thou hadst eternal toil, thou wouldest never reach eternal rest. Always toiling, when wouldest thou reach that which worthily indeed would be the price of eternal toil, because the rest is eternal? Make the price an equivalent: surely eternal rest is worthy of comparison with eternal toil! But if thou didst always toil, thou wouldest never reach eternal rest. That thou mayest therefore at some time gain what thou buyest, thou must not toil for ever: not that it is not of so much value, but that what is bought may be possessed. It is indeed worthy of being bought by perpetual toil; but it is necessary that it be bought by temporary toil. Certainly it ought to be so much, that is, eternal labour for eternal rest. What is the value of a million of years in toil? A million of years have an end: what I will give thee, saith God, shall not have an end. What then is the mercy of God? He saith not, toil for a million of years: he saith not, toil even for a thousand years: not, toil for five hundred years: toil while thou dost live, for a few years; thence shall thy rest commence, and be without end. Hear what followeth: Lord, in the multitude of sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul. Thou toilest not only a few years, but in those very years, consolation is not wanting, daily joys are not wanting. But rejoice not

in the world: rejoice in Christ, rejoice in His word, rejoice in His law. What I am speaking of, what ye are listening to, belongeth to these very joys. How great then are those consolations amid so great toils? True, there is what the Apostle saith, For our light affliction, which is but for a time, after an incredible measure and to an incredible measure, worketh for us an eternal weight of glory. See how small a price do we give; as it were, a single grain of pulse to receive eternal treasures; a single mite of toil, for a rest which is beyond our conception, according to what is said, it worketh for us, after an incredible measure and to an incredible measure, an eternal weight of glory. Thou rejoicest for a season: trust not therein; thou art sorrowful for a season: do not despair. Let not prosperity corrupt thee, nor adversity break thee down: lest perchance thou mayest say in thy mind, it cannot be that God, Who chasteneth even the righteous that He may save them, that He may teach them, can admit unto Himself the wicked. For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of iniquity? that is, Dost Thou share the seat of the wicked? Thou Who makest sorrow in learning; Who hast chosen thus to try these Thy children, and to teach them thus, to give them such lessons, as to leave them still in fear, lest they should love something else, and forget Thee their true good. God is good: but if He were to cease, and not to mingle bitternesses with our temporal bliss, we should forget Him.

25. But where the anguish of trouble raiseth waves in the soul, then that faith, which was sleeping there, is aroused. For it was calm, when Christ was asleep on the sea: while He was sleeping, a storm arose, and they began to be in danger. Both tranquillity then and peace will be in the Christian's heart: but as long as our faith is on the watch: but if our faith sleepeth, we are in danger. For Christ sleeping signifieth, that some forget their faith, and are in danger. But as when that ship was tossing on the waves, Christ was aroused by the tossed crew, who cried, Lord, we perish! He arose, and commanded the winds, commanded the waves, and it became calm; thus when evil lusts, evil persuasions, disturb thee, they are waves, they will be calmed. Thou dost now despair, and believest that thou dost not belong unto the Lord: let thy faith awake: awake Christ in thy heart; when faith riseth, thou recognisest where thou art: and if perchance the waves of lust tempt

thee, thou beholdest what God hath promised; and the sweetness of His promises will make thee a despiser of the sweetnesses of the world; and if perchance many threats of the powerful wicked oppress thee, and drive thee from righteousness, thou listenest to the threat of God, Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, and thou dost not leave thy righteousness: in fear therefore of eternal fire thou despisest temporal pain: and for the promises of God, thou scornest temporal happiness. He promised rest: suffer trouble. He threateneth eternal fire; despise temporal pains: and while Christ doth watch, let thy heart be calmed, that thou also mayest reach the harbour. For He would not fail to prepare a harbour, Who provided a vessel. Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of iniquity, Thou Who makest sorrow in learning? He trieth us with the wicked, and by their persecution He teacheth us. By means of the malice of the wicked the good is scourged, through the slave the son is chastened: thus is learning taught by sorrow. What God alloweth them power to do, that do wicked men, whom He spareth for a season, do.

26. Ver. 21. For what followeth? They will be captious against the soul of the righteous. Why will they be captious? Because they can find no true ground of accusation. For how were they captious against our Lord? They made up false accusations, because they could not find true ones. And will condemn the innocent blood. Why all this taketh place, he will shew in the sequel.

27. Ver. 22. And the Lord is become my refuge, he saith. Thou wouldest not seek such a refuge, if thou wert not in danger: but thou hast therefore been in danger, that thou mightest seek for it: for He teacheth us by sorrow. He causeth me tribulation from the malice of the wicked: pricked with that tribulation, I begin to seek a refuge which I had ceased to seek for in that worldly prosperity. For who, that is always prosperous, and rejoiceth in present hopes, findeth it easy to remember God? Let the hope of this life give way, and the hope of God advance; that thou mayest say, And the Lord is become my refuge: may I sorrow for this end that the Lord may become my refuge! And my God the help of my hope. For as yet the Lord is our hope, since as long as we are here, we are in hope, and not in possession. But lest we fail in hope, there is near us a provision to encourage us, and to

mitigate those very evils which we suffer. For it is not said in vain, God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it: who will so put us into that furnace of tribulation, that the vessel may be hardened, but not broken. And the Lord is become my refuge: and my God the help of my hope. Why then did He seem to thee to be as it were unjust, in that He spareth the evil? See then how the Psalm is now set right, and be thou set right together with the Psalm: for, for this reason the Psalm contained thy words. What words? Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? The Psalm just now used thy words: use therefore thyself the Psalm's words in thy turn. What are these words of the Psalm? And the Lord is become my refuge: and my God the help of my hope.

28. Ver. 23. And the Lord shall recompense them according to their works, and after their own malice; the Lord our God shall destroy them. The words, after their own malice, are not said without meaning. I am benefitted through them: and yet it is said to be their malice, and not their benefits. For assuredly He trieth us, scourgeth us, by means of the wicked. To prepare us for what doth He scourge us? Confessedly for the kingdom of heaven. For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? and when God doth this, He is teaching us in order to an eternal heritage: and this learning He often giveth us by means of wicked men, through whom He trieth and perfecteth our love, which He doth will to be extended even to our enemies. For the love of a Christian is not perfect, unless it fulfil the precept of Christ, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. Hence is the devil himself conquered; hence the crown of victory is gained. Behold how great blessings doth God bestow upon us through the ungodly: and yet He recompenseth them, not according to what He giveth us through them, but after their own malice. For see what blessings He hath heaped upon us, even by means of the enormous iniquity of Judas the betrayer. For Judas betrayed unto the cross the Son of God, by Whose suffering all nations are redeemed unto salvation: and yet for the salvation of nations no reward was given unto Judas, but for his own malice a due punishment hath been dealt unto him. For if the betrayal of Christ, and not the intention of the betrayer,

is to be considered, Judas did what God the Father did, of Whom it is written, that He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. Judas did that, which our Lord Christ Himself did, of Whom it is written, Who hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour: and again, Even as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. And yet we offer thanksgivings unto God the Father, in that He spared not His only Son, but delivered Him for us; we offer thanksgivings unto the Son Himself, Who delivered up Himself for us, and in that very act fulfilled His Father's will: and we execrate Judas, through whose deed God hath conferred so great a blessing upon us; and we rightly say, God hath recompensed him after his iniquity: and in his malice hath He destroyed him. For he delivered not Christ up for us, but for the silver for which he sold Him; although the betrayal of Christ be our recovery; and his fall be our redemption. Thus also they who persecuted the Martyrs, by persecuting them on earth, sent them into heaven: knowingly they caused them the loss of the present life, while unconsciously they were bestowing upon them the gain of a future life: but, nevertheless, unto all who persevered in their wicked hatred of the righteous, will God recompense after their own iniquities, and in their own malice will He destroy them. For as the goodness of the righteous is hurtful unto the wicked, so is the iniquity of the wicked beneficial unto the righteous. For our Lord saith, I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind; and the Apostle, To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other, the savour of life unto life. But the malice of the wicked is the left hand arms of the righteous; as the same Apostle saith, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, that is, by honour and dishonour; and he then severally recounteth the other points, shewing what were their right hand arms, viz. the glory of God, good report, truth by which it was known of them that they lived, that they were not brought to death, that they rejoiced, that they enriched many, that they possessed all things; and that their left hand arms were, that they were held in dishonour, of evil report, that they were thought deceivers, that they were unknown, slain, imprisoned, made sorrowful, seemed to be in want, and to have nothing. And what wonder is it if the soldiers of Christ overpower the devil at once by left and right hand weapons? But as peace cometh unto men of good

will, even when they are unto others a savour of death unto death; so doth destruction come unto men of ill-will, even when they are the left hand weapons of the righteous towards their salvation. He will therefore recompense them not according to the profit we derive from them; but after their own iniquity, by loving which they hate their own souls; and not according to the blessings which through them He doth dispense unto us, doth He honour them, He Who maketh a good use even of the wicked; but after their own malice shall the Lord our God destroy them.

29. Let therefore the righteous bear with the ungodly; let the temporal suffering of the righteous bear with the temporal impunity of the wicked; for the just shall live by faith. For there is no righteousness of man in this life except to live by faith, which worketh by love. But if he liveth by faith, let him believe both that he will himself inherit rest after his present toil, and that they will suffer eternal torments after their present exultation. And if faith worketh by love, let him love his enemies also, and, as far as in him lies, have the will to profit them; for thus he will prevent their injuring him when they have the will. And whenever perchance they have received power to hurt and tyrannise; let him lift his heart above, where no man hurteth him, well taught and chastened in the law of God, that he may have patience given him in the days of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. For if his delight is in the law of God, and in it he will exercise himself day and night, whose conversation is in heaven; he shineth over the earth from the firmament above; whence this Psalm hath received its title from the fourth day of the week, when the heavenly bodies were made; so that we may do all things without murmuring, holding the word of life in a nation crooked and perverse. For as the night doth not extinguish the stars in heaven; so iniquity overcometh not the minds of the faithful, when fixed in the firmament of God's Scriptures. And this very fact, that our earthly possessions are sometimes given into the power of the wicked, not only pertaineth unto our learning, so that God may become our refuge, and the help of our hope; but also profiteth towards the very pit of the ungodly, of whom it is said in another Psalm, He will be bent down and fall, when he shall have mastery of the poor.

30. Possibly the length of this discourse hath been tedious to you: although this doth not appear amid the eagerness of your attention. But though it be so, forgive me: first, because I did so by command; the Lord our God having ordered me through those Brethren, in whom He dwelleth. For God doth not command, save from His own throne. Secondly, as you have been so eager toward us, so, we confess, have we been toward you. May our God therefore console us for this toil, so that it may result in your advancement unto salvation, not in a testimony to accuse you. This I say, brethren, that ye may profit from what ye have heard, and ruminate within yourselves: permit not yourselves to forget, not only by thinking over again upon these subjects, and discoursing upon them, but also by so living. For a good life which is led after God's commands, is like a pen, because it is heard writing in our hearts. If it were written on wax, it would easily be blotted out: write it in your hearts, in your character, and it shall never be blotted out.

PSALM 95

1. Ver. 1. I could wish, brethren, that we were rather listening to our father: but even this is a good thing, to obey our father. Since therefore he who deigneth to pray for us, hath ordered us, I will speak unto you, beloved, what from the present Psalm Jesus Christ our common Lord shall deign to give us. Now the title of the Psalm is David's Song of praise. The Song of praise signifieth both cheerfulness, in that it is a song; and devotion, for it is praise. For what ought a man to praise more than that which pleaseth him so, that it is impossible that it can displease him? In the praising of God therefore we praise with security. There he who praiseth is safe, where he feareth not lest he be ashamed for the object of his praise. Let us therefore both praise and sing; that is, let us praise with cheerfulness and joy. But what we are about to praise, this Psalm in the following verses sheweth us.

2. O come, let us sing unto the Lord. He calleth us to a great banquet of joy, not one of this world, but in the Lord. For if there were not in this life a wicked joy which is to be distinguished from a righteous joy, it would be enough to say, Come, let us rejoice; but he has briefly distinguished it. What is it to rejoice aright? To rejoice in the Lord. Thou shouldest piously joy in the Lord, if thou dost wish safely to trample upon the world. But what is the word, Come? Whence doth He call them to come, with whom he wisheth to rejoice in the Lord; except that, while they are afar, they may by coming draw nearer, by drawing nearer they may approach, and by approaching rejoice? But whence are they afar? Can a man be locally distant from Him who is every where? Dost thou wish to be far from Him? Where wilt thou go, that thou mayest be far from Him? For a certain sinner indeed, but yet penitent with the hope of salvation and sorrowing for his sins, and fearing the anger of God, and wishing to appease Him, speaketh this in another Psalm, Whither shall I go then from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I go then from Thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there.

What remaineth then? For if he climb up into heaven, and there find God: whither shall he go, that he may fly far from God? See what he saith, If I go down to hell, Thou art there also? If therefore by climbing into heaven, he there findeth God; if by going down into hell, he escapeth Him not; whither shall he go, whither shall he fly, from that angry God, unless unto Himself appeased? And yet, though no man could possibly fly from Him who is every where; unless some were far from God, it would not be written, This people do honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. It is not therefore by place, but by being unlike Him, that a man is afar from God. What is to be unlike Him? it meaneth, a bad life, bad habits; for if by good habits we approach God, by bad habits we recede from God. One then and the same man standing bodily in the same spot, by loving God doth approach Him, and by loving iniquity doth recede from Him: he no where moveth his feet, and yet he can both approach and recede. For our affections are our feet in this journey, according as each man hath affection, according as each hath love, so doth he either approach or recede from God. Do we not usually say, when we find any things unlike, This is far from that? When we are comparing any two men, two horses, two garments, and some one saith, This garment is like, it is such as that; or, This man is such as that man; what doth he say who contradicts it? It is no such thing: it is far from it. What meaneth, It is far from it? It is unlike it. They stand close together: and yet this man is far from that. But two ungodly men, alike in life and habits, if one be in the east, the other in the west, are near each other. In the same way two righteous men, one in the east, the other in the west, are with one another, since they are in God. On the other hand, one righteous, and one ungodly man, even though they be bound with one chain, yet are widely separated from one another. If therefore by unlikeness we recede from God, by likeness we approach unto God. What likeness? That after which we were created, which by sinning we had corrupted in ourselves, which we have received again through the remission of sins, which is renewed in us in the mind within, that it may be engraved a second time as if on coin, that is, the image of our God upon our soul, and that we may return to His treasures. For what was the reason, brethren, that our Saviour chose to discover to His tempters, from a piece of money, what God demandeth? For when they resolved, by way of seeking a pretext of false accusation, to question the Master of Truth respecting the tribute paid

to Cæsar, and by consulting Him to tempt Him as to whether it were lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar; what answered He? Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? He asked them to shew Him the tribute money, and they brought unto Him a penny; and He saith unto them, Whose image and superscription hath it? They say unto Him, Cæsar's. Then saith He unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. As if He should say: If Cæsar seeketh on a coin his own image, doth not God seek in man His Image? Our Lord Jesus Christ, inviting us to the resemblance of this image, commandeth us also to love our enemies; and giveth us an example from God Himself: As your Father, He saith, which is in heaven; Who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father. When He saith, Be ye therefore perfect, as He is, He calleth us to resemble Him. If therefore He invite us to resemble Him, it is clear that by being unlike we had receded from God, and had become far from Him through unlikeness, and are made near unto Him by means of our resemblance to Him, that what is written may be realized in us; Come near unto Him, and be lightened. To some therefore, dwelling afar, and living evilly, this Psalm saith, O come, let us rejoice unto the Lord! Whither do ye go? whither retire? whither depart? whither do ye fly, by rejoicing in the world? O come, let us rejoice unto the Lord! Whither do ye go to rejoice, when ye turn away? O come, let us rejoice unto Him by Whom we were created! O come, let us rejoice unto the Lord!

3. Let us make a joyful noise unto God, our salvation. What is to make a joyful noise? Not to be able to express one's joy in words, and yet to testify by the voice what hath been conceived within, and refuseth to be compassed within words: this is to make a joyful noise. Consider, beloved, those who make a joyful noise in any ordinary songs, as in a sort of competition of worldly joy; and ye see them while reciting the written lines bursting forth with a joy, that the tongue sufficeth not to express the measure of; how they shout, indicating by that utterance the feeling of the mind, which cannot in words express what is conceived in the heart. If they then in earthly joy make a joyful noise; might we not do so from heavenly joy, which truly we cannot express in words?

4. Ver. 2. Let us prevent His face by confession. Confession hath a double meaning in Scripture. There is a confession of him who praiseth, there is that of him who groaneth. The confession of praise pertaineth to the honour of Him Who is praised: the confession of groaning to the repentance of him who confesseth. For men confess when they praise God: they confess, when they accuse themselves; and the tongue hath no more worthy use. Truly, I believe these to be the very vows, of which he speaketh in another Psalm: I will pay Thee my rows, which I distinguished with my lips. Nothing is more elevated than that distinguishing, nothing is so necessary both to understand and to do. How then dost thou distinguish the vows which thou payest unto God? By praising Him, by accusing thyself; because it is His mercy, to forgive us our sins. For if He chose to deal with us after our deserts, He would find cause only to condemn. O come, he said therefore, that we may at last go back from our sins, and that He may not cast up with us our accounts for the past; but that as it were a new account may be commenced, all the bonds of our debts having been burnt. How great then is His praise; how great His mercy. This let us confess, that is, by praising Him. For if confession were always the act of a penitent, it would not be spoken of in the Gospel of our Lord Himself: In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Because Christ confessed, was He in any way a penitent? He could repent of nothing, Who had not done one action wrongly: but He confessed, by His praises of His Father. Therefore, since this also is a passage of exultation, we ought perhaps to understand that confession which consists in the praise of God: whence also it is styled, The song of praise, that we may not here understand the confession of penitents, but of those who praise God. And why is it that he at once admonisheth us of some confession, when he saith, Let us prevent His face by confession? What meaneth this? He will come: Let us prevent His face by confession, beforehand: before He arrive, let us by confession condemn what we have done, that He may find that which He may crown, not what He must condemn. But doth not this very act of confessing thy sins pertain to the praise of God? Yea truly it most fully doth pertain to God's praise. And why? Because the more desperate was the state of the sufferer, so much greater is the honour of the physician. The more therefore thou despairedst

of thyself on account of thy iniquities, do thou confess thy sins; for so much greater is the praise of Him Who forgiveth, as is the fulness of the penitent's confession more abundant. Let us not therefore imagine that we have receded from the song of praise, in understanding here that confession by which we acknowledge our transgressions: this is even a part of the song of praise; for when we confess our sins, we praise the glory of God. Let us prevent His face in confession.

5. And make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms. We have already said what it is to make a joyful noise: the word is repeated, that it may be confirmed by the act: the very repetition is an exhortation. For we have not forgotten, so as to wish to be again admonished, what was said above, that we should make a joyful noise: but usually in passages of strong feeling a well-known word is repeated, not to make it more familiar, but that the very repetition may strengthen the impression made: for it is repeated that we may understand the feeling of the speaker. Hence our Lord's words, Verily, verily, I say unto you: one verily sufficed: why, Verily, verily, unless because the repetition strengthens? Let us, he saith then, make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms. And what shall we say in Psalms? what shall we say, or rather feel, in that burst of joy? what are the topics which belong to this song of praise? Hear now: (ver. 3.) For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. Let us therefore make a joyful noise unto Him. For the Lord will not cast off His people; let us make a joyful noise unto Him. (Ver. 4.) For in His hands are all the corners of the earth: and the heights of the hills are His also: for all these reasons let us make a joyful noise unto Him. (Ver. 5.) For the sea is His, and He made it: and His hand prepared the dry land: let us make a joyful noise unto Him. Now time sufficeth not for a proportionate exposition of what all this meaneth: yet if it be utterly neglected, we shall remain debtors. Hear then some brief remarks, as the time alloweth, gleaning as much as I shall be able: since even a few seeds, where the soil is fruitful, bear the richest crop.

6. Ver. 3. First, he mentions this, as a reason for our song to praise. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. There are therefore gods above whom is our great God, to Whom we make a joyful noise, in Whom we heartily rejoice, to Whom we utter a song of praise. There are:

but not unto us. For the Apostle saith: For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God the Father, of Whom are all things, and we by Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we in Him. If therefore not unto us, unto whom? Hear from another Psalm, As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but devils; but it is the Lord who made the heavens. The Holy Spirit could not in terms more magnificent and lofty commend unto thee through the Prophet thy God and Lord. It was not enough to say that God is terrible above all devils: why is it high praise enough to say, that He is above all devils? For all the gods of the heathen are but devils. But where is thy Lord? But it is the Lord Who made the heavens. Thy God created that, where devils cannot dwell: for the devils were cast down from heaven. The heavens are preferred to the devils, thy Lord even to the heavens: because thy Lord made also the heavens. How much higher therefore than the heathen gods, that are devils, is He, Who is higher than the heavens, whence fell the angels, to become devils? And yet all nations were under these devils: temples were built to devils, altars reared to devils, priests established to devils, sacrifices offered to devils, men brought in for prophets that were possessed with devils! All these honours the heathen offered to devils: all, in their true use, are only due to the one great God. The heathen erected a temple to devils; God hath a temple: the heathen established priests for devils; God hath a priest; the heathen offered sacrifice to devils; God hath a sacrifice. For those devils who wished to appear gods, would not exact such honours in order to deceive, unless because they know that they are due unto the true God; for what a false deity arrogates to himself, is usually due to the True God. We therefore acknowledge a true temple of God. For the temple of God is holy, saith St. Paul, which are ye. If therefore we are the temple of God, our soul is the altar of God. What is the sacrifice of God? Perhaps we are at the present moment offering sacrifice on the altar of God, when we praise God; for the Psalm teacheth us, in these words: The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me: and there is the way, where I will shew the salvation of God. But if thou seekest for a Priest, there is One above the heavens; He intercedeth for thee, Who on earth died for thee. Therefore, The Lord our God is a great God: and a great King above all gods. Understand here men by the word gods: for the Lord is not King over devils. And hence we have

Scripture testimony: God standeth in the congregation of princes: He is a Judge among gods. He calleth them gods, because they partake of the Divine Nature, not because they are in their own nature gods; by grace, through which He willed to make them gods. How great is that God Who maketh gods! or what sort of gods are those whom a man maketh? As He is great in making gods, so are they nothing who are made by man. The true God maketh gods of those who believe in Him, to whom He hath given power to become the sons of God. And for that reason He is the True God, because He is not a created God: but we who are created, are not true gods, though better than those which man maketh. Since the images of the heathen are of gold and silver, the work of men's hands: they have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not. For us our God hath created eyes that see; and yet He hath not created us gods, in that He hath made for us eyes that see; for this He hath done also for cattle: but He hath made us gods, because He hath enlightened our inner eyes. Unto Him therefore be praise, unto Him be confession, unto Him shouts of joy: For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

7. (Ver. 3. in LXX.) For the Lord will not cast off His people. Praise be unto Him, and shouts of joy be unto Him! What people shall He not cast off? we have no right to make our own explanation here: for the Apostle hath prescribed this unto us, he hath explained whereof it is said. For this was the Jewish people, the people where were the prophets, the people where were the patriarchs, the people begotten according to the flesh from the seed of Abraham; the people in which all the mysteries which promised our Saviour preceded us; the people among whom was instituted the temple, the anointing, the Priest for a figure, that when all these shadows were past, the Light itself might come; this therefore was the people of God; to it were the prophets sent, in it those who were sent were born; to it were delivered and entrusted the revelations of God. What then? is the whole of that people condemned? far be it. It is called the good olive-tree by the Apostle, for it commenced with the patriarchs: but there were boughs there that were dry, because they were raised too high in pride; they were therefore lopped off owing to their barrenness, and the wild olive engrafted owing to its humility. Nevertheless, most beloved, lest the wild olive when engrafted should become proud, what saith the Apostle? If thou wert cut out of the

olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree? As thou, by not remaining in thy infidelity, hast deserved to be engrafted upon the good olive, when thou wast a wild olive; so will they when repentant naturally be grafted more easily upon their own olive: such are the Apostle's words respecting them. This then is the tree itself: though some of its boughs have been broken, yet all have not. For if all the boughs were broken, whence is Peter? whence John? whence Thomas? whence Matthew? whence Andrew? whence are all those Apostles? whence that very Apostle Paul who was speaking to us but now, and by his own fruit bearing witness to the good olive? Were not all these of that people? Whence also those five hundred brethren to whom our Lord appeared after His resurrection? Whence were so many thousands at the words of Peter, (when the Apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke with the tongues of all nations,) converted with such zeal for the honour of God and their own accusation, that they who first shed the Lord's blood in their rage, learnt how to drink it now that they believed? And all these five thousand were so converted that they sold their own property, and laid the price of it at the Apostles' feet. That which one rich man did not do, when he heard from the Lord's mouth, and sorrowfully departed from Him, this so many thousands of those men by whose hands Christ had been crucified, did on a sudden. In proportion as the wound was deeper in their own hearts, with the greater eagerness did they seek for a physician. Since therefore all these were from thence, the Psalm saith of them, For the Lord will not cast off His people. For the Apostle, speaking on this point, hath quoted this as a testimony: I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew. If in fact the Lord were to cast away His people, there would have been no root for Paul himself to spring from: and whence he was, there were others also. In these is the Lord's people, not in all; but, as it is written, a remnant shall be saved. Not in all: but the floor hath been fanned: the wheat been garnered within: the chaff lieth left. In all that thou seest of the reprobate Jews, thou seest the chaff. The wheat hath already been gathered from the floor whereon thou seest this chaff, and hath been stored up in the barn. Let us see both, and distinguish both.

8. Ver. 4. What doth the Psalm add? In His hand are all the corners of the earth: we recognise the corner stone: the corner stone is Christ. There cannot be a corner, unless it hath united in itself two walls: they come from different sides to one corner, but they are not opposed to each other in the corner. The circumcision cometh from one side: the uncircumcision from the other; in Christ both peoples have met together: because He hath become the stone, of which it is written, The stone which the builders rejected, hath become the head of the corner. If then Christ be the head of the corner, let us not regard the difference of those who come from afar, but the nearness of those who are united in Christ. Therein let us see verified the words: The Lord shall not cast off His people. Behold one wall, in which now as we have said, the Lord hath not cast off His people. Thence are the Apostles: thence all the Israelites who believed, and who threw the price of their possessions which they had sold at the Apostles' feet; poor by their own resolution, in God rich. We have recognised one wall, and what we have said, that the Lord will not cast off His people, hath therein been fulfilled: let us see another also. For in His hand are all the corners of the earth. Behold another wall in all the heathen, all the heathen came unto the Corner Stone, where they acknowledged the kiss of peace: to Him, One, who made the two one; not as the heretics, who made two of one. For the Apostle saith this same of our Lord Christ: For He is our peace, Who hath made both one. Let us therefore shout for joy in Him. Why? Because the Lord will not cast off His people. Again: Why? For in His hand are all the corners of the earth: and the heights of the hills are His also. The heights of the hills meaneth the high places of the earth. Sometimes these high places, that is, earthly powers, are adverse to the Church; they have promulgated laws against the Church, and endeavoured to blot out the name of Christian from off the earth: but after the fulfilment of the prophecy, All the kings of the earth shall fall down before Him, what is here said happened, the heights of the hills are His also.

9. Ver. 5. But perhaps thou art busied with temptations, and hence it is that, though placed in so great grace of God's promises, thou art disturbed by the world's stumbling-blocks? But those very stumbling-blocks do not really any thing to thee; since they have received their measure from God: For the sea is His. For the sea is this world, but God made also the sea: nor can the

waves rage save only so far as to the shore, where He hath marked their bounds. There is therefore no temptation, that hath not received its measure from the Lord. Let there be therefore temptations, let there be tribulations; thou art perfected, not consumed by them. Consider whether those very temptations be not useful. Hear the Apostle; God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. He saith not, He will not suffer you to be tempted at all; for if thou wert to refuse temptation, thou wouldest also refuse reformation. Thou art therefore reformed: and if thou art reformed, thou art in His hands Who formed thee. He taketh something from thee: He chasteneth thee in some way, He levelleth somewhat, He cleanseth somewhat in thee: He worketh with certain tools of His own: these are the stumbling-blocks of this world: do thou only be careful not to fall out of thy Maker's hands. No temptation beyond thy strength will approach thee. This God alloweth for thy benefit, whence thou mayest profit. Lastly, hear the Apostle himself adding this: But will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Perhaps then the sea was a subject of fear to thee? Fear not. For the sea is His, and He made it. Fearest thou stumbling-blocks from the heathen? He made the heathen also Himself; He will not permit them to rage beyond the measure which He knoweth, whence thou mayest profit. Saith not another Psalm, All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord! if all the nations which Thou hast made, it is clear that He also created the nations: therefore, The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands prepared the dry land. Be thou the dry land: thirst for the grace of God: that as a sweet shower it may come upon thee, may find in thee fruit. He alloweth not the waves to cover what He hath sown. And His hands prepared the dry land. Hence also therefore let us shout unto the Lord.

10. Since then these things are thus: since we have expounded so great things pertaining unto the praise of God, return ye to where he commenced: (ver. 6.) O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him; and mourn before the Lord our Maker. Let us rejoice, because He made this and that. He hath enumerated many things, and he now repeateth his exhortation, O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him: let us mourn before the Lord our Maker. Now that I have mentioned the praises of God, be not slothful, and stand

not afar in life and habits. O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him. But possibly ye are anxious on account of your sins, which have made you afar from God; let us do as followeth: And mourn before the Lord our Maker. Perhaps thou art burning with the consciousness of a fault; blot out with tears the flame of thy sin: mourn before the Lord: fearlessly mourn before the Lord, Who made thee; for He despiseth not the work of His own hands in thee. Think not thou canst be restored by thyself. By thyself thou mayest fall off, thou canst not restore thyself: He Who made thee restoreth thee. Let us mourn before the Lord our Maker: weep before Him, confess unto Him, prevent His face in confession. For who art thou who mournest before Him, and confessest unto Him, but one whom He created? The thing created hath no slight confidence in Him Who created it, and that in no indifferent fashion, but according to His own image and likeness. O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him; and mourn before the Lord our Maker.

11. Ver. 7. For He is the Lord our God. But that we may without fear fall down and kneel before Him, what are we? We are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. See how elegantly he hath transposed the order of the words, and as it were not given its own attribute to each word; that we may understand these very same to be the sheep, who are also the people. He said not, the sheep of His pasture, and the people of His hand; which might be thought more congruous, since the sheep belong to the pasture; but He said, the people of His pasture. The people are therefore sheep, since he saith, the people of His pasture: the people themselves are sheep. But again, since we have sheep which we buy, not which we create; and he had said above, Let us fall down before our Maker; it is rightly said, the sheep of His hand. No man maketh for himself sheep, he may buy them, they may be given, he may find them, he may collect them, lastly, he may steal them; make them he cannot. But our Lord made us; therefore the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand, are the very sheep which He hath deigned by His grace to create unto Himself. He praiseth these sheep also in the Song of Solomon, speaking of some perfect ones as the teeth of His Spouse the Holy Church: Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which come up from the washing; whereof every one beareth twins, and there is none barren. What meaneth, Thy teeth? These by

whom thou speakest: for the teeth of the Church are those through whom she speaketh. Of what sort are thy teeth? Like a flock of sheep that are shorn. Why, that are shorn? Because they have laid aside the burdens of the world. Were not those sheep, of which I was a little before speaking, shorn, whom the bidding of God had shorn, when He saith, Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt find treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me? They performed this bidding: shorn they came. And because those who believe in Christ are baptized, what is there said? which come up from the washing; that is, come up from the cleansing. Whereof every one beareth twins. What twins? Those two commandments, wherefrom hang all the Law and the Prophets. We, therefore, are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

12. Ver. 8. Therefore, To-day if ye will hear His voice. O my people, the people of God! God addresses His people: not only the people of His which He shall not cast off, but also all His people. For He speaketh in the corner-stone to each wall: that is, prophecy speaketh in Christ, both to the people of the Jews, and the people of the Gentiles. To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For sometime ye heard His voice through Moses, and hardened your hearts. He then, when you hardened your hearts, spoke through a herald; He now speaketh by Himself, let your hearts soften. He who used to send heralds before Him, hath now deigned to come Himself; He here speaketh by His own mouth, He Who used to speak by the mouths of the Prophets. To-day, therefore, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

13. Ver. 9. Why hath he said, Harden not your hearts? Because ye remember what your fathers used to do. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and in the day of temptation in the wilderness. Ye surely remember, brethren, that that people tempted God, received chastening, and was governed in the desert as it were by an excellent rider, with the curb of laws, the curb of commandments; and was not forsaken by God even when unsubdued, not only in His present blessings, but in the rod of correction that never ceased. Therefore harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the desert—where your fathers—proved me. Let such be no more your fathers: imitate them not. They were your fathers, but

if ye do not imitate them, they shall not be your fathers: yet as ye were born of them, they were your fathers. And if the heathen who came from the ends of the earth, in the words of Jeremias, The Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our forefathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit: if the heathen forsook their idols, to come to the God of Israel; ought Israel whom their own God led from Egypt through the Red Sea, wherein He overwhelmed their pursuing foes; whom He led out into the wilderness, fed with manna, never took His rod from correcting them, never deprived them of the blessings of His mercy; ought they to desert their own God, when the heathen have come unto Him? When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works. For forty years they saw My works, for forty years they provoked Me: before them I repeatedly wrought miracles by the hand of Moses, and yet they more and more hardened their hearts.

14. Ver. 10. Forty years long was I very near unto this generation. What doth very near mean? I made Myself present in signs and good works: not on one day, not on two; but forty years long was I very near unto this generation, and said, It is a people that do always err in their hearts; for they have not known My ways. The forty years have the same meaning as the word always. For that number forty indicates the fulness of ages, as if the ages were perfected in this number. Hence our Lord fasted forty days, forty days He was tempted in the desert, and forty days He was with His disciples after His resurrection. On the first forty days He shewed us temptation, on the latter forty days consolation: since beyond doubt when we are tempted we are consoled. For His body, that is, the Church, must needs suffer temptations in this world: but that Comforter, Who said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, is not wanting. And I said, It is a people that do always err in their hearts. For this was I with them forty years, to shew such a race of men, which alway provoketh Me, even unto the end of the world: because by those forty years He meant to signify the whole of this world's duration.

15. Ver. 11. What then? In their stead shall there not be others to enter into God's rest? Those whom God's mercy displeased are rejected, they who resisted God with a hardened heart; they being rejected, hath God lost His

people? It will not then be true, that God is able out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Therefore, I said, It is a people that do alway err in their hearts, and they have not known My ways; unto whom I swear in My wrath, that they should not enter into My rest: this is an awful threat. We began with exulting joy: but this Psalm hath ended with great fear: Unto whom I swear in My wrath, that they should not enter into My rest. It is a great thing for God to speak: how much greater for Him to swear? Thou shouldest fear a man when he sweareth, lest he do somewhat on account of his oath against his will: how much more shouldest thou fear God, when He sweareth, seeing He can swear nought rashly? He chose the act of swearing for a confirmation. And by whom doth God swear? By Himself: for He hath no greater by whom to swear. By Himself He confirmeth His promises: by Himself He confirmeth His threats. Let no man say in his heart, His promise is true; His threat is false: as His promise is true, so is His threat sure. Thou oughtest to be equally assured of rest, of happiness, of eternity, of immortality, if thou hast executed His commandments; as of destruction, of the burning of eternal fire, of damnation with the devil, if thou hast despised His commandments. He therefore swore unto them in His anger, that they should not enter into His rest: and yet some must enter into His rest; for it will not be given to none. They therefore being reprobate, we shall enter: for although some of the boughs have been broken for their want of resemblance and infidelity, we shall be engrafted on account of our faith and humility. Let us therefore enter into His rest. But by what means did they who entered enter, those who were chosen, who resisted not with an hardened heart? Because it is true, that God will not cast off His people.

PSALM 96

My lord and brother Severus still defers the pleasure we shall feel in his discourse, which he oweth us; for he acknowledgeth, that he is held a debtor. For all the Churches through which he hath passed, by his tongue the Lord hath gladdened: much more therefore ought that Church to be rejoiced, out of which the Lord hath propagated his preaching among the rest. But what shall we do, but obey his will? I said, however, brethren, that he deferred, not that he defrauded us. Therefore let us keep him as a debtor bound, and release him not until he hath paid. Attend therefore, beloved: as far as the Lord alloweth, let us say somewhat of this Psalm, which indeed you already know; for the fresh mention of truth is sweet. Possibly when its title was pronounced, some heard it with wonder. For the Psalm is inscribed: When the house was being built after the Captivity. This title having been prefixed, ye were perhaps expecting in the text of the Psalm to hear what stones were hewn from the mountains, what masses were drawn to the spot, what foundations were laid, what beams were placed on high, what columns raised. Its song is of nothing of this kind: and if its song be of another sort, doth then the Psalm not agree with its title, but beareth one thing in its title, another in its words? It doth nothing of the sort, but only seeketh those who can understand it. For it speaketh of the building of the house. Let all the stones of that house know what they have sung. For the house is built unto God, not in the place where Solomon built. For he built a temple: and ye have just heard what the Lord said of that very temple. When His disciples were admiring the stones and vast masses of the temple, they discovered their admiration and wonder unto the Lord; and He said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. It is no such house that is in building; for behold where it is built, not in one spot, not in any particular region. For thus he commenceth.

2. Ver. 1. O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth. If all the earth singeth a new song, it is thus building while it singeth: the very act of singing is building: but only, if it singeth not the old song. The lust of the flesh singeth the old song: the love of God singeth the new. Whatever thou singest of lust, thou art singing the old song; although the words of the new song sound in the mouth, yet praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. It is better for thee to be new and silent, than to be old and sing; for if thou art new, and art silent, it soundeth not but in the ears of men; for thy heart is not silent of the new song, which reacheth the ears of God, Who made thee a new man. Thou lovest, and art silent: thy very love is a voice unto God, and that very love is a new song. Hear why it is a new song: the Lord saith, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. The whole earth then singeth a new song: there the house of God is built. All the earth is the house of God. If all the earth is the house of God, he who clingeth not to all the earth, is a ruin, not a house; that old ruin whose shadow that ancient temple represented. For there what was old was destroyed, that what was new might be built up. And how was the old destroyed? Now I say unto you, He saith, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. The stone is Christ: but the Apostle saith, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. If whosoever is baptized in Christ, putteth on Christ, who placeth stone upon stone, except he who layeth baptism upon Baptism? But be not terrified: there shall not be left one that shall not be thrown down. For the stones are gathered together in such a manner for the new fabric, which is built after the captivity, and love so bindeth together in unity, that it is not stone upon stone, but all the stones are one stone. Wonder not: the new song, that is, the altered law of love, hath done this. The Apostle bindeth us together into this very structure, and fasteneth us when bound together in that unity, saying, Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Where there is this unity of Spirit, there is one stone; but one stone formed out of many. How one formed out of many? By forbearing one another in love. Therefore the house of the Lord our God is in building; it is this that is being wrought, for this are these words, for this these readings, for this the preaching of the Gospel over the whole world; as yet it is in building. This house hath increased greatly, and filled many nations: nevertheless, it hath

not yet prevailed through all nations: by its increase it hath held many, and will prevail over all: and it is gainsaid by those who boast of their being of its household, and who say, it hath already lost ground. It still increaseth, still all those nations which have not yet believed are destined to believe; that no man may say, will that tongue believe? will the barbarians believe? what is the meaning of the Holy Spirit having appeared in the fiery tongues, except that there is no tongue so hard that it cannot be softened by that fire? For we know that many barbarous nations have already believed in Christ: Christ already possesseth regions where the Roman empire hath never yet reached; what is as yet closed to those who fight with the sword, is not closed to Him Who fighteth with wood. For the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Who is it who fighteth with wood? Christ. With His cross He hath vanquished kings, and fixed upon their forehead, when vanquished, that very cross; and they glory in it, for in it is their salvation. This is the work which is being wrought, thus the house increaseth, thus it is building: and that ye may know, hear the following verses of the Psalm: see them labouring upon, and constructing the house. O sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth.

3. Ver. 2, 3. Sing unto the Lord, bless His Name: be telling good tidings of His salvation from day to day. How doth the building increase? Be telling, he saith, good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Let it be preached from day to day; from day to day, he saith, let it be built; let My house, saith God, increase. And as if it were said by the workmen, Where dost Thou command it to be built? Where dost Thou will Thy house to increase? Choose for us some level, spacious spot, if Thou wish an ample house built Thee. Where dost Thou bid us be telling good tidings from day to day? He sheweth the place: Declare His honour unto the heathen: His honour, not yours. O ye builders, Declare His honour unto the heathen. Should ye choose to declare your own honour, ye shall fall: if His, ye shall be built up, while ye are building. Therefore they who choose to declare their own honour, have refused to dwell in that house; and therefore they sing not a new song with all the earth. For they do not share with the whole round world; and hence they are not building in the house, but have erected a whited wall. How sternly doth God threaten the whited wall? There are innumerable testimonies of the Prophets, whence He curseth the whited

wall. What is the whited wall, save hypocrisy, that is, pretence? Without it is bright, within it is dirt. What I am about to say, hath already been said: but since it hath been said through that Spirit, Which the Lord hath deigned to confer even upon us, we have declared it; and whatever we now say by the same Spirit, those who were before us have said. It is not therefore to be passed by: but to be declared, since by God's gift it hath been spoken. A certain person, speaking of this whited wall, said thus: 'as, if in a wall which standeth alone, and is not connected with any other walls, you make a door, whoever enters, is out of doors; so in that part which hath refused to sing the new song together with the house, but hath chosen to build a wall, and that a whited one, and not solid, what availeth it that it hath a door?' If thou enterest, thou art found to be without. For because they themselves did not enter by the door, their door also doth not admit them within. For the Lord saith, I am the door: by Me they enter in. Who are they who enter by the door? They who seek the Lord's glory, not their own. Who enter by the door? They who do as it is said, Declare His honour unto the heathen. He that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep, saith the Lord; but he who climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. He who entereth by the door, is humble: he who climbeth up another way, is proud: for that reason He spoke of one as entering in, of the other as climbing up. But the one by entering is received, the other by climbing is thrown down. Declare His honour unto the heathen. What is, unto the heathen? Perhaps by nations but a few are meant: and that part which hath raised the whited wall hath still somewhat to say: why are not Getulia, Numidia, Mauritania, Byzacium, nations? Provinces are nations. Let the word of God take the word from hypocrisy, from the whited wall, building up the house over the whole world. It is not enough to say, Declare His honour unto the heathen; that thou mayest not think any nations excepted, he addeth, and His wonders unto all people.

4. Ver. 4. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. What Lord, except Jesus Christ, is great, and cannot worthily be praised? Ye know surely that He appeared as a Man: ye know surely that He was conceived in a woman's womb, ye know that He was born from the womb, that He was suckled, that He was carried in arms, circumcised, that a victim was offered for Him, that He grew; lastly, ye know that He was buffeted, spit upon,

crowned with thorns, was crucified, died, was pierced with a spear; ye know that He suffered all these things: He is great, and cannot worthily be praised. Despise not what is little, understand what is great. He became little, because ye were such: let Him be acknowledged great, and in Him ye shall be great. For thus the house is built, thus in the house itself are the constructions raised: the stones which are brought to the building increase. Increase, therefore; acknowledge Christ to be great: and He Who was little, is great, great beyond praise. He hath finished his words: he wished to say how great; even though throughout the whole day he should say, Great, Great, yet what would he say? Saying all the day, Great, he would at length stop; because day ceaseth: His greatness is before days, beyond days, without day. What then should he say? For God is great, and cannot worthily be praised. For what can a small tongue say towards the praise of the Great One? By saying, Beyond praise, he hath spoken, and hath given to imagination what it may conceive: as if saying, What I cannot utter, do thou reflect on; and when thou shalt have reflected, it will not be enough. What no man's thought uttereth, doth any man's tongue utter? The Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. Let Him be praised, and preached: His honour declared, and His house built.

5. He is more to be feared than all gods. Are there then gods, than whom He is more to be feared? Let us see whom he is speaking of, and we shall see why he speaketh. Meanwhile before we speak, most beloved, attend. He Who appeared as it were frightened among men, is more to be feared than all gods. Did not the heathen rage? Have not the people imagined vain things against the Lord, and against His Anointed? Did not those fat bulls close Him in on every side? Did not that roaring lion gape upon Him, and entering into the hearts of the raging crowd exclaim, Crucify, crucify Him! as if He could be frightened by that roar, Who is more to be feared not than all men, but than all gods? For the spot where he wished to build the house, is itself woody, where it was said yesterday, we found it in the wood. For he was seeking that very house, when he said, 'in the wood.' And why is that spot woody? Men used to worship images: it is not wonderful that they fed hogs. For that son who left his father, and spent his all on harlots, living as a prodigal, use to feed hogs, that is, to worship devils; and by this very superstition of the heathen, all the earth became a wood. But he who

buildeth a house, rooteth up the wood; and for this reason it was said, While the house was being built, after the captivity. For men were held captive under the devil, and served devils; but they were redeemed from captivity. They could sell, but they could not redeem themselves. The Redeemer came, and gave a price; He poured forth His Blood, and bought the whole world. Ye ask what He bought? Ye see what He hath given; find out then what He bought. The Blood of Christ was the price. What is equal to this? What, but the whole world? What, but all nations? They are very ungrateful for their price, or very proud, who say that the price is so small that it bought the Africans only; or that they are so great, as that it was given for them alone. Let them not then exult, let them not be proud: He gave what He gave for the whole world. He knew what He bought, because He knew at what price He bought it. Thus because we are redeemed, the house is built after the captivity. And who are they who held us in captivity? Because they to whom it is said, Declare His honour, are the clearers of the wood: that they may root out the wood, free the earth from captivity, and build, and raise up, by declaring the greatness of the Lord's house. How is the wood of devils cleared away, unless He Who is above them all be preached? All nations then had devils for their gods: those whom they called gods, were devils, as the Apostle more openly saith, The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God. Since therefore they were in captivity, because they sacrificed to devils, and on that account the whole earth had remained woody; He is declared to be great, and above all worldly praise.

6. Ver. 5. And how is His greatness shewn, that He may root out all superstitions, captive beneath which the people was held, whom He Who is more to be feared than all gods came to redeem? As if the Psalmist were asked, Why hast thou said, above all gods? Are these then gods? He addeth, As for all the gods of the heathen, they are devils. Attend, beloved. He was speaking of something great but just before: The Lord is great; and as if he failed in His praises, he addeth, and cannot worthily be praised. Did I not say this, that He left it to thee to imagine what he could not express in words? But when he was expressing it in words, what great praise did he utter concerning our Lord Jesus Christ? That He is above all devils? For when he had said, He is more to be feared than all gods: he added, As for all

the gods of the heathen, they are devils. It is not a great thing to be above devils: even thou, if thou willest, shalt be so: if thou believest in Him. This then is that exalted praise, The Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. For wishing to express it, as far as the human tongue is capable, and although the Holy Spirit is a powerful player of that organ, yet in the straitness of human breath, He uttereth syllables, He giveth birth to thoughts; wishing therefore to express it by this tongue, what saith he? The Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. Say, say, how far He may be praised! He is more to be feared, he saith, than all gods. Why didst thou say, more than all gods? Because all the gods of the heathen are devils. And is this all the praise of Him Who cannot worthily be praised, that He is above all the gods of the heathen, which are devils? Wait, and hear what followeth: It is the Lord that made the heavens. Not above all gods only therefore, but above all the heavens which He made, is the Lord. If he were to say, above all gods, for the gods of the heathen are devils, and if the praise of our Lord stopped here, he had said less than we are accustomed to think of Christ; but when he said, But it is the Lord that made the heavens; see what difference there is between the heavens and devils: and what between the heavens and Him Who made the heavens; behold how exalted is the Lord. He said not, But the Lord sitteth above the heavens; for perhaps some one else might be imagined to have made them, upon which He was enthroned: but, It is the Lord that made the heavens. If He made the heavens, He made the Angels also: Himself made the Angels, Himself made the Apostles. The devils yielded to the Apostles: but the Apostles themselves were heavens, who bore the Lord. And what Lord did they bear? Him by Whom they were made. Hear that they are heavens: The heavens declare the glory of God. To these very heavens, it is said, Declare His honour among the heathen: and His wonders in all people. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised: He is more to be feared than all gods. What gods? As for the gods of the heathen, they are devils. And He is more to be feared than all these gods. But it is the Lord that made the heavens. O heavens, which He made, declare His honour unto the heathen! Let His house be built throughout the earth, let all the earth sing a new song.

7. Ver. 6. Confession and beauty are before Him. Dost thou love beauty? Wishest thou to be beautiful? Confess! He said not, beauty and confession, but confession and beauty. Thou wast foul; confess, that thou mayest be fair: thou wast a sinner; confess, that thou mayest be righteous. Thou couldest deform thyself: thou canst not make thyself beautiful. But of what sort is our Betrothed, who hath loved one deformed, that he might make her fair? How, saith some one, loved He one deformed? I came not, said He, to call the righteous, but sinners. Whom callest Thou? sinners, that they may remain sinners? No, saith He. And by what means will they cease to be sinners? Confession and beauty are before Him. They honour Him by confession of their sins, they vomit the evils which they had greedily devoured; they return not to their vomit, like the unclean dog; and there will then be confession and beauty: we love beauty; let us first choose confession, that beauty may follow. Again, there is one who loveth power and greatness: he wisheth to be great as the Angels are. There is a certain greatness in the Angels; and such power, that if the Angels exert it to the full, it cannot be withstood. And every man desireth the power of the Angels, but their righteousness every man loveth not. First love righteousness, and power shall follow thee. For what followeth here? Holiness and greatness are in His sanctification. Thou wast before seeking for greatness: first love righteousness: when thou art righteous, thou shalt also be great. For if thou preposterously dost wish first to be great, thou fallest before thou canst rise: for thou dost not rise, thou art raised up. Thou risest better, if He raise thee Who falleth not. For He who falleth not descendeth unto thee: thou hadst fallen: He descendeth, He hath stretched forth His hand unto thee; thou canst not rise by thy own strength, embrace the hand of Him who descendeth, that thou mayest be raised up by the Strong One.

8. What then? (Ver. 7.) If confession and beauty are before Him. Holiness and greatness in His sanctification. (This we declare, when we are building the house; behold, it is already declared unto the heathen;) what ought the heathen to do, to whom those who have cleared away the wood have declared the Lord's honour? He now saith to the heathen themselves, Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people: ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour. Ascribe them not unto yourselves: because they also

who have declared it unto you, have not declared their own, but His honour. Do ye then ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour; and say, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us: but unto Thy Name give the praise. Put not your trust in man. If each of you is baptized, let him say: He baptizeth me, of whom the friend of the Bridegroom said, He baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. For when ye say this, ye ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour: Ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour.

9. Ver. 8. Ascribe unto the Lord glory unto His Name. Not unto the name of man, not unto your own name, but unto His ascribe worship. Bring sacrifices, and come into His courts. Bring sacrifices! What are ye to bring, that ye may enter into His courts? For already the house hath increased, and the courts are made: those who bring sacrifices, let them enter the courts. Are we to bring bulls, goats, or sheep? God forbid. Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee. He commended unto us a present which we ought to offer. See whether that be not the present of which he hath before spoken, confession and beauty are before Him. Confession is a present unto God. O heathen, if ye will enter into His courts, enter not empty. Bring presents. What presents shall we bring with us? The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt not Thou despise. Enter with an humble heart into the house of God, and thou hast entered with a present. But if thou art proud, thou enterest empty. For whence wouldest thou be proud, if thou wert not empty? For if thou wast full, thou wouldest not be puffed up. How couldest thou be full? If thou wert to bring a present, which thou shouldest carry to the courts of the Lord. Let us not retain you much longer: let us run over what remaineth. Behold the house increasing: behold the edifice pervade the whole world. Rejoice, because ye have entered into the courts; rejoice, because ye are being built into the temple of God. For those who enter are themselves built up, they themselves are the house of God: He is the inhabitant, for whom the house is built over the whole world, and this ‘after the captivity.’ Bring presents, and come into His courts.

10. Ver. 9, 10. O worship the Lord in His holy court: in the Catholic Church; this is His holy court. Let no man say, Lo, here is Christ, or there. For there shall arise false prophets. Say this unto them, There shall not be

left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. Ye are calling me to the whited wall; I adore my God in His holy court.

11. Let the whole earth be moved before His face. Tell it out among the nations, that the Lord reigneth from the wood: and that it is He Who hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved. What testimonies of the building of the house of God! The clouds of heaven thunder out throughout the world that God's house is being built; and the frogs cry from the marsh, We alone are Christians. What testimonies do I bring forward? That of the Psalter. I bring forward what thou singest as one deaf: open thine ears; thou singest this; thou singest with me, and thou agreest not with me; thy tongue soundeth what mine doth, and yet thine heart disagreeeth with mine. Dost thou not sing this? Behold the testimonies of the whole world: Let the whole earth be moved before His face: and dost thou say, that thou art not moved? Tell it out among the heathen, that the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Shall men perchance prevail here, and say they reign by wood, because they reign by means of the clubs of their bandits? Reign by the Cross of Christ, if thou art to reign by wood. For this wood of thine maketh thee wooden: the wood of Christ passeth thee across the sea. Thou hearest the Psalm saying, He hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved; and thou sayest it hath not only been moved since it was made fast, but hath also decreased. Dost thou speak the truth, and the Psalmist falsehood? Do the false prophets, when they cry out, Lo, here is Christ, and there, speak truth; and doth this Prophet lie? Brethren, against these most open words ye hear in the corners rumours like these; "such an one was a traditor," and, "such an one was a traditor." What dost thou say? Are thy words, or the words of God, to be heard? For, it is He Who hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved. I shew unto thee the round world built: bring thy present, and come into the courts of the Lord. Thou hast no presents: and on that account thou art not willing to enter. What is this? If God were to appoint unto thee a bull, goat, or ram, for a present, thou wouldest find one to bring: He hath appointed a humble heart, and thou wilt not enter; for thou findest not this in thyself, because thou art swollen with pride. He hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved: and He shall judge the people righteously. Then shall they mourn, who now refuse to love righteousness.

12. Ver. 11. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad. Let the heavens, which declare the glory of God, rejoice; let the heavens rejoice, which the Lord made; let the earth be glad, which the heavens rain upon. For the heavens are the preachers, the earth the listeners. Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof. What sea? The world. The sea hath been stirred up, and the fulness thereof: the whole world was roused up against the Church, while it was being extended and built over all the earth. Concerning this stirring up, ye have heard in the Gospel, They shall deliver you up to councils. The sea was stirred up: but how should the sea ever conquer Him Who made it?

13. Ver. 12, 13. The plains shall be joyful, and all things that are in them. All the meek, all the gentle, all the righteous, are the 'plains' of God. Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice. The trees of the woods are the heathen. Why do they rejoice? Because they were cut off from the wild olive, and engrafted into the good olive. Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice: because huge cedars and cypresses have been cut down, and undecaying timbers have been bought for the building of the house. They were trees of the woods; but before they were sent to the building: they were trees of the woods, but before they produced the olive.

14. Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice before the face of the Lord. For He cometh, for He cometh to judge the world. He came at first, and will come again. He first came in His Church in clouds. What are the clouds which bore Him? The Apostles who preached, respecting whom ye have heard, when the Epistle was being read: We are ambassadors, he saith, for Christ: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. These are the clouds in whom He cometh, excepting His last Advent, when He will come to judge the quick and the dead. He came first in the clouds. This was His first voice which sounded forth in the Gospel: From this time shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. What is, from this time? Will not the Lord come in later times, when all the tribes of the earth shall mourn? He first came in His own preachers, and filled the whole round world. Let us not resist His first coming, that we may not tremble at His second. But woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days! Ye have heard but now in the Gospel: "Take ye heed, for ye know not at what hour He

cometh.” This is said figuratively. Who are those with child, and who give suck? Those who are with child, are the souls whose hope is in the world: but those who have gained what they hoped for, are meant by ‘they who give suck.’ For example: one wisheth to buy a country seat; he is with child, for his object is not gained as yet, the womb swelleth in hope: he buyeth it; he hath brought forth, he now giveth suck to what he hath bought. Woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days! Woe to those who put their hope in the world; woe to them that cling to those things which they brought forth through hope in the world. What then should the Christian do? He should use, not serve, the world. What is this? Those that have as those that have not. Thus he saith, thus he exhorteth those whom he wisheth not to be found by that day as it were with child, and as they that give suck: But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness. He who is without carefulness, waiteth without fear for his Lord’s coming. For what sort of love is it of Christ, to fear lest He come? Brethren, are we not ashamed? We love Him, and yet we fear lest He come. Are we sure that we love Him? or do we love our sins more? Therefore let us hate our sins for their own sake, and love Him Who will come to punish our sins. He will come, whether we like or not: for because He cometh not just now, it is no reason that He will not come at all. He will come, and when thou knowest not; and if He shall find thee ready, thy ignorance is no hurt to thee. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for He cometh: at His first coming. And what afterwards? For He cometh to judge the earth. And all the trees of the woods shall rejoice. He came first: and later to judge the earth: He shall find those rejoicing who believed in His first coming, for He cometh.

15. For with righteousness shall He judge the world: not a part of it, for He bought not a part: He will judge the whole, for it was the whole of which He paid the price. Ye have heard the Gospel, where it saith, that when He cometh, He shall gather together His elect from the four winds. He gathereth all His elect from the four winds: therefore from the whole world.

For Adam himself (this I had said before) signifieth in Greek the whole world; for there are four letters, A, D, A, and M. But as the Greeks speak, the four quarters of the world have these initial letters, Ἀνατολή, they call the East; Δύσις, the West; Ἄρκτος, the North; Μεσημβρία, the South: thou hast the word Adam. Adam therefore hath been scattered over the whole world. He was in one place, and fell, and as in a manner broken small, he filled the whole world: but the mercy of God gathered together the fragments from every side, and forged them by the fire of love, and made one what was broken. That Artist knew how to do this; let no one despair: it is indeed a great thing, but reflect Who that Artist was. He Who made, restored; He who formed, reformed; With righteousness shall He judge the world, and the peoples in His truth. What is righteousness and truth? He will gather together His elect with Him to the judgment, but the rest He will separate one from another; for He will place some on the right, others on the left hand. But what is more just, what more true, than that they shall not expect mercy from their Judge, who have refused to act mercifully, before their Judge come? But those who chose to act with mercy, with mercy shall be judged. For it shall be said unto them placed on the right hand: Come, ye blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And He imputeth to them works of mercy: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; and so forth. Again, what is imputed unto those who are placed on the left hand? That they refused to do mercifully. And whither shall they go? Into everlasting fire. This evil hearing will call forth deep wailings. But what saith another Psalm? The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, He will not be afraid of any evil hearing. What is evil hearing? Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. He who shall rejoice in good, shall not fear for evil hearing. How shall they rejoice in good hearing? Come, ye blessed of My Father. And for what hearing shall they not fear? Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. This is righteousness, this is truth. For He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth. Because thou art unrighteous, shall thy Judge not be righteous? Because thou art a liar, shall not Truth be true? But if thou wishest to find Him merciful, be merciful before He cometh: forgive whatever hath been done against thee, give from out of thine abundance. And from whose

abundance, but His, dost thou give? If of thine own thou gavest, it would be bounty: since thou givest of His, it is restitution. For what hast thou, that thou hast not received? These are the most acceptable offerings unto God, mercy, humility, confession, peace, love. These let us bring, and without fear we shall await the coming of our Judge, Who with righteousness shall judge the world, and the peoples with His truth.

PSALM 97

A Discourse to the people.

God affordeth mighty spectacles to the Christian heart, than which truly nothing more delightful can be discovered; if only the palate of faith be at hand to taste the honey of God. We believe that in all of you, who have with all your heart believed in our Saviour, there dwelleth His Spirit, that may delight you when the Prophecies are read, so many years ago uttered by the mouth of the Saints, and so many years after fulfilled in the faith of nations. For those holy Prophets felt the liveliest joy, when they saw those things in the Spirit, not as yet fulfilled, but destined to be fulfilled. They felt great delight: and yet, by reason of the love with which they were inspired for us, whom they saw not as yet, but in the Spirit travailed of us; they wished, if possible, to live with us in these times, and to see what they were prophesying in the Spirit, fulfilled. Thence our Lord saith unto His disciples, when they began to discern these things: Many righteous men and prophets have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. For although they saw these things in the Spirit, yet they were figured unto them as future: but to the Apostles they were fulfilled before their eyes. Whence that Simeon, a righteous old man, rejoiced much when he saw the infant Jesus, recognising the great in the small, and in that little body the Creator of heaven and earth. He rejoiced therefore much, because he had been answered, that he should not depart from this life, before he should see the salvation of God. He therefore recognised Him, he was delighted, and exulted with joy; saying these words, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. Great therefore is this gladness; and love createth it. We were pleased, when this Psalm was sung: and some things therein were understood by all; but some, as I think, either by few, or certainly not by all. Let us therefore at once consider it in

this discourse, in which we are serving you; and let us see with how great goodness God hath been pleased to make us glad, by making what He hath promised present to us, and by displaying unto us the truth of His promises.

2. (Title.) This Psalm is entitled, A Psalm of David's, when his land was restored. Let us refer the whole to Christ, if we wish to keep the road of a right understanding: let us not depart from the corner-stone, lest our understanding suffer a fall: in Him let that become fixed, which wavered with unstable motion; let that rest upon Him, which before was waving to and fro in uncertainty. Whatever doubt a man hath in his mind when he heareth the Scriptures of God, let him not depart from Christ; when Christ hath been revealed to him in the words, let him then be assured that he hath understood; but before he arriveth at the understanding of Christ, let him not presume that he hath understood. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. What doth this mean, and how are these words understood in Christ, When his land was restored? For it is easy to understand how Christ is represented by David; for Christ was born of Mary, and from David's seed; and since He was to be born of David's seed, on that account He is prophesied of, figuratively, under David's name. David is therefore Christ; because also the signification of David is Strong of Hand: and who is so strong, as He Who by the Cross conquered the world? For after His resurrection and ascension, when the Holy Spirit had been received, and the Apostles were speaking with different tongues, a multitude of those very persons who had crucified Him, were roused to seek the counsel of salvation; received it, and believed; they were forgiven, their guilt in the blood of Christ was remitted unto them, the drinking of His blood imparted unto them; they became faithful disciples of Him whose persecutors they had been; they believed in Him Whom they crucified, and before Whom they bowed their heads in mockery; Himself they chose to hold as their Head. Thus then in the words of the title of the Psalm, was His land restored; for this land was Judæa, all of which had been lost, when in their ignorance they crucified their Lord, like delirious men raving against their physician, and in their frenzy rejecting the means of safety. The whole of Judæa then had as it were been lost: how the whole? The very Apostles even wavered; Peter, who was following Him with a courageous devotion, thrice in the confusion of fear denied Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself,

on His resurrection, found some of them talking together about Himself in the road, in such a state as to reply unto Him on His asking them the subject of their conversation: Art thou alone a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we hoped that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel. They had already lost their hope in Christ. For they said not, we hope that He shall redeem Israel; but, we hoped that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel. He was with them in Person, and hope in Him was not in them. He shewed Himself unto them, He was manifested even to the rest of His disciples, seen, touched, and found by those to whom He seemed already to have perished: the faith of those who had fallen was brought back; His land was restored. Then after speaking forty days with them, He ascended into heaven; and, as I mentioned a little before, by sending His Holy Spirit, He caused His disciples, unlearned men, to speak with the tongues of all nations. Then they, in whose behalf He had prayed not in vain, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, moved, as I have said, sought for safety, received counsel to believe in Him; three thousand believed in one day, and again five thousand; the Church of Christ began to be rife throughout Judæa, where the reproach of Christ had been rife; and His land was restored. But since He had Himself said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd; the Apostles were sent to the Gentiles also, to whom the Prophets had not been sent. They were sought, who had not sought; they were found, who were expecting nothing; that God, Whom they knew not as Promiser, they found a Redeemer. For the Jews before His advent held Him bounden unto them by promises, because the Prophets had there preached Christ, there had promised Christ; but they had not recognised Him when present Whom they had heard promised; while to the Gentiles no promise was made; although that they should believe also had been mentioned in the Prophets. Though not addressed to them, it was said of them. The Gospel was sent unto them also: and ye have heard this from the dispensation of God; for that lesson hath just been read unto you in the Acts of the

Apostles, how the centurion Cornelius believed: for Cornelius the centurion was not of the Jewish nation. He prayed, fasted, gave alms. God deserted him not, although placed among the Gentiles; and an Angel was sent to announce unto him, that his prayer and his alms were had in remembrance in the sight of God; he believed, when he had invited Peter unto him. Could not the Angel teach him? He sent him unto Peter, that his faith might be the rather made sure unto him by a man, that God had deigned to visit men: nor did He, Who deigned to be Man, disdain to teach by means of men. Thus then was His land restored; one wall coming from the Jews, another wall from the Gentiles; which two walls meeting from opposite sides, He was Himself the corner stone, where both should be joined together.

3. Again, how do we understand the words, when His earth was restored? When His Flesh was raised again. For another interpretation, not departing from Christ, may thus occur to us: the earth restored is the resurrection of the flesh; for after His resurrection, all those things which are sung of in the Psalm were done. Let us then hear a Psalm full of joy on the restoration of the Earth. Let the Lord our God excite in us a hope and a pleasure worthy of so great a thing; may He rule our discourse, that it be fit for your hearts, that whatever joy our heart doth feel in such sights, He may bring on to our tongue, and thence conduct it into your ears, then to your heart, thence to your actions.

4. Ver. 1. The Lord is King. He Who stood before the judge, He Who received blows, He Who was scourged, He Who was spit upon, He Who was crowned with thorns, He Who was struck with fists, He Who hung upon the cross, He Who as He hung upon the wood was mocked, He Who died upon the cross, He Who was pierced with the spear, He Who was buried, Himself arose from the dead. The Lord is King. Let kingdoms rage as much as they can; what can they do to the King of kingdoms, the Lord of all kings, the Creator of all worlds? Is He despised, because He appeared so submissive, so humble? That was His mercy, not His want of power: for He appeared humble, that we might take Him. But let us now see: The Lord is King, let the earth be glad: yea, let the multitude of the isles be joyous. It is so indeed, because the word of God hath been preached not in the continent alone, but also in those isles which lie in mid sea: even these are full of

Christians, full of the servants of God. For the sea doth not retard Him Who made it. Where ships can approach, can not the words of God? The isles are filled. But figuratively the isles may be taken for all the Churches. Why isles? Because the waves of all temptations roar around them. But as an isle may be beaten by the waves which on every side dash around it, yet cannot be broken, and rather itself doth break the advancing waves, than by them is broken: so also the Churches of God, springing up throughout the world, have suffered the persecutions of the ungodly, who roar around them on every side; and behold the isles stand fixed, and at last the sea is calmed. Yea, let the multitude of the isles be joyous.

5. Ver. 2. Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the direction of His seat. For whom are clouds and darkness round about Him? For whom are righteousness and judgment the direction of His seat? Clouds and darkness for the ungodly, who have not understood Him: righteousness and judgment for the faithful, who have believed in Him; for the former have not seen through pride, the latter have deserved to be guided by their humility. Hear the clouds and darkness, and hear righteousness and judgment. The Lord Himself saith: For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. What meaneth, that they which see might be made blind? They who seem unto themselves to see, who think themselves wise, who think healing not needful for them, that they may be made blind, may not understand. And that they which see not may see; that they who confess their blindness may obtain to be enlightened. Let there be therefore clouds and darkness round about Him, for those who have not understood Him: for those who confess and humble themselves, righteousness and judgment are the direction of His seat. He called those who believe in Him His seat: for from them hath He made Himself a seat, since in them Wisdom sitteth; for the Son of God is the Wisdom of God. But we have heard from another passage of Scripture a strong confirmation of this interpretation. The soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. Because then they who have believed in Him have been made righteous: justified by faith, they have become His own seat: He sitteth in them, judging from them, and guiding them. Wherefore? because He found them meek, like obedient cattle, not kicking backward, not shaking their heads in pride against His yoke, not refusing

His scourge: they became good and obedient cattle of His; and deserved what is said in another Psalm, “Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment: and such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way.” Clouds and darkness, therefore, are around Him, unto them who are not righteous; but to the meek, righteousness and judgment shall be the habitation of His seat.

6. Ver. 3. There shall go a fire before Him, and burn up His enemies on every side. Of what fire doth he say, brethren, a fire shall go before Him, and burn up His enemies on every side? I do not think it is said of that fire, into which the ungodly are to be sent by that sentence of the last judgment, to whom when set apart on the left, as we remember having read in the Gospel, He shall say, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. I do not think it is said of that fire. Why do I not? Because he speaketh of some fire, which shall go before Him, before He cometh to judgment. For it is said, that the fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies on every side, that is, throughout the whole world. That fire will burn after His advent: this, on the contrary, will go before Him. What fire then is this? We may understand it of the punishment of the wicked, we may understand it of the salvation of the redeemed. Of the punishment of the wicked, how? Because when Christ was preached, the heathen were enraged, and stirred up persecution: which was the fury of fire, consuming rather those who persecuted, than those whom they persecuted. For when we see two persons, the one enraged, the other meekly enduring, it is for you to judge, which of them is on fire. Ye may behold such a spectacle in the human race. Place before your eyes an unjust man, excited in mind, savage in countenance, with flaming eyes, with flashing words, carried on to another’s death, to depredations, injury, insult, not able to hold, to restrain himself; the other patiently enduring his words, his blows, whatsoever he chooseth to inflict upon him, and when he striketh his cheek, offering unto him the other: when thou hast seen on the one side fury, on the other mildness; on the one anger, on the other endurance: on the one flames, on the other patience; wilt thou hesitate to pronounce which of these is on fire, and suffereth punishment? He whose body is assaulted, or he whose mind is laid waste? On which account the prophet Isaiah also saith, The fire of thine enemies shall devour them, even now. What is, even now? Before that great day of judgment cometh, those who will afterwards burn with the

punishment of eternal fire, already burn in their own rage. Unless indeed ye imagine, brethren, that injustice, which proceedeth out of one man to the injury of another, hurteth him to whom it proceedeth, and hurteth not him from whom it proceedeth. How can it be so? Sometimes a burning brand is applied to a damp and green log of wood, without burning it, though it is on fire itself; thus also thine enemy. If perchance there be any unjust man who plotteth snares against thee, or deviseth any trouble, he is unjust: then if thou art green wood, that is, if vigorous and flourishing with spiritual sap, thou shalt resist the fire of his hostilities, by praying for him who persecuteth thee: he is on fire, thou remainest whole; and his injustice hurteth him, thee not at all. Unless indeed thou thinkest that it hurteth thee, if he hath done ought unto thy body, and thy soul hath come patient and incorrupt to be crowned before God, following the example of its Lord, Who chose rather to suffer from the Jews, and who could have avoided death, but yet died, just as He was born, though He needed not to have been born. For thou wast born by the law of thy nature, He of His own will; thou diest from thy nature, He from His mercy. As then the Jews did Him no harm; so neither doth any persecuting enemy hurt thee, if thou hast chosen to be a member of Him thy Head.

7. Behold, we have understood the fire that goeth before Him, that is to be understood of a kind of temporal punishment of the unbelieving and ungodly: let us understand the fire, if possible, of the salvation of the redeemed also; for thus we had proposed. The Lord Himself saith: I am come to send fire on the earth: 'fire' in the same way as a 'sword'; as in another passage He saith, that He was not come to send peace, but a sword, upon earth. The sword to divide, the fire to burn: but each salutary: for the sword of His own word hath in salutary wise separated us from evil habits. For He brought a sword, and separated every believer either from his father who believed not in Christ, or from his mother in like manner unbelieving: or at least, if we were born of Christian parents, from his ancestors. For no man among us had not either a grandsire, or great grandsire, or some ancestry among the heathen, and in that unbelief which is accursed before God. We are separated from that which we were before; but the sword which separateth, but slayeth not, hath cut between us. In the same way the fire also: I am come to send fire upon the earth. Believers in Him were set

on fire, they received the flame of love: and for this reason when the Holy Spirit itself had been sent to the Apostles, It thus appeared: There appeared, he saith, unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. Burning with this fire they set out on their march through the world, to burn and set on fire His enemies on every side. What enemies of His? They who forsaking the God Who made them, adored the idols they had made. They were burnt, if they were evil, unto their consumption: if good, unto their restoration: either the man was burnt, who refused to believe, by that fire, becoming worse when he heard the word of God, being burnt up and consumed by his own malice; or if he were converted and believed, yet it was not as if nothing had burnt within him. For the grass had burnt, that the gold might be refined. Faith is gold, carnal lust is grass. All flesh is grass, saith Isaiah, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the grass. Whatever there is therefore in carnal man lusting for things vain and worldly, is grass. How many perchance, even brethren of ours, have been to the theatre? they were led by grass. Is not this fire to be desired by them, that the grass may burn, and the gold be refined? For whatever faith there be in them, is choked by the grass. It is therefore good for them to burn with a holy fire, that when the grass hath been consumed, the treasure which Christ redeemed may shine. Therefore, there shall go a fire before Him, and shall burn up His enemies on every side. There are some who have burned for their own health, they are to-day His faithful; they were His enemies, and they are now at last His faithful: thou seekest for enemies, they are not; they are consumed, they have been on fire; love hath consumed in them that which made them persecute Christ, and hath refined within them their belief in Christ. And it shall burn up His enemies an every side.

8. Ver. 4. His lightnings gave shine unto the world. This is great joy. Do we not see? is it not clear? His lightnings have shined unto the whole world: His enemies have been set on fire, and burnt. All that gainsaid hath been burnt, and His lightnings have given shine unto the world. How have they shone? That the world might at length believe. Whence were the lightnings? From the clouds. What are the clouds of God? The preachers of the truth. But thou seest a cloud, misty and dark in the sky, and it hath I know not what hidden within it. If there be lightning from the cloud, a brightness shineth forth: from that which thou didst despise, hath burst forth that which

thou mayest dread. Our Lord Jesus Christ therefore sent His Apostles, as His preachers, like clouds: they were seen as men, and were despised; as clouds appear, and are despised, until what thou wonderest at gleameth from them. For they were in the first place men encumbered with flesh, weak; then, men of low station, unlearned, ignoble: but there was within what could lighten forth; there was in them what could flash abroad. Peter a fisherman approached, prayed, and the dead arose. His human form was a cloud, the splendour of the miracle was the lightning. So in their words, so in their deeds, when they do things to be wondered at, and utter words to be wondered at, His lightnings gave shine unto the world; the earth saw it, and was afraid. Is it not true? Doth not the whole Christian world at length exclaim, Amen, afraid at the lightnings which burst forth from those clouds? The earth saw it, and was afraid.

9. Ver. 5. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. Who are the hills? The proud. Every high thing raising itself against God, at the deeds of Christ and of the Christians, trembled, yielded, and when I say, what hath been already said, melted, a better word cannot be found. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. Where is the elevation of powers? where the hardness of the unbelieving? The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. The Lord was a fire unto them, they melted at His presence like wax; so long hard, until that fire was applied. Every height hath been levelled; it dareth not now blaspheme Christ: and though the Pagan believeth not in Him, he blasphemeth Him not; though not as yet become a living stone, yet the hard hill hath been subdued. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth: not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, as the Apostle saith; for He is not the God of the Jews alone, but of the Gentiles also. He is therefore the Lord of the whole earth, the Lord Jesus Christ born in Judæa, but not born for Judæa alone, because before He was born He created all men; and He Who created, also new created, all men. At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

10. Ver. 6. The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory. What heavens have declared? The heavens declare the glory of God. Who are the heavens? Those who have become His seat; for

as God sitteth in the heavens, so doth He sit in the Apostles, so doth He sit in the preachers of the Gospel. Even thou, if thou wilt, shalt be a heaven. Dost thou wish to be so? Purge from thy heart the earth. If thou hast not earthly lusts, and hast not in vain uttered the response, that thou hast ‘lifted up thy heart,’ thou shalt be a heaven. If ye be risen with Christ, saith the Apostle to believers, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth upon the right hand of God: set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. Thou hast begun to set thine affection upon things above, not on things upon earth; hast thou not become a heaven? Thou earnest flesh, and in thy heart thou art already a heaven; for thy conversation will be in heaven. Being such, thou also declarest Christ; for who of the faithful declareth not Christ? Attend, beloved: do ye imagine that we standing here alone declare Christ, and do ye not declare Him? Whence do they come unto us, wishing to be Christians, whom we have never seen, whom we know not, unto whom we have never preached? Have they believed, perchance, without any preacher? The Apostle saith: How shall they believe in Him, of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? Therefore the whole Church preacheth Christ, and the heavens declare His righteousness; for all the faithful, whose care it is to gain unto God those who have not yet believed, and who do this from love, are heavens. From them God thundereth forth the terror of His judgment; and he who was unbelieving trembleth, and is alarmed, and believeth. He shews unto men what power Christ had throughout the world, by pleading with them, and leading them to love Christ. For how many this day have led their friends either to some pantomimist, or flute-player? Why, except from their liking him? And do ye love Christ. For He Who conquered the world hath exhibited such spectacles, as that no man can say that he findeth in them cause for blame. For each person’s favourite in the theatre is often vanquished there. But no man is vanquished in Christ: there is no reason for shame. Seize, lead, draw, whom ye may: be without fear, ye are leading unto Him, Who displeaseth not those who see Him; and ask ye Him to enlighten them, that they may behold to good account. The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory.

11. Ver. 7. Confounded be all they that worship carved images. Hath not this come to pass? Have they not been confounded? Are they not daily

confounded? For carved images are images wrought by the hand. Why are all who worship carved images confounded? Because all people have seen His glory. All nations now confess the glory of Christ: let those who worship stones be ashamed. Because those stones were dead, we have found a living stone: indeed those stones never lived, so that they cannot be called even dead; but our Stone is living, and hath ever lived with the Father, and though He died for us, He revived, and liveth now, and death shall no more have dominion over Him. This glory of His the nations have acknowledged; they leave the temples, they run to the Churches. Confounded be all they that worship carved images. Do they still seek to worship carved images? Have they not chosen to forsake their idols? They have been forsaken by their idols. Confounded be all they that worship carved images, who glory in their idols. But there is a certain disputer who seemeth unto himself learned, and saith, I do not worship that stone, nor that image which is without sense; your prophet could not be aware that they have eyes and see not, and I be ignorant that this image neither hath a soul, nor seeth with its eyes, nor heareth with its ears: I worship not this image; but I adore what I see, and serve him whom I see not. Who is that? Some invisible deity, he replieth, who presideth over that image. By giving this account of their images, they seem to themselves able disputants, because they do not worship idols, and yet do worship devils. The things, brethren, saith the Apostle, which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God; and I would not, he addeth, that ye should have fellowship with devils; for we know that an idol is nothing in the world. The Apostle himself saith this, we know that an idol is nothing: and that what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Let them not therefore excuse themselves on this ground, that they are not devoted to insensate idols; they are rather devoted to devils, which is more dangerous. For if they were only worshipping idols, as they would not help them, so they would not hurt them; but if thou worship and serve devils, they themselves will be thy masters. And who will be thy masters? Those who are jealous of thee: they must necessarily be jealous of thy freedom, always wish to possess thee, always to render thee such, as they may be able to draw along with them. For those evil spirits have a sort of inherent malevolence, and love of destruction: they rejoice in the evil of man; and

feed upon our delusion, if they have deceived us. And what do they seek? Not those over whom they may for ever have dominion, but with whom they may for ever undergo damnation; just as an evil-minded robber is wont to accuse the innocent. If a man is burnt alive, doth he burn the less, if two men are burning? doth he die the less, if he die in company with another? His punishment is not lessened, but his malignity is fed. 'Let him die with me;' not meaning that he will the less himself die, but another's ill brings consolation. Such is the devil; he wisheth to seduce those who with him may be punished: and because God is a Judge whom he cannot deceive, (for he accuseth not before Him the innocent,) wishing to have true charges to prefer, he persuadeth to sin. Behold what master they who worship idols and devils create for themselves: for the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

12. But what sort of God have we? Hear what followeth. For when he had said, Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that glory in their idols: lest men should try to stand in defence of their images, by saying, We are not worshipping stones, but deities: what deities dost thou worship? Tell me, dost thou worship devils, or good spirits, such as are the Angels? For there are holy Angels, and there are evil spirits. I say, that in thy temples none are worshipped but evil spirits; who in their pride exact sacrifice for themselves, and wish themselves to be worshipped as gods; who are malignant and proud. Such also are wicked men, who seek their own glory, and despise the glory of God. But observe holy men, who are like the Angels. When thou hast found some holy man who serveth God, if thou wish to worship him instead of God, he forbiddeth thee: he will not arrogate to himself the honour due to God, he will not be unto thee as God, but be with thee under God. Thus did the holy Apostles Paul and Barnabas. They preached the word of God in Lycaonia. When they had performed wonderful works in Lycaonia, the people of that country brought victims, and wished to sacrifice to them, calling Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury: they were not pleased. Did they perchance refuse to be sacrificed to, because they abhorred to be compared to devils? No, but because they shuddered at divine honour being paid to men. Their own words shew this: it is no guess of ours; for the text of the book goeth on to say how they were

moved: then Barnabas and Paul rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, Men and brethren, why do ye these things? we also are men of like passions with you. Attend. Just then, as good men forbid those who had wished to worship them as gods, and wish rather that God alone be worshipped, God alone be adored, to God alone sacrifice be offered, not to themselves; so also all the holy Angels seek His glory Whom they love; endeavour to impel and to excite to the contemplation of Him all whom they love: Him they declare to them, not themselves, since they are angels; and because they are soldiers, they study only how to seek the glory of their Captain; but if they have sought their own glory, they are condemned as usurpers. Such were the devil and his angels: he claimed for himself divine honour, and for all his demons; he filled the pagan temples, and persuaded them to offer images and sacrifices to himself. Was it not better to worship holy Angels than devils? They answer: we do not worship devils; we worship angels, as ye call them, the powers and the ministers of the great God. I wish ye would worship them: ye would easily learn from themselves not to worship them. Hear an Angel teaching. He was teaching a disciple of Christ, and shewing him many wonders in the Revelation of John: and when some wonderful vision had been shewn him, he trembled, and fell down at the Angel's feet; but that Angel, who sought not but the glory of God, said, See thou do it not; for I am a fellow servant of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets. What then, my brethren? Let no man say, I fear lest the Angel may be angry with me, if I worship him not as my God. He is then angry with thee, when thou hast chosen to worship him: for he is righteous, and loveth God. As devils are angry if they are not worshipped, so are Angels angry if they are worshipped instead of God. But lest the weak and trembling heart perchance say unto itself: If then the demons are incensed because they are not worshipped, I fear to offend them; what can even their chief the devil do unto thee? If he had any power over us, no one of us would remain. Are not daily so many things said against him by the mouth of Christians, and yet the harvest of Christians increaseth. When thou art angry with the most depraved of thy slaves, thou givest him the name, Satan, Devil. Perhaps in this thou dost err, since thou sayest it to a man, and thy immoderate anger hurrieth thee to revile the image of God: and yet thou choosest a term thou deeply hatest, to apply to him. If he could, would he not revenge himself? But it is not allowed: and he doth so

much only as is allowed him. For when he wished to tempt Job, he had to ask power to do so: and he could do nothing had he not received power. Why then dost thou not fearlessly worship God, without Whose will no one hurteth thee, and by Whose permission thou art chastened, not overcome? For if it shall have pleased the Lord thy God to permit some man to hurt thee, or some spirit: He will chasten thee, that thou mayest cry unto Him: “The Lord hath chastened and corrected me: but He hath not given me over unto death.” Confounded, therefore, be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in vain gods: worship Him, all ye His angels. Let pagans learn to worship God: they wish to worship Angels: let them imitate Angels, and worship Him Who is worshipped by Angels. Worship Him, all ye His angels. Let that Angel worship who was sent to Cornelius, (for worshipping Him he sent Cornelius to Peter,) himself Peter’s fellow-servant; let him worship Christ, Peter’s Lord. Worship Him, all ye gods!

13. Ver. 8. Sion heard of it, and rejoiced. What did Sion hear? That all His Angels worship Him. What heard Sion? Behold what she heard: The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory. Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in their idols. For the Church was not as yet among the Gentiles; in Judæa the Jews had some of them believed, and the very Jews who believed thought that they only belonged to Christ: the Apostles were sent to the Gentiles, Cornelius was preached to; Cornelius believed, was baptized, and they who were with Cornelius were also baptized. But ye know what happened, that they might be baptized: the reader indeed hath not reached this point, but, nevertheless, some recollect; and let those who do not recollect, hear briefly from me. The Angel was sent to Cornelius: the Angel sent Cornelius to Peter; Peter came to Cornelius. And because Cornelius and his household were Gentiles, and uncircumcised: lest they might hesitate to give the Gospel to the uncircumcised: before Cornelius and his household were baptized, the Holy Spirit came, and filled them, and they began to speak with tongues. Now the Holy Spirit had not fallen upon any one who had not been baptized: but upon these It fell before baptism. For Peter might hesitate whether he might baptize the uncircumcised: the Holy Spirit came, they began to speak with tongues; the invisible gift was given, and took away all doubt about the visible Sacrament; they were all baptized.

And thou hast it there written; And the apostles and brethren that were in Judæa heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. This is what he here mentions; Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad. What did Sion hear, and rejoice at? That the Gentiles also had received the word of God. One wall had come, but the corner existed not as yet. The name Sion is here peculiarly given to the Church which was in Judæa. Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad. Thus it is written, The apostles and brethren that were in Judæa heard. See if the daughters of Judæa rejoiced not. What did they hear? That the Gentiles had also received the word of God. Where did this Psalm express this? The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory. And because even the Gentiles, who used to worship idols, had believed, he goeth on to say, Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in their idols. Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad. Afterwards some of the circumcised chose to reproach Peter, saying unto him, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But he gave them a reason, telling how while he prayed a vessel let down by four corners was shewn Him. This vessel which contained all living things, signified all nations. But it hung by four corners, because there are four quarters of the globe, whence the people were to come: and four Gospels preach Christ, that His grace may be understood to belong to all the four quarters of the globe. Because therefore such a vision had been shewn to Peter, he rehearsed to them the whole, how Cornelius believed, and that, before the Gentile was baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon him. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Behold, Sion heard of it, and rejoiced, and the daughters of Judah were glad because of Thy judgments, O Lord. What judgments? Because God is no acceptor of persons. For Peter himself, when he had seen Cornelius the centurion, and those who were with him, filled with the Holy Ghost, cried out and said, Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons. Therefore, The daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord. What is, because of Thy judgments? Because in any nation, and in any people, he that serveth Him is accepted of Him: for He is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

14. Ver. 9. See if this be not the reason for the joy of the daughters of Judah. And the daughters of Judah were glad because of Thy judgments, O Lord. For Thou, Lord, art most high over all the earth. Not in Judæa alone, but over Jerusalem; not over Sion only, but over all the earth. To this whole earth the judgments of God prevailed, so that it assembled its nations from every quarter: judgments with which they who have cut themselves off have no communion: they neither hear the prophecy, nor see its completion; For Thou, Lord, art most high over all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods. What is far? For it is said of Christ. What then meaneth far, except that Thou mayest be acknowledged coequal with the Father? What meaneth, above all gods? Who are they? Idols have not life, have not sense: devils have life and sense; but they are evil. What great thing is it that Christ is exalted above devils? He is exalted above devils: but neither is this very great; the heathen gods indeed are devils, but He is far above all gods. Even men are styled gods: I have said, Ye are gods: and ye are all the children of the Most Highest: again it is written, God standeth in the congregation of princes: He is a Judge among gods. Jesus Christ our Lord is exalted above all: not only above idols, not only above devils; but above all righteous men. Even this is not enough; above all Angels also: for whence otherwise is this, Worship Him, all ye gods? Thou art far exalted above all gods.

15. Ver. 10. What then do we all, who have assembled before Him, before Him Who is exalted far above all gods? He hath given us a brief commandment, O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil! Christ doth not deserve that with Him thou shouldest love avarice. Thou lovest Him: thou shouldest hate what He hateth. There is a man who is thine enemy, he is what thou art; ye are the work of one Creator, with the same nature: and yet if thy son were to speak unto thine enemy, and come to his house, and constantly converse with him, thou wouldest be inclined to disinherit him; because he speaketh with thine enemy. And how so? Because thou seemest to say justly, Thou art my enemy's friend, and seekest thou ought of my property? Attend then. Thou lovest Christ: avarice is Christ's foe; why speak with her? I say not, speak with her; why dost thou serve her? For Christ commandeth thee to do many things, and thou dost them not; she commandeth thee, and thou dost them. Christ

commandeth thee to clothe the poor man: and thou dost it not; avarice biddeth thee defraud, and this thou dost in preference. If such be the case, if such thou art, do not very confidently promise thyself Christ's heritage. But thou sayest, I love Christ. O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil! Hence it appeareth that thou lovest what is good, if thou shalt be found to hate what is evil. O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil!

16. But when we have begun to hate evil, persecutions will follow. We hate evil; some persecutor saith to us, Defraud; saith to us, Worship that image; saith to us, Offer frankincense to devils: but we have heard, O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil. We have heard indeed: but if we do not these things, the persecutor rageth. To what degree doth he rage? What will he take away? Answer: Wherefore art thou a Christian? on account of thy eternal heritage, or thy temporal happiness? Ask the question of thy faith, place thy soul on the frame of conscience, torture thyself with the fear of judgment, answer whom thou hast believed in, why thou hast believed. Thou sayest to me, I have believed in Christ. What hath Christ promised thee, but what He hath shewn in Himself? What hath He shewn in Himself? He died, and arose from the dead, ascended into heaven. Dost thou wish to follow? Imitate His passion: expect His promise. What then can the enraged persecutor deprive thee of, when thou hast begun to hate the evil, because thou lovest the Lord? What can he deprive thee of? Thy patrimony? Can he deprive thee of heaven? Lastly, whatever God hath given thee, let him take: (he taketh not indeed, unless God wills; but if God will, he taketh away what God gave, lest God take Himself away from thee:) no one can deprive thee of God; thou deprivest thyself of Him, if thou fliest from Him.

17. Perhaps thou answerest: I am not concerned for my patrimony. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; I may say, Blessed be the name of the Lord: but I fear, lest he slay me. This is all. Hear the Psalm consoling thee: The Lord preserveth the souls of His servants. Because then he had said above, O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil, lest ye should fear to hate evil, lest he should kill thee, he addeth instantly, The Lord preserveth the souls of His servants. Hear Him preserving the

souls of His servants, and saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. He who hath most power against thee, slayeth the body. What hath he done unto thee? What he also did to the Lord thy God. Why lovest thou to have what Christ hath, if thou fearest to suffer what Christ did? He came to bear thy life, temporal, weak, subject unto death. Surely fear to die, if thou canst avoid dying. What thou canst not avoid through thy nature, why dost thou not undergo by faith? Let the adversary who threateneth take away from thee that life, God giveth thee another life: for He gave thee this life also, and without His will even this shall not be taken from thee; but if it be His will that it be taken from thee, He hath a life to give thee in exchange; fear not to be robbed for His sake. Art thou unwilling to put off a patched garment? He will give thee a robe of glory. What robe dost thou tell me of? This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. This very flesh of thine shall not perish. Thine enemy can rage as far as to thy death: he hath not power beyond, either over thy soul, or even over thy flesh; for although he scatter thy flesh about, he hindereth not the resurrection. Men were fearful for their life: and what said the Lord unto them? The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Dost thou, who lovest not a single hair, fear the loss of thy life? All things are numbered with God. He Who created all things, will restore all things. They were not, and they were created: they were, and shall they not be restored? Believe then with your whole heart, my brethren, and ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil. Be strong, not only in the love of God, but also in the hatred of evil. Let no man frighten you: He Who called you is more powerful, He is Almighty; He is stronger than all the strong, higher than all the exalted. The Son of God hath died for us: fear not but that thou shalt receive His life, who hast a pledge in His death. For, for whom hath He died? was it for the righteous? Ask of Paul: for Christ died for the ungodly. Thou wast ungodly, and He died for thee: thou art justified, and will He desert thee? He Who justified the ungodly, shall He desert the godly? O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil! Let no man fear: The Lord preserveth the souls of His saints; He shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.

18. But perhaps thou wilt say, I lose this light. (Ver. 11.) There is sprung up a light for the righteous. What light fearest thou thou mayest lose? fearest

thou thou mayest be in darkness? Fear not thou mayest lose light; nay, fear lest while thou art guarding against the loss of this light, thou mayest lose that true light. For we see to whom that light is given which thou fearest losing, and with whom it is shared. Do the righteous only see this sun, when He maketh it rise over the just and unjust, and raineth upon the just and unjust? Wicked men, robbers, the unchaste, beasts, flies, worms, see that light together with thee. What sort of light doth He keep for the righteous, Who giveth this even to such as these? Deservedly the Martyrs beheld this light in faith; for they who despised this light of the sun, had some light in their eyes, which they longed for, who rejected this. There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted. Do you imagine that they were really in misery, when they walked in chains? Spacious was the prison to the faithful, light were the chains to the confessors. They who preached Christ amid their torments, had joy in the iron-chair. There is sprung up a light for the righteous. What light hath sprung up for the righteous? Not that which springeth up for the unrighteous; not that which He causeth to rise over the good and bad. There is a different light which springeth up to the righteous; of which light, that never rose upon themselves, the unrighteous shall in the end say, Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. Behold, by loving this sun they have lain in the darkness of the heart. What did it profit them to have seen with their eyes this sun, and not in mind to have seen that light? Tobit was blind, but he used to teach his son the way of God. Ye know this, that Tobit warned his son, and said to him, Son, give alms of thy substance; because that alms suffer not to come into darkness. Even he who was in darkness spoke thus. Do ye see that there is another light which springeth up to the righteous, and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted? He had not sight: and he said to his son, Give alms of thy substance; alms suffer not to come into darkness. Nor did he fear, lest his son should say to him in his heart, And hast not thou then given alms? why dost thou, that art blind thyself, thus enjoin me? Behold, thy alms have brought thee to darkness, and how sayest thou to me, Give alms: alms suffer not to come into darkness. How could he speak with such confidence, except because he had in sight another light? The son gave his arm to his father, that he might walk: but the father taught the son the way that he

might live. There is therefore another light which springeth up to the righteous: There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful gladness for the true-hearted. Dost thou wish to know that light? Be true-hearted. What is, be true-hearted? Be not of a crooked heart before God, withstanding His will, and wishing to bend Him unto thee, and not to rule thyself to please Him; and thou wilt feel the joyful gladness which all the true-hearted know. There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful gladness for the true-hearted.

19. Ver. 12. Be glad, ye righteous. Perhaps already the faithful hearing the word, Be glad, are thinking of banquets, preparing cups, waiting for the season of roses; because it is said, Be glad, ye righteous! See what followeth, Be glad in the Lord. Thou art waiting for the season of spring, that thou mayest be glad: thou hast the Lord for joyful gladness, the Lord is always with thee, He hath no special season; thou hast Him by night, thou hast Him by day. Be true-hearted; and thou hast ever joy from Him. For that joy which is after the fashion of the world, is not true joy. Hear the prophet Isaiah: There is no joy, saith my God, to the wicked. What the wicked call joy is not joy, such as he knew who made no account of their joy: let us believe him, brethren. He was a man, but he knew both kinds of joy. He certainly knew the joys of the cup, for he was a man, he knew the joy of the table, he knew the joys of marriage, he knew those joys worldly and luxurious. He who knew them saith with confidence, There is no joy to the wicked, saith the Lord. But it is not man who speaks, it is the Lord: of the truth of the Lord it is said, There is no joy to the wicked. For they but seem to themselves to rejoice: But there is no joy to the wicked, saith not a man, but the Lord. Whence he who saw real joy, saith, Neither have I desired the day of men, thou knowest. Thou Who shewest me another day, Who teachest me another light, Who fillest me with another joy, Who dost inspire my heart with another feeling, Thou hast made me not desire the day of men. Isaiah saw men in drink, in luxury, in theatres and spectacles, the whole world indulging itself in various trifles, and yet he cried, There is no joy, saith the Lord, to the wicked. If this was not joy, what sort of joy was that which he saw, in comparison with which this was not joy? As if thou hadst known the sun, and wert to say to some person who was praising a lamp, This is not light. Why is it not light? He holdeth it in high esteem, he

rejoiceth, he is delighted: and thou sayest, This is not light. Or if any one were admiring an ape, thou wouldest say, This is not beauty. And if perchance he were engaged in tracing the composition of the brute's limbs, and admiring all their fitness of adaptation to each other, thou who hadst known another beauty wouldest deny it, and say, it is not so. Why? Because thou knowest another. But thou sayest, I see not that light which Isaiah saw. Believe, and thou shalt see it. For perhaps thou hast not the eye to see it; for it is an eye by which that beauty is discerned. For as there is an eye of the flesh, by means of which this light is seen: so there is an eye of the heart, by which that joy is perceived: perhaps that eye is wounded, dimmed, disturbed by passion, by avarice, by indulgence, by senseless lust; thine eye is disturbed: thou canst not see that light. Believe, before thou seest: thou shalt be healed, and shalt see. There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful-gladness for the true-hearted.

20. Be glad, he saith, in the Lord, ye righteous: and confess to the remembrance of His holiness. Now made glad, now rejoicing in the Lord, confess unto Him; for unless it were His will, ye would not rejoice in Him. For the Lord Himself saith: These things I have spoken to you: that in Me ye might have peace. But in the world ye shall have tribulation. If ye are Christians, look for tribulations in this world; look not for more peaceful and better times. Brethren, ye deceive yourselves; what the Gospel doth not promise you, promise not to yourselves. Ye know what the Gospel saith; we are speaking to Christians; we ought not to disobey the faith. The Gospel saith this, that in the last times many evils, many stumbling-blocks, many tribulations, much iniquity, shall abound; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. The love, it saith, of many shall wax cold. Whosoever then hath been stedfastly fervent in spirit, as the Apostle saith, fervent in spirit, his love shall not wax cold: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us. Let no man therefore promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. Behold, happier times will come, and I am doing this, and purchasing this. It is good for thee to listen to Him Who is not deceived, nor hath deceived any man, Who promised thee joy not here, but in Himself; and when all here hath passed away, to hope that with Him thou wilt for ever reign; lest when thou

dost wish to reign here, thou mayest neither enjoy gladness here, nor find it there.

PSALM 98

A Discourse to the People.

1. Ver. 1. O sing unto the Lord a new song. The new man knoweth this, the old man knoweth it not. The old man is the old life, and the new man the new life: the old life is derived from Adam, the new life is formed in Christ. But in this Psalm, the whole world is enjoined to sing a new song. More openly elsewhere the words are these: O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth; that they who cut themselves off from the communion of the whole earth, may understand that they cannot sing the new song, because it is sung in the whole, and not in a part of it. Attend here also, and see that this is said. And when the whole earth is enjoined to sing a new song, it is meant, that peace singeth a new song. O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvellous things. What marvellous things? Behold, the Gospel was just now being read, and we heard the marvellous things of the Lord. The only son of his mother, who was a widow, was being carried out dead: the Lord, in compassion, made them stand still; they laid him down, and the Lord said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak: and He delivered him unto his mother. Behold, the Lord hath done marvellous things: but it is much more marvellous, that He hath aroused from everlasting death the whole world, than that He recalled to life the only son of a widowed mother. O sing then unto the Lord a new song; for the Lord hath done marvellous things. What marvellous things? Hear: His own right hand, and His holy arm, hath healed for Him. What is the Lord's holy arm? Our Lord Jesus Christ. Hear Isaiah: Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? His holy arm then, and His own right hand, is Himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ is therefore the arm of God, and the right hand of God: for this reason is it said, hath He healed for Him. It is not said only, "His right hand hath healed the world," but hath healed

for Him. For many are healed for themselves, not for Him. Behold how many long for that bodily health, and receive it from Him: they are healed by Him, but not for Him. How are they healed by Him, and not for Him? When they have received health, they become wanton: they who when sick were chaste, when cured become adulterers: they who when in illness injured no man, on the recovery of their strength attack and crush the innocent: they are healed, but not unto Him. Who is he who is healed unto Him? He who is healed inwardly. Who is he that is healed inwardly? He who trusteth in Him, that when he shall have been healed inwardly, reformed into a new man, afterwards this mortal flesh too, which doth languish for a time, may in the end itself even recover its most perfect health. Let us therefore be healed for Him. But that we may be healed for Him, let us believe in His right hand; because His own right hand, and His holy arm, hath healed for Him.

2. Ver. 2. The Lord hath made known His salvation. This very right hand, this very arm, this very salvation, is our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom it is said, And all flesh shall see the salvation of God; of Whom also that Simeon who embraced the Infant in his arms, spoke, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." The Lord hath made known His salvation. To whom did He make it known? To a part, or to the whole? Not to any part specially. Let no man betray, no man deceive, no man say, Lo, here is Christ, or there: the man who saith, Lo, He is here, or there, pointeth to some particular spots. To whom hath the Lord declared His salvation? Hear what followeth: His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the right hand of God, the arm of God, the salvation of God, and the righteousness of God.

3. Ver. 3. He hath remembered His mercy to Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel. What meaneth this, He hath remembered His mercy and truth? He hath pitied, so that He promised; because He promised and shewed His mercy, truth hath followed: mercy hath gone before promise, promise hath been fulfilled in truth. He hath remembered His mercy to Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel. And what? only to Jacob? and only to the house of Israel? The house of the Jews and that offspring of

Abraham according to the flesh, is wont to be called the house of Israel, and Israel is Jacob. For Jacob was Isaac's son, and Isaac himself was Abraham's son. Jacob therefore was the grandson of Abraham; and Jacob had twelve sons, and of these twelve sons descended the whole race of the Jews. Was Christ promised to them only? If thou reflect what is Israel, Christ is promised unto Israel. Israel meaneth 'seeing God.' We shall see Him face to face, if only we now see Him by faith. Let our faith have eyes, and its truth shall be displayed: let us believe in Him Whom we see not, and rejoicing we shall see; let us long for Him we have not seen, and we shall enjoy Him seen. Now therefore is it Israel by faith: but then Israel face to face. No longer through a glass darkly; but as it is said by John, Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Prepare ye your hearts for this vision, prepare your souls for this joy: just as if God willed to shew the sun, He would warn us to make ready the eyes of the flesh; but because He deigneth to shew you the fashion of His Wisdom, prepare the eyes of your heart. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

He hath remembered His mercy unto Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel. Who is this Israel? That ye may not perchance think of one nation of the Jews, hear what followeth: All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God. It is not said, all the earth: but, all the ends of the world: as it is said, from one end to the other. Let no man cut this down, let no man scatter it abroad; strong is the unity of Christ. He who gave so great a price, hath bought the whole: All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.

4. Ver. 4. Because they have seen, then, Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands Ye already know what it is to make a joyful noise. Rejoice, and speak. If ye cannot express your joy, shout ye; let the shout manifest your joy, if your speech cannot: yet let not joy be mute; let not your heart be silent respecting its God, let it not be mute concerning His gifts. If thou speakest to thyself, unto thyself art thou healed; if His right hand hath healed thee for Him, speak thou unto Him for Whom thou hast been healed.

All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands; sing, rejoice, and make melody.

5. Ver. 5. Make melody unto the Lord upon the harp: on the harp and with the voice of a Psalm. Praise Him not with the voice only; take up works, that ye may not only sing, but work also. He who singeth and worketh, maketh melody with psaltery and upon the harp.

6. Ver. 6. Now see what sort of instruments are next spoken of, in figure: With ductile trumpets also, and the sound of the pipe of horn. What are ductile trumpets, and pipes of horn? Ductile trumpets are of brass: they are drawn out by hammering; if by hammering, by being beaten, ye shall be ductile trumpets, drawn out unto the praise of God, if ye improve when in tribulation: tribulation is hammering, improvement is the being drawn out. Job was a ductile trumpet, when suddenly assailed by the heaviest losses, and the death of his sons, become like a ductile trumpet by the beating of so heavy tribulation, he sounded thus: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. How did He sound? How pleasantly doth his voice sound? This ductile trumpet is still under the hammer: he is given into Satan's power, so that even his flesh might be struck; it is struck: it beginneth to be corrupted and to be covered with worms. Eve placed ready for his seduction from God, his wife, kept for the service of the devil, and not for her husband's comfort, suggesteth blasphemy; he complieth not. The Adam in Paradise obeyed Eve: the Adam on the dunghill repelleth Eve. For Job was sitting on a dunghill, while his flesh was running and wasting with worms! Better was Job in his rottenness, than he that was whole in Paradise. But as yet she was Eve, he was not Adam. He answered Eve, prepared thus to deceive and tempt him: (we have heard how this trumpet was beaten. The devil struck him with a terrible disease from head to foot; and, covered with worms, he sat upon a dunghill. We have heard how he was hammered; let us hear how he soundeth: let us, if it please you, hear the sweet sound of this ductile trumpet:) Thou speakest, he said, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? O courageous, O sweet sound! whom will not that sound awake from sleep? whom will not confidence in God awake, to march to battle fearlessly against the devil; not to struggle with his own

strength, but His Who proveth him. For He it is Who hammereth: for the hammer could not do so of itself. Of the devil's future punishment the Prophet maketh mention, and saith, The hammer of the whole earth is cut asunder and broken. He meant the devil to be understood by the hammer of the whole earth. By means of this hammer placed in the hand of God, that is, in His power, the ductile trumpets are beaten out, that they may re-echo His praises. See how (I dare so speak, my brethren) even the Apostle was beaten with this very hammer: Lest I should be exalted, he saith, above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. Behold he is under the hammer: let us hear how he speaketh of it: For this thing, he saith, I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I, saith His Maker, wish to make this trumpet perfect; I cannot do so unless I hammer it; in weakness is strength made perfect. Hear now the ductile trumpet itself sounding as it should; When I am weak, then am I strong. And the Apostle himself, as if clinging to Christ, clinging to that right hand which holdeth the hammer to draw out the trumpet, placed in that right hand himself with the same hammer; as he saith of some, Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. He gave them up to be beaten with the hammer. They sounded ill before they were beaten out; when hammered upon, and made ductile trumpets, leaving off blasphemy, they sounded the praises of the Lord. These are the ductile trumpets.

7. The voice of the pipe of horn, what is it? The horn riseth above the flesh: in rising above the flesh it needs must be solid so as to last, and able to speak. And whence this? Because it hath surpassed the flesh. He who wisheth to be a horn trumpet, let him overcome the flesh. What meaneth this, let him overcome the flesh? Let him surpass the desires, let him conquer the lusts of the flesh. Hear the horn trumpets: If ye then be risen with Christ, saith the Apostle, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. What meaneth this, Set your affection on things above? It meaneth, Rise above the flesh, think not of carnal things. They were not yet horn trumpets, to whom he now spoke thus: I could not speak

unto you, brethren, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it: neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal. They were not therefore horn trumpets, because they had not risen above the flesh. Horn both adhereth to the flesh, and riseth above the flesh; and although it springeth from the flesh, yet it surpasseth it. If therefore thou art spiritual, when before thou wast carnal; as yet thou art treading the earth in the flesh, but in spirit thou art rising into heaven: for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. Let not us pass by this, brethren, unto whom the Apostle spoke. What did he say unto them, by which he proved that they were carnal, and had carnal lusts, and were not as yet become horn trumpets? For while one saith, I am of Paul: and another, I am of Apollos: are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers of God, by whom ye believed? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. He therefore wisheth them to be raised from the hope which they had placed in man, and to reach the spiritual things of Christ; in order that they might be horn trumpets, if they could conquer the flesh. Brethren, do not reproach brethren whom the mercy of God hath not yet converted; know that as long as ye do this, ye savour of the flesh. That is not a trumpet which pleaseth the ears of God: the trumpet of boastfulness maketh the war fruitless. Let the horn trumpet raise thy courage against the devil; let not the fleshly trumpet raise thy pride against thy brother. With ductile trumpets, and in the voice of the trumpet of horn, make a joyful noise in the sight of the Lord the King.

8. Ver. 7, 8. While ye are rejoicing, and delighted with the ductile trumpets, and the voice of the horn, what followeth? Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof. Brethren, when the Apostles, like ductile trumpets and horns, were preaching the truth, the sea was stirred up, its waves arose, tempests increased, persecutions of the Church took place. Whence hath the sea been stirred up? When a joyful noise was made, when Psalms of thanksgiving were being sung before God: the ears of God were pleased, the waves of the sea were raised. Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof: the round world, and all that dwell therein. Let the sea be stirred up in its persecutions. Let the floods clap their hands together. Let the sea be aroused, and the floods clap their hands together; persecutions arise, and the

saints rejoice in God. Whence shall the floods clap their hands? What is to clap their hands? To rejoice in works. To clap hands, is to rejoice; hands, mean works. What floods? Those whom God hath made floods, by giving them that Water, the Holy Spirit. If any man thirst, saith He, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. These rivers clapped their hands, these rivers rejoiced in works, and blessed God.

9. The hills shall be joyful together, (ver. 9.) Before the Lord, for He is come; for He is come to judge the earth. The hills signify the great. The Lord cometh to judge the earth, and they rejoice. But there are hills, who, when the Lord is coming to judge the earth, shall tremble. There are therefore good and evil hills; the good hills, are spiritual greatness; the bad hills, are the swelling of pride. Let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for He is come; for He is come to judge the earth. Wherefore shall He come, and how shall He come? For He is come to judge the earth. With righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity. Let the hills therefore rejoice; for He shall not judge unrighteously. When some man is coming as a judge, to whom the conscience cannot lie open, even innocent men may tremble, if from him they expect a reward for virtue, or fear the penalty of condemnation; when He shall come who cannot be deceived, let the hills rejoice, let them rejoice fearlessly; they shall be enlightened by Him, not condemned; let them rejoice, because the Lord will come to judge the world with equity; and if the righteous hills rejoice, let the unrighteous tremble. But behold, He hath not yet come: what need is there they should tremble? Let them mend their ways, and rejoice. It is in thy power in what way thou wilt to await the coming of Christ. For this reason He delayeth to come, that when He cometh He may not condemn thee. Lo, He hath not yet come: He is in heaven, thou on earth: He delayeth His coming, do not thou delay wisdom. His coming is hard to the hard of heart, soft to the pious. See therefore even now what thou art: if hard of heart, thou canst soften; if thou art soft, even now rejoice that He will come. For thou art a Christian. Yea, thou sayest. I believe that thou prayest, and sayest, Thy kingdom come. Thou desirest Him to come, Whose coming thou fearest. Reform thyself, that thou mayest not pray against thyself.

PSALM 99

A Sermon to the people.

1. Beloved brethren, it ought already to be known to you, as sons of the Church, and well instructed in the school of Christ through all the books of our ancient Fathers, who wrote the words of God and the great things of God, that their wish was to consult for our good, who were to live at this period, believers in Christ; Who, at a seasonable time came unto us, the first time, in humility; at the second, destined to come in exaltation. For at the first time He came to stand before the judge: He will afterwards come to sit as Judge, that the human race may stand before Him according to its deserts. Many heralds went before Him: as before a mighty Judge, and that Judge as yet to come in humility. Many heralds went before Him, Who was yet to be born of the Virgin Mary, Who was yet to be an Infant, yet to suck milk; many heralds went before Him Who was to be a Child, the Word of God by Whom all things were made, and announced these future times; but they spoke so as to cover their meaning under certain figures of other objects, and that the covering which concealed the truth in the books of the old prophets, might then be removed, when the Truth Itself should arise from the earth. For thus it is said in the Psalms: Truth shall flourish out of the earth: and righteousness hath looked down from heaven. Now, therefore, our whole design is, when we hear a Psalm, a Prophet, or the Law, all of which was written before our Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, to see Christ there, to understand Christ there. Attend therefore, beloved, to this Psalm, with me, and let us herein seek Christ; certainly He will appear to those who seek Him, Who at first appeared to those who sought Him not; and He will not desert those who long for Him, Who redeemed those who neglected Him. Behold, the Psalm beginneth concerning Him: of Him it is said:

2. Ver. 1. The Lord is King, be the people angry. For our Lord Jesus Christ began to reign, began to be preached, after He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, after He had filled His disciples with the confidence of the Holy Spirit, that they should not fear death, which He had already killed in Himself. Our Lord Christ began then to be preached, that they who wished for salvation might believe in Him; and the peoples who worshipped idols were angry. They who worshipped what they had made were angry, because He by Whom they were made was declared. He announced, in fact, through His disciples, Himself, Who wished them to be converted unto Him by Whom they were made, and to be turned away from those things which they had made themselves. They were angry with their Lord in behalf of their idols, they who even if they were angry with their slave on their idol's account, were to be condemned. For their slave was better than their idol: for God made their slave, the carpenter made their idol. They were so angry in their idol's behalf, that they feared not to be angry with their Lord. But the words, be they angry, are a prediction, not a command; for in a prophecy it is that this is said, The Lord is King, be the people angry. Some good resulteth even from the enraged people: let them be angry, and in their anger let the Martyrs be crowned. What did they do to the preachers of the Word of Truth, those the clouds of God travelling around the world, and raining upon the field of God? What did the angry people unto them, except afflict their flesh with their hands, and cause their spirit to be crowned by the hands of Christ? Nor did even that flesh, which the persecutors had power to kill, so die as to perish for ever: for it will have its season when even itself may arise again: for our Lord hath already shewn the resurrection of the flesh in Himself. For this reason He was willing to receive it from us, that we might not despair of our own. Therefore, brethren, the flesh of those servants, which the worshippers of idols slew, will rise again in its own time: never more will carpenter fashion the idols that Christ broke. Ye heard when Jeremiah was being read before the reading of the Apostle, if ye listened; ye saw therein the times in which we now live. He said, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven. He said not, The gods that have not made the heavens and earth, let them perish from the heaven and from the earth; because they never were in heaven: but what did he say? The gods that have not made heaven and earth, let them perish from

the earth, and from under the heaven. As if, while the word earth was repeated, the repetition of the word heaven were wanting, (because they never were in heaven:) he repeateth the earth twice, since it is under heaven. Let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven, from their temples. Consider if this be not now taking place; if in a great measure it hath not already happened: for what, or how much, hath remained? The idols remained rather in the hearts of the pagans, than in the niches of the temples.

3. Therefore, the Lord is King, be the people angry: He Who sitteth between the cherubims: thou dost understand, He is King: let the earth be stirred up. He repeateth, Be the people stirred up. For the word, Lord, is repeated in the expression, He Who sitteth between the cherubim: the words, is King, he maketh us understand in the next verse: and the words, be the people angry, are here repeated, in the following, Be the earth stirred up. For what are people, but the earth? Let the earth be as angry as it can with Him Who is now sitting in the heavens. For the Lord was both upon the earth, and took upon Himself earth in which to abide when on earth. He clothed Himself with flesh, and chose first to suffer the angry people. That His servants might not fear the anger of the people, He chose first to suffer it Himself: and as the anger of the people against His servants was necessary for them, that they might be cured, and healed from all their sins by means of tribulations; the Physician first drank the bitter cup, that the sick man might not fear to drink it. Therefore, The Lord is King, let the people be angry. Let the people be angry, because by their anger God hath wrought many blessings. They are impatient, and God's servants are cleansed; they are crowned, who are tried. Be the people angry; He Who sitteth between the cherubims, He is King: be the earth stirred up. The Cherubim is the seat of God, as the Scripture sheweth us, a certain exalted heavenly throne, which we see not; but the Word of God knoweth it, knoweth it as His own seat: and the Word of God and the Spirit of God hath Itself revealed to the servants of God where God sitteth. Not that God doth sit, as doth man; but thou, if thou dost wish that God sit in thee, if thou wilt be good, shalt be the seat of God; for thus is it written, The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom. For a throne is in our language called a seat. For some, conversant with the Hebrew tongue, have interpreted

cherubim in the Latin language (for it is a Hebrew term) by the words, fulness of knowledge. Therefore, because God surpasseth all knowledge, He is said to sit above the fulness of knowledge. Let there be therefore in thee fulness of knowledge, and even thou shalt be the throne of God. But perhaps thou wast about to say, and when shall there be in me fulness of knowledge? And who can attain such a height, that there may be in him fulness of knowledge. Thinkest thou it is the will of God that there be in us that fulness of knowledge, that we may know either how many stars, or grains of wheat, (not to say of sand,) there are, or how many apples hang on a tree? He knoweth all things: for our hairs are numbered before God. But the fulness of knowledge which He willed man to know is different from this; the knowledge which He willed thee to have, pertaineth to the law of God. And who can, thou mayest perhaps say unto me, perfectly know the Law, so that he may have within himself the fulness of the knowledge of the Law, and be able to be the seat of God? Be not disturbed; it is briefly told thee what thou hast, if thou dost wish to have the fulness of knowledge, and to become the throne of God: for the Apostle saith, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. What followeth then? Thou hast lost the whole of thine excuse. Ask thine heart; see whether it hath love. If there be love there, there is the fulfilment of the Law there also; already God dwelleth in thee, thou hast become the throne of God. Be the people angry; what can the angry people do against him who hath become the throne of God? Thou givest heed unto them who rage against thee: Who is it That sitteth within thee, thou givest not heed. Thou art become a heaven, and fearest thou the earth? For the Scripture saith in another passage, that the Lord our God doth declare, The heaven is My throne. If therefore even thou by having the fulness of knowledge, and by having love, hast been made the throne of God, thou hast become a heaven. For this heaven which we look up to with these eyes of ours, is not very precious before God. Holy souls are the heaven of God; the minds of the Angels, and all the minds of His servants, are the heaven of God. Be the people, therefore, angry. Be the earth stirred up; what can they do, or what can it do, to the throne of God, and to the heaven whereon God is enthroned?

4. Ver. 2. The Lord is great in Sion, and high above all people. Lo, if the words, He Who sitteth above the Cherubims, were obscure to thee, thou

wast ignorant what Cherubim is; and perhaps thou didst figure to thyself in mind some heavenly throne, vast, and jewelled, and didst call it Cherubim, fluttering among phantasms in thy carnal sense; and it was said to thee, that fulness of knowledge, not of every knowledge, but of the knowledge of the Law, is profitable for man; and that thou shouldest not despair of this very knowledge of the Law, it is briefly told thee, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Have, therefore, love unto God, and unto thy neighbour, and thou shalt be a throne of God; thou shalt belong to the Cherubim. But if thou dost not yet understand, hear what followeth: The Lord is great in Sion. He Whom I spoke to thee of as above the Cherubims, is great in Sion. Ask thou now, what is Sion? We know Sion to be the city of God. The city of Jerusalem is called Sion; and is so called according to a certain interpretation, for that Sion signifieth watching, that is, sight and contemplation; for to watch is to look forward to, or gaze upon, or strain the eyes to see. Now every soul is a Sion, if it trieth to see that light which is to be seen. For if it shall have gazed upon a light of its own, it is darkened; if upon His, it is enlightened. But, now that it is clear that Sion is the city of God; what is the city of God, but the Holy Church? For men who love one another, and who love their God Who dwelleth in them, constitute a city unto God. Because a city is held together by some law; their very law is Love; and that very Love is God: for openly it is written, God is Love. He therefore who is full of Love, is full of God; and many, full of love, constitute a city full of God. That city of God is called Sion; the Church therefore is Sion. In it God is great. Be thou in it, and God shall not be apart from thee. And when God shall be in thee, because thou hast become a citizen of Sion, a member of Sion, belonging to the society of the people of God; God will be high in thee, above all people, above those who are enraged, or above those who have been enraged. For do ye imagine that they were then enraged, and are not now enraged? They were then enraged; but because they were more numerous, they were enraged openly; now that they have dwindled into a few, they are enraged secretly. In the meantime, their boldness hath been broken; their rage also shall have an end.

5. For do ye imagine, brethren, that they whose instruments re-echoed yesterday, are not angry with our fastings? But let us not be angry with them, but let us fast for them. For the Lord our God Who sitteth in us hath

said, He hath Himself commanded us to pray for our enemies, to pray for them that persecute us: and as the Church doth this, the persecutors are almost extinct. For she was heard when she did this, and she is still heard when she doth it: they prevailed to their evil, they have been brought to an end to their good. But do ye wish to know how they were brought to an end? They were eaten up by the Church. Thou seekest them in themselves, and findest them not; seek for them in her who hath eaten them up, and they are discovered in her entrails. For by passing over to the Church, they have become Christians; persecutors have disappeared, preachers have increased. Therefore throughout their festal days, since we see those of them who have been left behind, still frenzied in their wicked and perverse pleasures, we pray God in their behalf, that they who hear the instrument of music with delight, may with greater delight listen to the voice of God. For it cannot be, that while that which soundeth without reason delighteth the ear, the word of God also should be unable to delight the heart. But we pray for them for this reason, when we fast on their holidays, that they may become a spectacle unto themselves. For when they shall have seen themselves, they will displease themselves; but they do not displease themselves, because they do not heed themselves. The drunken man doth not offend himself, but he offendeth the sober man. Shew me a man who is at last happy in God, liveth gravely, sigheth for that everlasting peace which God hath promised him; and see that when he hath seen a man dancing to an instrument, he is more grieved for his madness, than for a man who is in a frenzy from a fever. If then we know their evils, considering that we also have been freed from those very evils, let us grieve for them; and if we grieve for them, let us pray for them; and that we may be heard, let us fast for them. For we do not keep our own fasts in their holidays. Different are the fasts which we celebrate through the days of the approaching Passover, through different seasons which are fixed for us in Christ: but through their holidays we fast for this reason, that when they are rejoicing, we may groan for them. For by their joy they excite our grief, and cause us to remember how wretched they are as yet. But since we see many freed thence, where we also have been, we ought not to despair even of them. And if they are still enraged, let us pray; and if still a particle of earth that hath remained behind be stirred up against us, let us continue in lamentation for them, that to them also God may grant understanding, and that with us they may hear those words, in

which we are at this moment rejoicing: The Lord is great in Sion: and high above all people.

6. Ver. 3, 4. Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great. All these very people, over whom Thou art great in Sion, Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great. Thy Name was little when they were enraged: it hath become great; let them now confess. In what sense do we say, that the Name of Christ was little, before it was spread abroad to so great an extent? Because His report is meant by His Name. His Name was small; already it hath become great. What nation is there that hath not heard of the Name of Christ? Therefore let now the people confess unto Thy Name, which is great, who before were enraged with Thy little Name: Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great. Wherefore shall they confess? Because it is wonderful and holy. Thy very Name is wonderful and holy. He is so preached as crucified, so preached as humbled, so preached as judged, that He may come exalted, that He may come living, that He may come to judge in power. He spareth at present the people who blaspheme Him, because the longsuffering of God leadeth to repentance. For He Who now spareth, will not always spare: nor will He, Who is now being preached that He may be feared, fail to come to judge. He will come, my brethren, He will come: let us fear Him, and let us live so that we may be found on His right hand. For He will come, and will judge, so as to place some on the left hand, some on the right. And He doth not act in an uncertain manner, so as to err perchance betwixt men, so that he who should be set on the right hand, be set on the left; or that he who ought to stand on the left, by a mistake of God should stand on the right: He cannot err, so as to place the evil where He ought to set the good; nor to place the good, where He should have set the evil. If He cannot err, we err, if we fear not; but if we have feared in this life, we shall not then have what to fear for. For Thy Name is wonderful and holy. The King's honour loveth judgment. Let the people therefore so fear Him as to reform themselves: let them not, as in great presumption on His mercy, set themselves at liberty, and live evilly; for while He loveth mercy, He loveth also judgment. What is mercy? His preaching to thee truth at present, His crying unto thee now to be converted. Is it little mercy that thou hast lived in evil deeds, and He did not carry thee off when thou wast in thy sins, that He might forgive thy sins when thou didst believe? is that a slight act of

mercy? Dost thou imagine that such mercy will for ever last, so that He will punish no man? Think not so! His Name is wonderful and holy; and the King's power loveth judgment. For judgment is unjust, and absolutely is not judgment, unless each man's deserts are recompensed, according as each man hath done in his body, whether it be good or bad: And the King's honour loveth judgment. Let us therefore fear, let us therefore work righteousness, let us therefore do equity.

7. But who doth equity? Who executeth righteousness? The sinner, the ungodly, the perverse man, the man who is turned aside from the light of truth? What ought a man to do? To turn himself unto God only, that He may work that righteousness in Him, which he cannot form for himself, though he can deform it. A man is capable of wounding himself; is he capable of curing himself? He is sick, when he doth wish, he riseth not when it is his wish. If he will, let him live intemperately in cold or heat; he is sick on that day when he shall will to be sick: when by intemperate living his sickness hath commenced, let him rise when he will; let him who hath lain down when he willed, rise, if he can, when he willeth. His intemperance was needful for him to lie down sick: but to rise, he findeth his Creator's healing needful. Thus then, in order that a man may sin, he sufficeth to himself: to his being justified, he is not self-sufficient, unless he be justified by Him, who alone is Just. In order then that men may surrender themselves to be formed to righteousness, after this Psalm had alarmed the people, and had said, Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great, wonderful, and holy. The King's power loveth judgment: as if the trembling people were seeking how they should live righteously, since they cannot have righteousness in themselves, it recommendeth to them one who will form their righteousness, and saith as followeth: Thou hast prepared equity; Thou hast wrought judgment and righteousness in Jacob. For we too ought to have judgment, we ought to have righteousness; but He worketh in us judgment and righteousness, Who created us in whom He might work them. How ought we too to have judgment and righteousness? Thou hast judgment, when thou dost distinguish evil from good: and righteousness when thou followest the good, and turnest aside from the evil. By distinguishing them, thou hast judgment; by doing, thou hast righteousness. Eschew evil, he saith, and do good; seek peace, and ensue it. Thou shouldest first have

judgment, then righteousness. What judgment? That thou mayest first judge what is evil, and what is good. And what righteousness? That thou mayest shun evil, and do good. But this thou wilt not gain from thyself; see what he hath said, Thou hast wrought judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

8. Ver. 5. O magnify the Lord our God. Magnify Him truly, magnify Him well. Let us praise Him, let us magnify Him Who hath wrought the very righteousness which we have; Who wrought it in us, Himself. For Who but He Who justified us, wrought righteousness in us? For of Christ it is said, Who justifieth the ungodly. We then are the ungodly, He the Justifier, since He Himself wrought in us that very righteousness by which we are to please Him, that He may place us on the right hand, and not on the left: that He may say unto those placed on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; and that He may not place us on the left, among those unto whom He will say, Depart into everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels. He Who will crown in us not our own deserts, but His own gifts, how greatly ought He to be magnified! O magnify the Lord our God!

9. And fall down before His footstool: for He is holy. What are we to fall down before? His footstool. What is under the feet is called a footstool, in Greek, ὑποπόδιον, in Latin, Scabellum, or, Suppedaneum. But consider, brethren, what he commandeth us to fall down before. In another passage of the Scriptures it is said, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Doth he then bid us worship the earth, since in another passage it is said, that it is God's footstool? How then shall we worship the earth, when the Scripture saith openly, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God? Yet here it saith, fall down before His footstool: and, explaining to us what His footstool is, it saith, The earth is My footstool. I am in doubt; I fear to worship the earth, lest He who made the heaven and the earth condemn me; again, I fear not to worship the footstool of my Lord, because the Psalm biddeth me, fall down before His footstool. I ask, what is His footstool? and the Scripture telleth me, the earth is My footstool. In hesitation I turn unto Christ, since I am herein seeking Himself: and I discover how the earth may be worshipped without impiety, how His footstool may be worshipped without impiety. For He took upon Him earth from earth; because flesh is

from earth, and He received flesh from the flesh of Mary. And because He walked here in very flesh, and gave that very flesh to us to eat for our salvation; and no one eateth that flesh, unless he hath first worshipped: we have found out in what sense such a footstool of our Lord's may be worshipped, and not only that we sin not in worshipping it, but that we sin in not worshipping. But doth the flesh give life? Our Lord Himself, when He was speaking in praise of this same earth, said, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. Therefore when thou bowest thyself down prostrate before the 'earth,' look not as if unto earth, but unto that Holy One Whose footstool it is that thou dost worship; for thou dost worship it on His account: wherefore he hath added here also, fall down before His footstool, for He is holy. Who is holy? He in whose honour thou dost worship His footstool. And when thou worshippest Him, see that thou do not in thy thought remain in the flesh, and be not quickened by the Spirit; for, He saith, it is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing. But when our Lord praised it, He was speaking of His own flesh, and He had said, Except a man eat My flesh, he shall have no life in him. Some disciples of His, about seventy, were offended, and said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it? And they went back, and walked no more with Him. It seemed unto them hard that He said, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you: they received it foolishly, they thought of it carnally, and imagined that the Lord would cut off parts from His body, and give unto them; and they said, This is a hard saying. It was they who were hard, not the saying; for unless they had been hard, and not meek, they would have said unto themselves, He saith not this without reason, but there must be some latent mystery herein. They would have remained with Him, softened, not hard: and would have learnt that from Him which they who remained, when the others departed, learnt. For when twelve disciples had remained with Him, on their departure, these remaining followers suggested to Him, as if in grief for the death of the former, that they were offended by His words, and turned back. But He instructed them, and saith unto them, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Understand spiritually what I have said; ye are not to eat this body which ye see; nor to drink that blood which they who will crucify Me shall pour forth. I have commended unto you a certain mystery;

spiritually understood, it will quicken. Although it is needful that this be visibly celebrated, yet it must be spiritually understood. O magnify the Lord our God, and fall down before His footstool, for He is holy.

10. Ver. 6–8. Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among such as call upon His Name: these called upon the Lord, and He heard them. He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. Those men of old, Moses and Aaron and Samuel, servants of God, were great among the men of old. Ye know that Moses led forth, in the strength of God, the people of Israel from Egypt, through the Red Sea, and guided them in the wilderness; and all those who cheerfully listen to those Scriptures in the Church, or read them at home, or have learnt them in any way, know how great miracles God wrought at that season by the hand of Moses; Aaron was his brother, whom he ordained priest also. And there indeed there seemeth to be no priest besides Aaron. For in those Scriptures Aaron is openly styled the priest of God: of Moses it is not there stated that he was a priest. But if he was not this, what was he? Could he be any thing greater than a priest? This Psalm declareth that he also was himself a priest: Moses and Aaron among His priests. They therefore were the Lord's priests. Samuel is read of later in the Book of Kings: this Samuel is in David's times; for he anointed the holy David. Samuel from his infancy grew up in the temple. His mother was barren: anxious to have a son, she prayed with deep groaning unto the Lord, and entreating that God might give her a son, she shewed that she did not wish to have one carnally, and that son she gave unto Him, who willed that he should be. For she vowed him to the Lord God, saying, "If there be born unto me a man child, then shall he serve in Thy Temple all the days of his life:" and thus she did. Holy Samuel after his birth, during his suckling, remained with his mother; presently, when she had weaned him, she gave him up to the Temple, that there he might grow, there be strengthened in spirit, there serve God: he became a great priest, a holy priest at that season. He mentioneth these: and by these desireth us to understand all the saints. Yet why hath he here named those? Because we said that we ought here to understand Christ. Attend, holy brethren. He said above, O magnify the Lord our God: and fall down before His footstool, for He is holy: praising some one, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ; Whose footstool is to be worshipped, because He assumed flesh, in which He was to appear before

the human race; and wishing to shew unto us that the ancient Fathers also had preached of Him, because our Lord Jesus Christ is Himself the True Priest, he mentioned these, because God spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. What meaneth, out of the cloudy pillar? He was speaking figuratively. For if He spoke in some cloud, those obscure words predicted some one unknown, yet to be manifest. This unknown one is no longer unknown; for He is known by us, our Lord Jesus Christ. Moses and Aaron among His priests: and Samuel among such as call upon His Name: these called upon the Lord, and He heard them. He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. He Who first spoke out of the cloudy pillar, hath in Person spoken unto us in His footstool; that is, on earth, when He had assumed the flesh, for which reason we worship His footstool, for He is holy. He Himself used to speak out of the cloud, which was not then understood: He hath spoken in His own footstool, and the words of His cloud have been understood. He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar.

11. Let us attend, therefore, brethren: see whom and of what sort he hath termed holy. They kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. They kept it certainly, attend ye. They kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. This he saith, and it cannot be denied. Had they nothing of sin? How so? Since they kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. See of what sort He would have us to be formed, that we may not presume in our righteousness as perfect. Behold, Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among those that call upon His Name, unto whom He spake out of the cloudy pillar, so openly did He hear them who kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. Thou heardest them, he saith, O Lord our God: Thou wast forgiving to them, O God. God is not said to be forgiving toward any thing but sins: when He pardoneth sins, then He forgiveth. And what had He in them to punish, so that He was forgiving in pardoning them? He was forgiving in pardoning their sins, He was also forgiving in punishing them. For what followeth? Thou wast forgiving toward them, O God, and punishedst all their own affections. Even in punishing them Thou wast forgiving toward them: for not in remitting, but also in punishing their sins, hast Thou been forgiving. Consider, my brethren, what he hath taught us here: attend. God is angry with him, whom, when he sinneth, He scourgeth not: for unto him to whom He is truly

forgiving, He not only remitteth sins, that they may not injure him in a future life; but also chasteneth him, that he delight not in continual sin.

12. Come, my brethren; if we ask how these were punished, the Lord will aid me to tell you. Let us consider these three persons, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel: and how they were punished, since he said, Thou hast punished all their own affections: meaning those affections of theirs, which the Lord knew in their hearts, which men knew not. For they were living in the midst of the people of God, without complaint from man. But what do we say? That perhaps the early life of Moses was sinful; for he fled from Egypt, after slaying a man. The early life of Aaron also was such as would displease God; for he allowed a maddened and infatuated people to make an idol to worship; and an idol was made for God's people to worship. What sin did Samuel, who was given up when an infant to the temple? He passed all his life amid the holy sacraments of God: from childhood the servant of God. Nothing was ever said of Samuel, nothing by men. Perhaps God knew of somewhat there to chasten; since even what seemeth perfect unto men, unto that Perfection is still imperfect. Artists shew many of their works to the unskilful; and when the unskilful have pronounced them perfect, the artists polish them still further, as they know what is still wanting to them, so that men wonder at things they had imagined already perfect having received so much additional polish. This happeneth in buildings, and in paintings, and in embroidery, and almost in every species of art. At first they judge it to be already in a manner perfect, so that their eyes desire nothing further: but the judgment of the in-experienced eye is one, and that of the rule of art another. Thus also these Saints were living before the eyes of God, as if faultless, as if perfect, as if Angels: but He Who punished all their own affections, knew what was wanting in them. But He punished them not in anger, but in mercy: He punished them that He might perfect what He had begun, not to condemn what He had cast away. God therefore punished all their affections. How did He punish Samuel? where is this punishment? This I say, that Christians, who have already known Christ, to whom He came in His footstool, whom He loved so, for whom He shed His blood, may know how those are beaten, who have made such progress. We seek punishment in Moses; he hath almost none: except that at the last God saith unto him, Get thee up into this mountain, and die. He said to the aged

man, Die: he had already passed through the seasons of life: was he never to die? what sort of punishment was that? Did He shew His punishment in the words, Thou shalt not go up into the land of promise, where the people were about to go? Moses represented certain persons in a type. For was it a great punishment for one who entered into the kingdom of heaven, not to reach that land which was promised for a season, that it might display the shadow, and then pass away? Did not many faithless men enter that land? did they not when living in that land do many evil deeds, and offend God? Did they not follow idolatry in that very land? Was it a great thing not to have given that land to Moses? But He intended Moses to typify those who were under the Law, since the Law was given through Moses: and He sheweth that those who chose to be under the Law, and chose not to be under grace, could not enter into the land of promise. Therefore, what was said unto Moses was a type, not a punishment. What punishment is death to an old man? What punishment was it, not to enter into that land, into which unworthy men entered? But what is said of Aaron? He also died an old man: his sons succeeded him in the priesthood: his son afterwards ruled in the priesthood: how did He punish Aaron also? Samuel also died a holy old man, leaving his sons as his successors. I seek for the punishment inflicted upon them, and according to men I find it not: but according to what I know the servants of God suffer every day, they were day by day punished. Read ye, and see the punishments, and ye also who are advanced bear the punishments. Every day they suffered from the obstinate people, every day they suffered from the ungodly livers; and were compelled to live among those whose lives they daily censured. This was their punishment. He unto whom it is small hath not advanced far; for the ungodliness of others tormenteth thee in proportion as thou hast departed far from thine own. For when thou art become wheat, that is, good blade from good seed, a son of the kingdom, when thou hast begun to yield fruit, then tares will appear unto thee: for when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. When the tares have begun to appear, thou wilt see thyself among the wicked. Thou mayest wish to separate thyself from the wicked, and to separate all the wicked from the Church; our Lord's injunction will answer thee, Let both grow together unto the harvest, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. According to our Lord's words, it will be needful to spare the tares;

according to the condition of a servant, it will be needful to live among the tares: thou canst not separate them, thou must endure them. See what wounds thou sufferest in heart, when with thy body whole thou livest among the wicked. Whoever of you shall advance far will prove this, whoever of you have already advanced far have proved it. These things therefore must be endured; and perhaps this pertaineth unto it: That servant which knoweth His Lord's will, and doth not worthily, shall be beaten with many stripes. In many cases the more the will of God becometh known to us, the more doth our guilt become known to us; and the more He becometh known unto us, the more do we weep and groan. For we see how just what God demandeth of us is: and in what an imperfect state we lie; and what is said, happeneth in us; He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Lo, let love abound in thee, thou wilt grieve more for the sinner. The more love there be in thee, the more will he whom thou bearest with torment thee: he will not torment thee with anger against him, but with grief for him.

13. Consider what the Apostle Paul suffered: consider who he was, and what he suffered: Besides those things, he saith, which are without, (for he had spoken of many things which he suffered, and he now beginneth to speak of things within, besides those things which were without, which he suffered from the evil persecutors of Christ,) that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches. Consider how like a father's, how like a mother's care, was his; see how he was beaten, that all his affections might be punished; we will mention those affections of his, which God punished. Who is weak, he saith, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? The greater his love, the greater were his wounds from the sins of others. He indeed had received a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him. Behold in what way God was forgiving unto him, punishing all his affections. What are the affections, in which God thus punished him? He hath declared them himself: Lest, saith he, I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. He was so far perfect, that even yet there was ground for fear, lest he should be exalted above measure: for God would not apply a cure where was no wound. And he prayed that it might be taken away; in his sickness he prayed that the cure might be removed: For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, he saith,

that it might depart from me. That is, the thorn of the flesh by which he was buffeted, perhaps some bodily pain: I besought the Lord thrice, he saith: and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I know whom I heal: let not him that is sick give Me counsel. Like a biting plaister, it stingeth thee, but it healeth thee. He asketh the physician to take away the plaister, and he taketh it not away, unless when that upon which he hath laid it shall be healed. Strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, brethren, let not any of us who are advanced in Christ imagine that we shall be without the scourge; since, advance as far as we may, He knoweth our sins; oftentimes too He sheweth them unto us, and even we see our sins. And when we have begun to live among such men, so that men no longer see in us matter for blame; yet He Who knoweth all things blameth us still, and punisheth all our affections, because He is forgiving unto us. For were He not to punish us, but to forsake us, we are lost. Thou wast forgiving to them, O God, and punishedst all their own affections.

14. Ver. 9. O magnify the Lord our God! Again we magnify Him. He Who is merciful even when He striketh, how is He to be praised, how is He to be magnified? Canst thou shew this unto thy son, and cannot God? For thou art not good when thou dost caress thy son, and evil when thou strikest him. Both when thou dost caress him thou art a father, and when thou strikest him, thou art his father: thou dost caress him, that he may not faint; thou strikest him, that he may not perish. O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy. As he said above, O magnify the Lord our God, and fall down before His footstool: now we have understood what it is to worship His footstool: thus also but now after he had magnified the Lord our God, that no man might magnify Him apart from His hill, he hath also praised His hill. What is His hill? We read elsewhere concerning this hill, that a stone was cut from the hill without hands, and shattered all the kingdoms of the earth, and the stone itself increased. This is the vision of Daniel which I am relating. This stone which was cut from the hill without hands increased, and became, he saith, a great mountain, and filled the whole face of the earth. Let us worship on that great mountain, if we desire to be heard. Heretics do not worship on that mountain, because it hath filled the whole earth; they have stuck fast on

part of it, and have lost the whole. If they acknowledge the Catholic Church, they will worship on this hill with us. For we already see how that stone that was cut from the mountain without hands hath increased, and how great tracts of earth it hath prevailed over, and unto what nations it hath extended. What is the mountain whence the stone was hewn without hands? The Jewish kingdom, in the first place; since they worshipped one God. Thence was hewn the stone, our Lord Jesus Christ. He Himself is styled, the stone which the builders rejected; the same hath become the head of the corner. This stone hewn without hands from the hill, broke all the kingdoms of the earth: we see all the kingdoms of the world shattered by that stone. What were the kingdoms of the earth? The kingdoms of idols, and kingdoms of devils, were broken. Saturn reigned among many men; where is his kingdom? Mercury reigned over many men; where is his kingdom? It is broken: those over whom he reigned, have been reduced into the kingdom of Christ. How great was the kingdom of Cœlestis at Carthage! where is now her kingdom? That stone, that was hewn without hands from the hill, hath broken all the kingdoms of the earth. What meaneth, hewn from the hill without hands? Born of the Jewish nation without work of man. For all who are born, are born of the work of marriage: He Who was born of a virgin, was born without hands; for by hands is signified the work of man: where human hands never reached, where there was no conjugal embrace, yet there was conception. That stone then was born of the mountain without hands: it increased, and by its increase broke all the kingdoms of the earth. It hath become a great mountain, and hath filled the whole face of the earth. This is the Catholic Church, in whose communion rejoice that ye are. But they who are not in her communion, since they worship and praise God apart from this same mountain, are not heard unto eternal life; although they may be heard unto certain temporal things. Let them not flatter themselves, because God heareth them in some things: for He heareth Pagans also in some things. Do not the Pagans cry unto God, and it raineth? Wherefore? Because He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the bad, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. Boast not therefore, Pagan, that when thou criest unto God, God sendeth rain, for He sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. He hath heard thee in temporal things: He heareth thee not in things eternal, unless thou hast worshipped in His holy hill. Worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy.

15. Let this suffice you, beloved, concerning the Psalm; as far as the Lord hath granted, we have spoken. And whatever we speak in the name of God, since it is God Who speaketh in us, is the shower of God: consider what sort of earth ye are. For when rain cometh upon the earth, if it be good soil, it produceth good fruit; if it be bad soil, it beareth thorns: yet the rain is sweet, both over the fruits, and over the thorns. He who when he hath heard these words hath become worse, and produced thorns from the rain, let him expect the fire, let him not accuse the rain: but he who hath become better, and hath produced fruits from a good soil, let him expect the barn, and praise the rain. But what are the clouds, or what is the rain, but the mercy of God, Who doth all things concerning those whom He loveth, and unto whom He hath granted that He may be loved by them.

PSALM 100

A Sermon to the People, in which he speaketh remarkably concerning enduring evil men in the Church, or in a Monastery.

1. Ye heard the Psalm, brethren, while it was being chaunted: it is short, and not obscure: as if I had given you an assurance, that ye should not fear fatigue. Let us however consider more attentively, and with as much care as freedom, what the literal expressions mean; that, so far as the Lord deign to allow, they may be spiritually understood. The voice of God, from whatever instrument it sound, is yet the voice of God; for nothing, save His voice, pleaseth His ears; for we also, when we speak, please Him when He is Himself speaking from us.

2. The title of this Psalm is, a Psalm of confession. The verses are few, but big with great subjects; may the seed bring forth within your hearts, the barn be prepared for the Lord's harvest. This Psalm giveth this exhortation to us, that we jubilate unto the Lord. Nor doth it, as it were, exhort one particular corner of the earth, or one habitation or congregation of men; but since it is aware that it hath sown blessings on every side, on every side it doth exact jubilation.

3. Ver. 1. Jubilate, therefore, unto the Lord, all ye lands. Doth all the earth at this moment hear my voice? And yet the whole earth hath heard this voice. All the earth is already jubilant in the Lord; and what is not as yet jubilant, will be so. For blessing, extending on every side, when the Church was commencing to spread from Jerusalem throughout all nations, every where overturneth ungodliness, and every where buildeth up piety: the good are mingled with the wicked throughout all lands. Every land is full of the discontented murmurs of the wicked, and of the jubilation of the good. What then is it, to jubilate? For the title of the present Psalm especially maketh us give good heed to this word, for it is entitled, A Psalm of confession. What

meaneth, to jubilate with confession? It is the sentiment thus expressed in another Psalm: Blessed is the people that understandeth jubilation. Surely that which being understood maketh blessed is something great. May therefore the Lord our God, Who maketh men blessed, grant me to understand what to say, and grant you to understand what ye hear: Blessed is the people, that understandeth jubilation. Let us therefore run unto this blessing, let us understand jubilation, let us not pour it forth without understanding. Of what use is it to be jubilant and obey this Psalm, when it saith, Jubilate unto the Lord, all ye lands, and not to understand what jubilation is, so that our voice only may be jubilant, our heart not so? For the understanding is the utterance of the heart.

4. I am about to say what ye know. One who jubilates, uttereth not words, but it is a certain sound of joy without words: for it is the expression of a mind poured forth in joy, expressing, as far as it is able, the affection, but not compassing the feeling. A man rejoicing in his own exultation, after certain words which cannot be uttered or understood, bursteth forth into sounds of exultation without words, so that it seemeth that he indeed doth rejoice with his voice itself, but as if filled with excessive joy cannot express in words the subject of that joy. You observe this in those even who sing licentiously. For our jubilation will not be such as theirs is; for we ought to be jubilant in justification, while they are jubilant in iniquity; we therefore shall do it in confession, they in confusion. Yet that ye may understand what I say, call to mind what ye well know; those who are engaged at work in the fields are most given to jubilate; reapers, or vintagers, or those who gather any of the fruits of the earth, delighted with the abundant produce, and rejoicing in the very richness and exuberance of the soil, sing in exultation; and among the songs which they utter in words, they put in certain cries without words in the exultation of a rejoicing mind; and this is what is meant by jubilating. If perhaps any one fail to recognise this, because he hath not heeded it, let him heed it in future. And I hope he may not find any to remark it in, lest God find some whom He will overthrow. But nevertheless, since thorns cease not to grow, let us observe in those, who wrongly rejoice, a jubilating to be censured, and let us offer unto God a jubilation that may be crowned.

5. When then are we jubilant? When we praise that which cannot be uttered. For we observe the whole creation, the earth and the sea, and all things that therein are: we observe that each have their sources and causes, the power of production, the order of birth, the limit of duration, the end in decease, that successive ages run on without any confusion, that the stars roll, as it seemeth, from the East to the West, and complete the courses of the years: we see how the months are measured, how the hours extend; and in all these things a certain invisible element, I know not what, but some principle of unity, which is termed spirit or soul, present in all living things, urging them to the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, and the preservation of their own safety; that man also hath somewhat in common with the Angels of God; not with cattle, such as life, hearing, sight, and so forth; but somewhat which can understand God, which peculiarly doth belong to the mind, which can distinguish justice and injustice, as the eye discerneth white from black. In all this consideration of creation, which I have run over as I could, let the soul ask itself: Who created all these things? Who made them? Who made among them thyself? What are these things which thou art considering? What art thou thyself who art considering them? Who is He Who made them to be considered, and thee to consider? Who is He? Say Who He is? That thou mayest say Who He is, think of Him. For thou canst imagine somewhat that thou canst not perhaps express; but by no means canst thou express what thou canst not imagine. Imagine Him, then, before thou speakest of Him; that thou mayest imagine Him, approach Him. For whatever thou dost wish to see clearly, in order that thou mayest be able to speak of it, thou dost approach in order to gaze upon it, that thou mayest not be deceived by seeing it afar off. But as those bodies are seen by the eyes, so is He by the mind, by the heart He is recognised and seen. And where is the heart by which He may be seen? Blessed, He saith, are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. I hear, I believe, as far as I can I understand, that God is seen by the heart, and that He can only be seen by the pure heart; but I hear another passage of Scripture: Who shall boast that he hath his heart clean, or who shall boast that he is pure from sin? I have observed the whole creation, as far as I could? I have observed the bodily creation in heaven and on earth, and the spiritual in myself who am speaking, who animate my limbs, who exert voice, who move the tongue, who pronounce words, and distinguish sensations. And when can I comprehend myself in

myself? How then can I comprehend what is above myself? Yet the sight of God is promised to the human heart, and a certain operation of purifying the heart is enjoined; this is the counsel of Scripture. Provide the means of seeing what thou lovest, before thou try to see it. For unto whom is it not sweet to hear of God and His Name, except to the ungodly, who is far removed, separated from Him? For lo, saith he, they that make themselves far from Thee shall perish: Thou hast destroyed every one that committeth fornication against Thee. But what is said unto us? Because they are afar off, and therefore in darkness, with eyes so wounded in the darkness, that they not only do not long for, but even dread, the light; what is said unto us, when found afar off? Come unto Him, and be lightened? But that thou mayest approach and be lightened, thy darkness must offend thee; condemn what thou art, that thou mayest deserve to be what thou art not. Thou art ungodly, thou oughtest to be righteous: thou wilt never understand righteousness, if iniquity still please thee. Crush it in thy heart, and purify that; drive it from thy heart, wherein He Whom thou wishest to see wills to dwell. The human soul, then, cometh near as it may, the inner man is regenerated to the image of God, since he was created in the image of God; he had become far from God in proportion as he had become unlike God. For we do not approach or recede from God by intervals of space; when thou hast become unlike, thou hast receded far: when thou hast become like, thou hast approached very close. See in what manner the Lord wisheth us to approach, first by making us like, that we may approach. Be ye, He saith, like your Father Which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Learn to love thine enemy, if thou dost wish to guard against thine enemy. But in proportion as charity increaseth in thee, creating and restoring thee unto the likeness of God, it extendeth unto thine enemies; that thou mayest be like Him, Who maketh His sun to rise, not only upon the good, but upon the good and upon the evil; and sendeth rain not only on the just, but on the just and on the unjust. The nearer thou approachest unto His likeness, the more thou dost advance in charity, and the more thou beginnest to perceive God. And whom dost thou perceive? One who cometh unto thee, or unto whom thou returnest? For He never departed from thee: God departeth from thee when thou departest from God. All things are present to the blind as to the seeing: a blind man and one who hath sight, standing on one spot, are

each surrounded by the same forms of things; but one is present to them, the other absent; of two men who are standing in one place, the one is present, the other absent: not because the things themselves approach the one and recede from the other, but on account of the difference of their own eyes. He who is called blind, because that is extinguished there which is wont to adapt itself to the light which clothes all things, is in vain present to things which he doth not see; indeed he is more rightly styled absent than present; for where his perception is not, he is rightly called absent; for not to be present in sense, is to be absent. Thus also God is every where present, every where whole. His wisdom reacheth from one land to another mightily, and sweetly doth it order all things. But what God the Father is, this His Word and His Wisdom is, Light of Light, God of God. What, then, dost thou wish to see? What thou dost wish to see is not far from thee. The Apostle indeed saith that He is not far from each of us: For in Him we live, and move, and have our being. How great a misery is it then, to be far from Him Who is every where?

6. Be therefore like Him in piety, and earnest in meditation: for the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; look upon the things that are made, admire them, seek their author. If thou art unlike, thou wilt turn back; if like, thou wilt rejoice. And when, being like Him, thou shalt have begun to approach Him, and to feel God, the more love increaseth in thee, since God is love, thou wilt perceive somewhat which thou wast trying to say, and yet couldest not say. Before thou didst feel God, thou didst think that thou couldest express God; thou beginnest to feel Him, and then feelest that what thou dost feel thou canst not express. But when thou hast herein found that what thou dost feel cannot be expressed, wilt thou be mute, wilt thou not praise God? Wilt thou then be silent in the praises of God, and wilt thou not offer up thanksgivings unto Him Who hath willed to make Himself known unto thee? Thou didst praise Him when thou wast seeking, wilt thou be silent when thou hast found Him? By no means; thou wilt not be ungrateful. Honour is due to Him, reverence is due to Him, great praise is due to Him. Consider thyself, see what thou art: earth and ashes; look who it is hath deserved to see, and What; consider who thou art, What to see, a man to see God! I recognise not the man's deserving, but the mercy of God. Praise therefore Him Who

hath mercy. How, sayest thou, shall I praise Him? I cannot now unfold that little which I can discern in part through a glass, darkly: Hear therefore the Psalm, Jubilate unto the Lord, all the earth. Thou hast understood the jubilation of the whole earth, if thou dost jubilate unto the Lord. Jubilate unto the Lord; dissipate not thy jubilating among several different objects. Lastly, all other things may be described in some way; He alone, Who spoke, and all things were made, cannot be spoken of. For He spake, and we were made: but we cannot speak of Him. His Word, by Whom we were uttered, is His Son: He was made weak, that He might be spoken by us, however weak. Word for word we cannot utter: but for the Word we can utter jubilation. Jubilate unto the Lord, all ye lands.

7. Serve the Lord with gladness. All servitude is full of bitterness: all who are bound to a lot of servitude both are slaves, and discontented. Fear not the servitude of that Lord: there will be no groaning there, no discontent, no indignation; no one seeketh to be sold to another master, since it is a sweet service, because we are all redeemed. Great happiness, brethren, it is, to be a slave in that great house, although in bonds. Fear not, bound slave, confess unto the Lord: ascribe thy bonds to thine own deservings; confess in thy chains, if thou art desirous they be changed into ornaments. It was not said in vain, nor without being heard above, "O let the sorrowful sighing of the fettered ones come before Thee." Serve the Lord with gladness. The service of the Lord is free: a service of freedom, where not compulsion, but love serveth. For, brethren, he saith, ye have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love in the Spirit serve one another. Let love make thee a slave, since Truth maketh thee free. If, said our Lord, ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. At the same time thou art slave, and free; slave, because thou art created such; free, because thou art loved by God, by Whom thou wast created: yea, free indeed, because thou lovest Him by Whom thou wast made. Serve not with discontent; for thy murmurs do not tend to release thee from serving, but to make thee a wicked servant. Thou art a slave of the Lord, thou art a freedman of the Lord: seek not so to be emancipated as to depart from the house of Him Who frees thee.

8. Serve the Lord with gladness. That gladness will be full and perfect, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality: then will gladness be complete, then will be that perfect jubilation, then praise without ceasing, then love without offence, then enjoyment without fear, then life without death. What is there here? is there no joy? If no joy, there is no jubilation: how then, Jubilate in the Lord, all ye lands? Even here there is clearly joy: we have a taste here of the hope of a future life, with which we are to be satisfied there. But it is needful that the corn bear much amid the tares: the true wheat is amongst the chaff, the lily is among thorns. For what is said of the Church? As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. It is not said, among strangers, but, among the daughters. O Lord, how dost Thou console, how dost Thou comfort, how dost Thou terrify? What is it that thou sayest? As the lily among what thorns? so is my beloved among what daughters? What dost thou call thorns? the daughters themselves? He answereth; They are thorns, on account of their own conduct; daughters, on account of My sacraments. Would that our groans were among the groans of strangers: those groans would be less. This is a cause for deeper groans: For it is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour: for then I could have borne it. Neither was it mine adversary, that did magnify himself against me: for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him. These are the words of a Psalm: he who knoweth our letters, followeth them: let him who knoweth them not, learn, that he may follow them. Neither was it mine adversary, that did magnify himself against me: for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him. But it was even thou, my companion, my guide, my own familiar friend. We took sweet food together. What sweet food do they take with us, who are not to be with us for ever? what sweet food, but this, Taste, and see how sweet the Lord is? Amongst these we must needs groan.

9. But where can the Christian live apart, that he may not groan among false brethren? Whither is he to go? What is he to do? Is he to seek solitudes? Stumbling-blocks follow him. Is he who is well advanced, to separate himself, that he may have to suffer no man? What if no one should choose to endure this very man, before he lived well? If therefore, because he liveth well, he will not endure any man, by the very fact of his refusal he is convicted of not living well. Attend, beloved: Forbearing one another, saith

the Apostle, in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "Forbearing one another;" hast thou nothing for another to forbear in thee? I am surprised if it be not so; but suppose it be not thus; for that reason thou art the stronger to forbear others, in proportion as thou hast no longer what others must forbear in thee. Thou art not forbore, forbear others. I cannot, thou sayest. Thou hast what others must forbear in thee. Forbearing one another in love. Thou forsakest human affairs, and separateth thyself, so that no one seeth thee; whom wilt thou profit? Wouldest thou have advanced so far, had no one profited thee? Because thou seemest to have had quick feet in passing over, wilt thou cut off the bridge? I exhort all men, the voice of God exhorteth all men: Forbearing one another in love.

10. I will live apart, saith some one; with a few good men; with them I shall be doing well. For to do good to no man is wicked and cruel. My Lord taught me not this; for He condemned not the slave who pilfered what he received, but the slave who put it not out at trade. Let the punishment of the pilferer be inferred from that of the slothful servant. Thou wicked and slothful servant, saith the Lord in condemnation: he saith not, Thou hast pilfered my money: he saith not, I gave thee money: and thou hast not restored to me whole what I gave thee; because it hath not increased, because thou hast not put it out at interest, for that reason, he saith, will I punish thee. God is covetous our salvation. I will, therefore, saith he, live separate with a few good men: why should I live in common with crowds? Well: those very few good men, from what crowds have they been strained out? If however these few are all good: it is, nevertheless, a good and praiseworthy design in man, to be with such as have chosen a quiet life; distant from the bustle of the people, from noisy crowds, from the great waves of life, they are as if in harbour. Is there therefore here that joy? that jubilant gladness which is promised? Not as yet; but still groans, still the anxiety of temptations. For even the harbour hath an entrance somewhere or other; if it had not, no ship could enter it; it must therefore be open on some side: but at times on this open side the wind rusheth in; and where there are no rocks, ships dashed together shatter one another. Where then is security, if not even in harbour? And yet it must be confessed, it is true, that persons in harbour are in their degree much better off than when afloat on the main.

Let them love one another, as ships in harbour, let them be bound together happily; let them not dash against one another: let absolute equality be preserved there, constancy in love; and when perchance the wind rusheth in from the open side, let there be careful piloting there.

11. Now what will one who perchance presideth over such places, nay, who serveth his brethren, in what are called monasteries, tell me? I will be cautious: I will admit no wicked man. How wilt thou admit no evil one? I will not allow any wicked man, any wicked brother, to enter; with a few good men my lot will be a happy one. How dost thou recognise the person whom perhaps it is thy wish to exclude? That he may be known to be wicked, he must be tested within; how then dost thou shut out one about to enter, who must be proved afterwards, and cannot be proved, unless he hath entered? Wilt thou repel all the wicked? Thou sayest so, and thou knowest how to inspect them. Do all come unto thee with their hearts bare? Those who are about to enter, do not know themselves; how much less dost thou know them? For many have promised themselves that they were about to fulfil that holy life, which has all things in common, where no man calleth any thing his own, who have one soul and one heart in God: they have been put into the furnace, and have cracked. How then knowest thou him who is unknown even to himself? Wilt thou shut out wicked brethren from the company of the good? Whoever thou art who speakest thus, exclude, if thou canst, all evil thoughts from thy heart: let not even an evil suggestion enter into thy heart. "I consent not," thou sayest, yet it entered, so as to suggest to thee. For we all wish to have our hearts fortified, that no evil suggestion may enter. But who knoweth, whence it entereth? Even every day we fight in our own heart; one man within his own heart is at strife with a crowd. Avarice suggests, lust suggests, gluttony suggests, that rejoicing of the people suggests, all things suggest: he restraineth himself from all, answereth to all, turneth away from all; it is hard for him not to be wounded by some one. Where then is security? Here no where; in this life no where, except solely in the hope of the promise of God. But there, when we shall reach thereunto, is complete security, when the gates are shut, and the bars of the gates of Jerusalem made fast; there is truly full jubilation, and great delight. Only do not thou feel secure in praising any sort of life: judge no man blessed before his death.

12. By this means men are deceived, so that they either do not undertake, or rashly attempt, a better life; because, when they choose to praise, they praise without mention of the evil that is mixed with the good: and those who choose to blame, do so with so envious and perverse a mind, as to shut their eyes to the good, and exaggerate only the evils which either actually exist there, or are imagined. Thus it happeneth, that when any profession hath been ill, that is, incautiously, praised, if it hath invited men by its own reputation, they who betake themselves thither discover some such as they did not believe to be there; and offended by the wicked recoil from the good. Brethren, apply this teaching to your life, and hear in such a manner that ye may live. The Church of God, to speak generally, is magnified: Christians, and Christians alone, are called great, the Catholic (Church) is magnified; all love each other; each and all do all they can for one another; they give themselves up to prayers, fastings, hymns; throughout the whole world, with peaceful unanimity God is praised. Some one perhaps heareth this, who is ignorant that nothing is said of the wicked who are mingled with them; he cometh, invited by these praises, findeth bad men mixed with them, who were not mentioned to him before he came; he is offended by false Christians, he flieth from true Christians. Again, men who hate and slander them, precipitately blame them: asking, what sort of men are Christians? Who are Christians? Covetous men, usurers. Are not the very persons who fill the Churches on holidays the same who during the games and other spectacles fill the theatres and amphitheatres? They are drunken, gluttonous, envious, slanderers of each other. There are such, but not such only. And this slanderer in his blindness saith nothing of the good: and that praiser in his want of caution is silent about the bad. But if the Church of God is praised at this time, as the Scriptures praise her, as I have now said, As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters: a man heareth, considereth, the lily pleaseth him, he entereth, clingeth to the lily, beareth with the thorns; the lily will deserve the praise and kisses of her spouse, who saith, As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. Thus also in the case of the clergy. The eulogists of the clergy point to the good ministers, faithful stewards, who bear with all things, sacrificing their own bowels for those whom they wish to profit, not seeking what is their own, but what is Jesus Christ's. They praise these things, but forget that they are mingled with bad men. Again, they who

blame them, talk of the avarice of the clergy, the dishonesty of the clergy, the litigations of the clergy, they are loud on those greedy of the property of others, gluttonous and drunken. Thou enviously blamest, and thou indiscreetly praisest: do thou who praisest, speak of the wicked who are mingled with them: do thou who blamest, see the good there also. Thus also in that common life of brethren, which exists in a monastery: great and holy men live therein, with daily hymns, prayers, praises of God; their occupation is reading; they labour with their own hands, and by this means support themselves; they seek nothing covetously; whatever is brought in for them by pious brethren, they use with contentedness and charity; no one claimeth as his own what another hath not; all love, all forbear one another mutually. Thou hast praised them; thou hast praised; he who knoweth not what is going on within, who knoweth not how, when the wind entereth, ships even in harbour dash against one another, entereth as if in hope of security, expecting to find no man to forbear; he findeth there evil brethren, who could not have been found evil, if they had not been admitted, (and they must be at first tolerated, lest they should perchance reform; nor can they easily be excluded, unless they have first been endured:) and becometh himself impatient beyond endurance. Who asked me here? I thought that love was here. And irritated by the perversity of some few men, since he hath not persevered in fulfilling his vow, he becometh a deserter of so holy a design, and guilty of a vow he hath never discharged. And then, when he hath gone forth himself too, he also becometh a reproacher, and a slanderer; and records those things only, (sometimes real,) which he asserts that he could not have endured. But the real troubles of the wicked ought to be endured for the society of the good. The Scripture saith unto him; Woe unto those that have lost patience. And what is more, he belcheth abroad the evil savour of his indignation, as a means to deter them who are about to enter; because, when he had entered himself, he could not persevere. Of what sort are they? Envious, quarrelsome, men who forbear no man, covetous; saying, He did this there, and he did that there. Wicked one, why art thou silent about the good! Thou sayest enough of those whom thou couldest not endure: thou sayest nothing of those who endured thy wickedness.

13. This saying of our Lord in His Gospel, is most justly extolled, most beloved brethren: There shall be two in the field: the one shall be taken, and

the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left. Who are the two in the field? This is what the Apostle saith: I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Ye are God's husbandry. We are labouring in the field. The two in the field, are clergy; the one shall be taken, and the other left? the good shall be taken, the bad shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, applieth to the laity. Why in the mill? Because they are held bound by the world, in the whirl of temporal things, as by a millstone. Thence shall the one be taken, and the other left. Who shall be taken thence? The one who doth good works, ministering to the indigence of God's servants, to the wants of the poor, faithful in confessing God, sure in the joyfulness of hope, watchful towards God, wishing no one evil, loving, as far as he can, not friends only, but enemies also, the man who knoweth no woman but his own wife, the woman who knoweth no man save her own husband; this one shall be taken even from the mill; but the one who shall be otherwise, shall be left. But others say, We are anxious for repose; we wish to have no one to endure, we are removing from crowds; we shall have a happy lot in a sort of security. If thou seekest repose, turn not, as it were, seeking a couch, to repose upon without any anxiety. And thence shall one be taken, the other left. Let no man deceive you, brethren: if ye wish not to be deceived, and to love your brethren, know that every profession in the Church containeth hypocrites. I said not that every man was a hypocrite, but that every profession had within itself hypocrites: there are wicked Christians, but there are also good ones. Thou seemest to see more wicked than good, because they are like chaff, which prevents your eye reaching the wheat; but there is wheat there also: approach, try them, sift them, judge of them by their taste. Thou findest nuns devoid of self-discipline: is a monastic life for this reason to be blamed? Many remain not in their own houses. They make visits to others' houses, busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not, proud, tattlers, drunken: though they be virgins, what profiteth the flesh being whole, while the mind is corrupt? Humble wedlock is better than proud virginity. For if such a woman were to marry, she would not have the name of virgin to raise her pride, while she would have a curb to govern her. But are we, on account of wicked virgins, to condemn those who are holy both in body and mind? or, on account of these praiseworthy

ones, shall we necessarily praise those who deserve censure? On every side the one shall be taken, and the other left.

14. Ver. 2. Let us then, brethren, finish the Psalm, which is plain. O serve the Lord with gladness: he addresseth you, whoever ye are who endure all things in love, and rejoice in hope. Serve the Lord, not in the bitterness of murmuring, but in the gladness of love. Come before His presence with rejoicing. It is easy to rejoice outwardly: rejoice before the presence of God. Let not the tongue be too joyful: let the conscience be joyful. Come before His presence with a song.

15. Ver. 3. Be ye sure that the Lord He is God. Who knoweth not that The Lord, He is God? But He speaketh of the Lord, Whom men thought not God: Be ye sure that the Lord He is God. Let not that Lord become vile in your sight: ye have crucified Him, scourged Him, spit upon Him, crowned Him with thorns, clothed Him in a dress of infamy, hung Him upon the Cross, pierced Him with nails, wounded Him with a spear, placed guards at His tomb; He is God. Be ye sure that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. It is He that hath made us: All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. What reason have ye for exultation, what reason have ye for pride? Another made you; the Same Who made you, suffereth from you. But ye extol yourselves, and glory in yourselves, as if ye were created by yourselves. It is good for you that He Who made you, make you perfect. It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. We ought not to be proud: all the good that we have, we derive from our Creator; we are condemned for what we have done in ourselves; for what He hath done in us, we are crowned. It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Sheep and one sheep. These sheep are one sheep: and how loving a Shepherd we have! He left the ninety and nine, and descended to seek the one, He bringeth it back on His own shoulders ransomed by His own blood. That Shepherd dieth without fear for the sheep, Who on His resurrection regaineth His sheep. We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

16. Ver. 3, 4. Enter into His gates with confession. At the gates is the beginning: begin with confession. Thence is the Psalm entitled, A Psalm of

Confession: there be joyful. Confess that ye were not made by yourselves, praise Him by Whom ye were made. Let thy good come from Him, in departing from Whom thou hast caused thine evil. Enter into His gates with confession. Let the flock enter into the gates: let it not remain outside a prey for wolves. And how is it to enter? With confession. Let the gate, that is, the commencement for thee, be confession. Whence it is said in another Psalm; Begin unto the Lord with confession. What he there calleth Begin, here he calleth Gates. Enter into His gates in confession. What? And when we have entered, shall we not still confess? Always confess Him: thou hast always what to confess for. It is hard in this life for a man to be so far changed, that no cause for censure be discoverable in him: thou must needs blame thyself, lest He Who shall condemn blame thee. Therefore even when thou hast entered His courts, then also confess. When will there be no longer confession of sins? In that rest, in that likeness to the Angels. But consider what I have said: there will there be no confession of sins. I said not, there will be no confession: for there will be confession of praise. Thou wilt ever confess, that He is God, thou a creature; that He is thy Protector, thyself protected. In Him thou shalt be as it were hid: as it is written, "Thou shall hide them in the secret of Thine own presence." Go into His courts with hymns; and confess unto Him. Confess in the gates; and when ye have entered the courts, confess with hymns. Hymns are praises. Blame thyself, when thou art entering; when thou hast entered, praise Him. Open me the gates of righteousness, he saith in another Psalm, that I may go into them, and confess unto the Lord. Did he say, when I have entered, I will no longer confess. Even after his entrance, he will confess. For what sins did our Lord Jesus Christ confess, when He said, I confess unto Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. He confessed in praising Him, not in accusing Himself.

17. Speak good of His Name; for the Lord is pleasant. Think not that ye faint in praising Him. Your praise of Him is like food: the more ye praise Him, the more ye acquire strength, and He Whom ye praise becometh the more sweet. Speak good of His Name; for the Lord is pleasant: His mercy is everlasting. For He will not cease to be merciful, after He hath freed thee: it belongeth to His mercy to protect thee even unto eternal life. His mercy, therefore, is to everlasting: and His truth from generation to generation. Understand by from generation to generation, either every generation, or in

two generations, the one earthly, the other heavenly. Here there is one generation which produceth mortals; another which maketh such as are everlasting. His Truth is both here, and there. Imagine not that His truth is not here, if His truth were not here, he would not say in another Psalm; Truth is risen out of the earth; nor would Truth Itself say, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

PSALM 101

A Discourse to the people.

1. Ver. 1. In this 101st Psalm, we ought to seek in the whole body of it what we find in the first verse: Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. Let no man flatter himself that he will never be punished through God's mercy; for there is judgment also; and let no man who hath been changed for the better dread the Lord's judgment, seeing that mercy goeth before it. For when men judge, sometimes overcome by mercy, they act against justice; and mercy, but not justice, seemeth to be in them: while sometimes, when they wish to enforce a rigid judgment, they lose mercy. But God neither loseth the severity of judgment in the bounty of mercy, nor in judging with severity loseth the bounty of mercy. Suppose we distinguish these two, mercy and judgment, by time; for possibly, they are not placed in this order without a meaning, so that he said not 'judgment and mercy,' but 'mercy and judgment:' so that if we distinguish them by succession in time, perhaps we find that the present is the season for mercy, the future for judgment. How is it that the season of mercy cometh first? Consider first how it is with God, that thou also mayest imitate the Father, in so far as He shall permit thee. For it is not arrogance to say, that we ought to imitate our Father; since our Lord, the only Son of God, exhorteth us to this, saying, Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. When He said to them, Love your enemies, pray for them which persecute you; that ye may, He addeth, be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Behold mercy. When thou seest the just and the unjust behold the same sun, enjoy the same light, drink from the same founts, satisfied with the same rain, blessed with the same fruits of the earth, inhale this air in the same way, possess equally the world's goods; think not that God is unjust, Who giveth these things equally

to the just and the unjust. It is the season of mercy, not as yet of judgment. For unless God spared at first through mercy, He would not find those whom He could crown through judgment. There is therefore a season for mercy, when the long-suffering of God calleth sinners to repentance.

2. Hear the Apostle distinguishing each season, and do thou also distinguish it: Thinkest thou this, he saith, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Remark this. For he saw that he himself (but to whom saith he it? for it is the whole race of men, not one only, that he is addressing) did many evil things daily, and yet lived, that no harm happened to him; and imagined that God was either sleeping, or that He regarded not human affairs, or loved men's evil deeds. He erases this notion from the heart of all disposed to a right understanding. Thinkest thou, he saith, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? And as if we were to reply, Why do I commit such sins daily, and no evil occurreth unto me? he goeth on to shew to him the season of mercy: Despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering? And he did indeed despise them; but the Apostle hath made him auxious. Not knowing, he saith, that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Behold the season of mercy. But that he might not think this would last for ever, how did he in the next verse raise his fears? But thou: (now hear the season of judgment; thou hast heard the season of mercy, on which account, mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord:) "But thou," saith the Apostle, "after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to every man according to his deeds." Lo, mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. But he hath threatened concerning judgment: is therefore the judgment of God to be feared only, and not to be loved? To be feared by the wicked on account of punishment, to be loved by the good on account of the crown. Because then the Apostle hath alarmed the wicked in the testimony which I have quoted, hear where he giveth hope concerning judgment to the good. He puts forth himself, and shews in himself too the season of mercy. For unless he found a period of mercy, in what condition would judgment find him? A blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurer of others. For he thus speaketh, and

praiseth the season of mercy, in which season we are now living: I who was before, he saith, a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy. But perhaps he only hath obtained mercy? Hear how he cheereth us: That in me, he saith, first, Christ Jesus might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting. What meaneth, that He might shew forth all longsuffering? That every sinner and wicked man might see that Paul received pardon, and might not despair of himself? Lo, he hath instanced himself, and thereby cheered others also. Wherein? In the season of mercy. Hear what he saith of the good at the time of judgment, again speaking of himself and of others. In the first place, he obtained mercy. Why? Because he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. The Lord came to give to Paul, not to reward him. For if He chose to reward, what would He find wherewith to give the sinner his due, except punishment? He willed not to requite him punishment, but to give him grace. Hear now that he, to whom He gave grace, holdeth even the Lord indebted to him. He found in Him a free Giver in the season of mercy, he holdeth Him a debtor at the season of judgment. See how he saith this. For I am now, he saith, ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. This, in the time of mercy: now hear of judgment: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render to me at that day. He said not, 'giveth,' but, shall render. When He gave, He was merciful: when He 'shall render,' He will be a Judge: because, Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. By pardoning his offences, He came to owe him a crown: there I have obtained mercy. The Lord therefore was merciful at first, but here He will render me a crown of righteousness. Why will He render it? Because He is a just Judge. Wherefore a just Judge? Because, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. A just Judge then cannot but crown these things. For He found there things to crown: but what had He found before? One who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. He pardoned these latter: He will crown the former deeds; He pardoned the one at the season of mercy, He will crown the other at the season of judgment: for, Mercy and judgment will I sing, unto Thee, O Lord. But did Paul alone deserve this? For I had asserted, that as he raised our fears by the former testimony, so did he

encourage us by the latter. When he said, The Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render to me at that day: he addeth, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing and His kingdom.

3. Since therefore, brethren, we have a season of mercy, let us not on that account flatter, or indulge ourselves, saying, God spareth ever. Behold what I did yesterday, God spared; I do so to-day also, and God spareth; I will do so to-morrow also, because God spareth. Thou heedest His mercy, but fearest not His judgment. If thou dost wish to sing of mercy and judgment, understand that He spareth, that thou mayest amend, not that thou mayest remain in thy wickedness. Do not treasure up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. For it is said in another Psalm of the time of mercy; But unto the ungodly said God, Why dost thou preach My laws, and takest My covenant in thy mouth? whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast My words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him: and hast been partaker with the adulterers. Thou satest, and spakest against thy brother: yea, and hast slandered thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue. Behold the season of mercy; what meaneth, I held My tongue? Doth it mean, I reprov'd him not? Rather, I judg'd not. For how doth He hold His tongue, Who daily crieth out in the Scriptures, in the Gospel, in His own preachers? These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue; and because God was silent, that is, punished not; what said the ungodly in his heart? Listen: Thou thoughtest wickedness, that I will be such a one as thyself. That is, it was not enough that thou wast such thyself; thou hast thought Me such also. When He had shewn unto him the season of mercy, He alarmed him with that of judgment: But I will reprove thee, and set thee before thine own face. Thou placest thyself behind thyself: I will place thee before thyself. For every man who will not see his own sins, placeth himself behind his back, and observeth sharply the sins of others, not from diligence, but envious feeling; not wishing to heal, but to accuse: but he forgetteth himself. Whence our Lord saith to such persons: Thou beholdest the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye. Since then mercy and judgment are our song, let us, while we do mercy, fearlessly await judgment: and let us be in His body, and let us sing these things. For Christ singeth this; if the Head alone

singeth it, this song cometh from the Lord; but if the whole of Christ, that is, His Head and Body, be thou among His members, cling unto Him by Faith, and by Hope, and by Love; and thou singest in Him, thou rejoicest in Him: for He Himself toileth in thee, thirsteth in thee, is hungred and in tribulation in thee. He is still dying in thee: and thou in Him hast already risen from the dead. For if He did not die in thee, He would not have had Himself spared in thee by the persecutor, when He said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Christ therefore, my brethren, singeth; but how, ye know: we have expounded Christ to you constantly: and I know that these things are not new to you. Our Lord Christ is the Word of God, by Whom all things were made. This Word, that He might redeem us, became flesh, and dwelt in us; God, Who is above all things, the Son coequal with the Father, became man; He became man, that God as man might be a Mediator between men and God; and might reconcile those who were at a distance from one another, join the separated, recall the estranged, bring back the exiled: for this He became man. He became then Head of the Church; He hath both body and limbs. Seek for His limbs; they are at present groaning throughout the whole world: they will rejoice then, in the end, in the crown of righteousness, of which St. Paul saith, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render me at that day. At present then let us all sing in hope, all gathered together into one. For having put on Christ, we are Christ together with our Head: inasmuch as we are the seed of Abraham. The Apostle saith this; as to what I said, that ‘we are Christ,’ the Apostle saith this, in these words: Then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. Ye are the seed of Abraham; let us see whether the seed of Abraham be Christ. In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. He saith not, In thy seeds, as in many; but as of one, In thy seed, which is Christ. And to us he saith, therefore ye are Abraham’s seed. It is clear that we belong to Christ; and because we are His members and body, we are one Man with our head. Let us therefore sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord!

4. Ver. 2. I will sing to the harp, and will have understanding, in the spotless way. When Thou shalt come unto me. Except in the spotless way, thou canst neither sing to the harp, nor understand. If thou dost wish to understand, sing in the spotless way, that is, work with cheerfulness before thy God. What is the spotless way? Hear what followeth: I walked in innocence, in

the midst of my house. This spotless way beginneth from innocence, and it endeth also in innocence. Why seek many words? Be innocent: and thou hast perfected righteousness. But what is it to be innocent? For a man injureth in two ways, as far as is in himself; either by making others miserable, or by deserting them in misery; for thou also dost not wish to be made wretched by another, or to be deserted by another, if thou art wretched. Who is it who maketh men wretched? He who assaulteth them with outrages, or with snares, robbeth others of their property, oppresseth the poor, stealeth, soliciteth another's wife, is a slanderer, wisheth to cause sorrow to men, through a malignant disposition. Who is he who forsaketh the wretched? He who seeth the poor man in need of some aid, and possessing the means of giving that aid, yet scorneth him; estrangeth his heart from him. And if he were in such a condition, as to have no need whatever of any mercy, he would be proud, if he forsook the wretched; he is still placed in the tribulation of the flesh, not knowing what may happen to him to-morrow, and yet despiseth the tears of the wretched; he is not innocent. But who is innocent? He who while he hurteth not another, injureth not himself. For he who hurteth himself, is not innocent. Some one saith; Lo, I have not robbed any one, I have not oppressed any one: I will live happily on my own substance, the fruits of my virtuous toil; I wish to have fine banquets, I wish to spend as much as pleaseth me, to drink with those whom I like as much as I please; whom have I robbed, whom have I oppressed, who hath complained of me? He seemeth innocent. But if he corrupt himself, if he overthrow the temple of God within himself, why hope that he will act with mercy toward others, and spare the wretched? Can that man be merciful to others, who unto himself is cruel? The whole of righteousness, therefore, is reduced to the one word, innocence. But the lover of iniquity, hateth his own soul, When he loved iniquity, he fancied he was injuring others. But consider whether he was injuring others: He who loveth iniquity, he saith, hateth his own soul. He therefore who wishes to injure another, first injureth himself; nor doth he walk, since there is no room. For all wickedness suffereth from narrowness: innocence alone is broad enough to walk in. I walked in the innocence of my heart, in the midst of my house. By the middle of his house, he either signifieth the Church herself; for Christ walketh in her: or his own heart; for our inner house is our heart: as he hath explained in the above words, in the

innocence of my heart. What is the innocence of the heart? The middle of his house? Whoever hath a bad house in this, is driven out of doors. For whoever is oppressed within his heart by a bad conscience, just as any man in consequence of the overflow of a waterspout or of smoke goeth out of his house, suffereth not himself to dwell therein; so he who hath not a quiet heart, cannot happily dwell in his heart. Such men go out of themselves in the bent of their mind, and delight themselves with things without, that affect the body; they seek repose in trifles, in spectacles, in luxuries, in all evils. Wherefore do they wish themselves well without? Because it is not well with them within, so that they may rejoice in a good conscience. Thus when the Lord had cured the palsied man, He saith, Take up thy bed, and go into thine house. Let the soul which is, as it were, relaxed with palsy, do this: in the members of good works let it new string its powers, that it may do good works, let it take up its bed, let it rule its body: let it now go into its own house, let it enter into its own conscience, it will now find it broad enough to walk in, and to sing, and to understand.

5. Ver. 3, 4. I set no wicked thing before my eyes. What meaneth this? I did not love such. For it is often said, as ye are aware, of a man who is loved of any one, he hath him before his eyes: and one who is despised, thus complaineth, He hath not me before his eyes. What is it then, to have one before one's eyes? To love. What is it, not to love? Not to dwell there in heart. He said therefore, I did set no wicked thing before my eyes: I did love no wicked thing. And he explaineth this same wicked thing: I hated them that do unfaithfulness. Attend, my brethren. If ye walk with Christ in the midst of His house, that is, if either in your heart ye have a good repose, or in the Church herself proceed on a good journey in the way of godliness; ye ought not to hate those unfaithful only who are without, but whomsoever also ye may have found within. Who are the unfaithful? They who hate the law of God; who hear, and do it not, are called unfaithful. Hate the doers of unfaithfulness, repel them from thee. But thou shouldest hate the unfaithful, not men: one man who is unfaithful, hath, ye see, two names, man, and unfaithful: God made him man, he made himself unfaithful; love in him what God made, persecute in him what he made himself. For when thou shalt have persecuted his unfaithfulness, thou killest the work of man, and freest the work of God. I hated the doers of unfaithfulness.

6. The wicked heart hath not cleaved unto me. What is a wicked heart? A crooked heart. What is a crooked heart? A heart not straight. What is a heart not straight? See what is a straight heart, and then thou wilt see what is a heart not straight. The heart of a man, who wisheth not any thing contrary to any that God wisheth, is called straight. Attend. Some one prayeth that something may not happen: he prayeth, and it is not hindered. Let him ask as much as he can: but something happeneth contrary to his own will; let him submit himself to the will of God, let him not resist the Great Will. For our Lord Himself thus explaineth it, shewing our weakness in Himself, when He was about to suffer; saying, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. For He did not truly fear death, who had the power of laying down His own life, and had the power of again resuming it. And the Apostle Paul, His own soldier, His own servant, exclaimeth, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render me at that day. He rejoiceth in that he is about to die; and is his Lord and General sorrowful, because he is about to die? Is then the servant better than his Lord? And where then are our Lord's own words? It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his Lord. Behold, is Paul brave at the prospect of death, and is the Lord sorrowful? I had a desire, he saith, to depart, and to be with Christ. He rejoiceth, in that he is departing, to be with Christ; and is Christ Himself, with Whom Paul rejoiceth that he is about to be, sorrowful? But what were those words, save the sound of our weakness? Many as yet weak are saddened by coming death; but let them have a straight heart; let them avoid death, as far as they can; but if they cannot, let them say what our Lord Himself said, not on His own account, but on ours. For what said He? O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Behold thou hast the human will expressed: now see the righteous heart; Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou, Father, will. If therefore the righteous heart followeth God, the crooked heart resisteth God. Suppose something untoward happeneth to him, he crieth out, 'God, what have I done unto Thee? What sin have I committed?' He wisheth himself to appear just, God unjust. What is so crooked as this? It is not enough that thou art crooked thyself: thou must think thy rule crooked also. Reform thyself, and thou findest Him straight, in departing from Whom thou hast made thyself crooked. He doth justly, thou unjustly; and for this

reason thou art perverse, since thou callest man just, and God unjust. What man dost thou call just? Thyself. For when thou sayest, "What have I done unto Thee?" thou thinkest thyself just. But let God answer thee: "Thou speakest truth: thou hast done nothing to Me: thou hast done all things unto thyself; for if thou hadst done any thing for Me, thou wouldest have done good. For whatever is done well, is done unto Me; because it is done according to My commandment; but whatever of evil is done, is done unto thee, not unto Me; for the wicked man doth nothing except for his own sake, since it is not what I command." When ye see such men, brethren, reprove them, convince and correct them: and if ye cannot reprove or correct them, consent not to them; that ye may say, The wicked heart hath not cleaved unto me.

7. When the wicked man departed from me, I knew him not. What is, I knew him not? I approved him not, I praised him not, he pleased me not. For we find the word to know occasionally used in Scripture, in the sense of to be pleased. For what is hidden from God, brethren? Doth He know the just, and doth He not know the unjust? What dost thou think of, that He doth not know? I say not, what thinkest thou; but what wilt thou ever think, that He will not have seen beforehand? God knoweth all things, then; and yet in the end, that is in judgment after mercy, He saith of some persons; Many will come and say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not in Thy Name cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? in Thy Name we have eaten and drunken. And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity. Was there any one He did not know? But what meaneth, I never knew you? I acknowledge you not in My rule. For I know the rule of My righteousness: ye agree not with it, ye have turned aside from it, ye are crooked. Therefore He said here also: I knew him not. When the wicked man departed from Me, I knew him not. What meaneth, I knew him not? Is it because when perchance a wicked man meeteth a righteous man in a narrow street, the righteous saith unto himself, as it is written in the Wisdom of Solomon: He is grievous unto us even to behold; and changeth his path that he may not see one whom he doth not wish to see? But how many wicked men are there whom we see, and who see us, and not only do not turn aside from us, but run unto us, and frequently desire their iniquities to be fulfilled through us. This often

happeneth to us. How then do they depart? He departeth from thee, who is unlike thee. What is, departeth from thee? followeth thee not. What is, followeth thee not? doth not imitate thee. Therefore, when the wicked man departed from me, that is, when the wicked man was unlike me, and was unwilling to imitate my paths, was unwilling in his wickedness to live as I had proposed myself for his imitation; I knew him not. What meaneth, I knew him not? Not that I was ignorant of him, but that I did not approve him.

8. Ver. 5. Whoso privily slandered his neighbour, him I persecuted. Behold the righteous persecutor, not of the man, but of the sin. With the proud eye, and the insatiable heart, I did not feed. What meaneth, I did not feed with? I did not eat in common with such. Attend, beloved; since ye are about to hear something wonderful. If he did not feed with this man, he did not eat with him; for to feed is to eat; how is it then that we find our Lord Himself eating with the proud? It was not only with those publicans and sinners, for they were humble: for they acknowledged their weakness, and asked for the physician. We find that He ate with the proud Pharisees themselves. For a certain proud man had invited Him: it was the same who was displeased because a sinning woman, one of ill repute in the city, approached the feet of our Lord; and he said in his heart; (for such was the purity of the Pharisees, that no wicked person was to touch them; if any unclean person had even slightly touched them, they shuddered, lest the unclean touch should render them in a manner unclean;) when therefore this sinner came to weep at the Lord's feet, and he saw her, he said in his heart; This Man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that hath come to His feet. How did he know that Jesus knew not, unless he suspected that He knew not, because He repelled not the woman? Because if it had been himself, he would repel the woman from him. But the Lord not only knew that the woman was a sinner, but the Physician also saw that the wounds of that proud man were incurable. For when He had heard him thinking, He said, in order that He might shew how proud that man was; Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee: There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed him fifty pence, and the other five hundred: and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell Me, then, which of them loved Him most? And the man gave his

opinion against himself, the Truth extorting confession from him: I suppose, Sir, that he to whom he forgave most. And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears: and the rest as ye know; we need not dwell further on the account, more than what we have mentioned for our purpose. That Pharisee was proud: the Lord ate with him; what is it therefore that he saith? With a proud eye, and an insatiable heart, with such an one I did not eat. How doth He enjoin unto us what He hath not done Himself? He exhorteth us to imitate Himself: we see that He ate with the proud; how doth He forbid us to eat with the proud? We indeed, brethren, for the sake of reproof, abstain from communion with our brethren, and do not eat with them, that they may be reformed? We rather eat with strangers, with Pagans, than with those who hold with us, if we have seen that they live wickedly, that they may be ashamed, and amend; as the Apostle saith, And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. For the sake of healing others we usually do this; but nevertheless we often eat with many strangers and ungodly men.

9. What is it that he saith, With a proud eye, and insatiable heart, with such an one I did not eat? The pious heart hath its banquets, the proud heart hath its banquets: for it was on account of the food of the proud heart, that he said, with an insatiable heart. How is the proud heart fed? If a man is proud, he is envious: otherwise it cannot be. Pride is the mother of enviousness: it cannot but generate it, and ever coexist with it. Every proud man is, therefore, envious: if envious, he feedeth on the misfortunes of others. Whence the Apostle saith, But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another. Ye see them, then, eating: eat not with these: fly such banquets: for they cannot satisfy themselves with rejoicing in others' evils, because their hearts are insatiable. Beware thou art not caught in their feasts by the devil's noose. On such meat the Jews feasted, when they crucified our Lord; that is, they fed in a manner on His punishment. (For we also feed on the Lord's Cross, since we eat His Body.) For they said, when they saw Him hanging on the cross, insulting Him, since they were insatiable in heart; they said, If He is the Son of God, let

Him come down from the Cross; He saved others, Himself He cannot save. They were feeding on the meat of their own cruelty, and He was feeding on the meat of His own mercy. Father, He saith, forgive them; for they know not what they do. They therefore had one, He another, sort of feast. But hear what is said of the table of the proud: Let their table be made a snare before themselves, and let the things that should have been for their wealth, be unto them a recompense and an occasion to them for falling. They fed, they were taken. Just as birds feed at the trap, or fishes at the hook, they were taken, when they fed. The ungodly therefore have their own feasts, the godly also have theirs. Hear the feasts of the godly: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. If therefore the godly eateth the meat of righteousness, and the ungodly of pride; it is no wonder if he is insatiable in heart. He eateth the meat of iniquity: do not eat the meat of iniquity, and the proud in eye, and the insatiable in heart, eateth not with thee.

10. Ver. 6. And whence wast thou fed? And what pleased thee, when he did not eat with thee? Mine eyes, he saith, were upon such as are faithful in the land, that they might sit with me. The Lord saith, Mine eyes were upon the faithful in the land, that they might sit with Me. That is, that with Me they might be seated. In what sense are they to sit? Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The faithful of the earth judge, for to them it is said, Know ye not, that we shall judge angels? Mine eyes were upon such as are faithful in the land, that they might sit with me. Whoso walketh in a spotless way, he ministered unto me. To Me, he saith, not to himself. For many minister the Gospel, but unto themselves; because they seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ. What is to serve Christ? To seek the things of Christ. And indeed when wicked men teach the Gospel, others are saved, they are punished. For it is said: Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works. Fear not then, when thou hearest the Gospel from a wicked man. Woe unto him who serveth himself, that is, who seeketh his own things therein: do thou receive the words of Christ. Whoso leadeth a godly life, he shall be my servant.

11. Ver. 7. The proud man hath not dwelt in the midst of my house. Understand this of the heart. The proud did not dwell in my heart: no such dwelt in my heart: for he hurried away from me. None but the meek and peaceful dwelt in my heart; the proud dwelt not there, for the unrighteous one dwelleth not in the heart of the righteous. Let the righteous be distant from thee, I know not how many miles and stations; ye dwell together, if ye have one heart. The proud doer hath not dwelt in the midst of my house: he that speaketh unjust things hath not directed in the sight of my eyes. This is the spotless way, where we understand when the Lord cometh unto us.

12. Ver. 8. In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. This is obscure: be so good as to attend: it is near the end of the Psalm. In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. Wherefore? That I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord. There are then wicked doers in the city of the Lord, and they at present, seemingly, spared. Why so? Because it is the season of mercy: but that of judgment will come; for the Psalm thus began, Of mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. He said above, that none but the righteous cleaved unto him. He clave not to the wicked, nor was he pleased with the feasts of iniquity of those who served themselves, not their Lord; that is, sought their own interests; and as if he were asked: How then hast thou so long endured such persons in thy city? It is, he replieth, the season of mercy. What meaneth, the season of mercy? Judgment hath not yet been revealed: it is night; day will appear, judgment will appear. Hear the Apostle: Therefore judge nothing before the time. What is, before the time? Before day. Hear that he meant before day: Until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. For at present, since thou seest not my heart, and I see not thine, it is night. Thou hast asked something of a man: thou hast not received: thou believest thyself despised; and perhaps thou art not despised; for thou seest not the heart; and thou dost at once blaspheme; pardon must be given thee as thou art erring by night. Some man perhaps loveth thee: and thou thinkest that he hateth thee; or he hateth thee, and thou thinkest that he loveth thee: but be it what it may, it is night. Fear not: trust in Christ, in Him have day: thou canst not think any thing evil of Him, since we are secure, and certain, that He cannot be

deceived: He loveth us. But we are not as yet sure of one another. For God knoweth our love for one another: but we, although we love one another, who knoweth with what mind our intercourse is carried on? How is it that no man seeth the heart? Because it is night. In this night temptations abound. The Psalm seemeth to speak of this same night: Thou makest darkness, that it may be night: wherein all the beasts of the forests will move. The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, and to seek their meat from God. The lion's whelps seek their prey at night. Who are the lion's whelps? The princes and powers of the air, fiends and angels of the devil. How do they seek their prey? When they tempt. But because they approach not, unless God hath given them power; for that reason it is said, they seek their meat from God. The devil sought Job, to tempt him. What sort of meat? Rich, fat, the righteous one of God, unto whom God Himself bore witness, calling him a perfect and an upright man; was a true worshipper of God. He sought him to be tempted, seeking food of God; and he received him to be tempted, but not to be crushed; to be purified, not to be overthrown; or perhaps not even to be purified, but to be proved. Yet even they who are tempted, are sometimes delivered up from secret deservings of their own into the tempter's hands, since perhaps they have been delivered up to their own lusts. For the devil hurteth no man, unless he hath received power of God. But when? at night. What is, at night? in this season. But when night shall have passed away, and day arrived, the wicked are sent with him into eternal fire, and the righteous into life eternal. There, there will be no tempter, because there are no lion's whelps there: because the night hath passed. Thus our Lord saith to His disciples, This night Satan hath desired to vex you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not. What is, to vex as wheat? As wheat is not eaten by man, before it be ground, so as to make bread; so the devil eateth no man, unless he hath first overthrown him by means of tribulation. He bruiseeth, that he may eat: but when thou art in tribulation, if thou remain wheat, be not disturbed; nothing shall befall thee. How? When oxen thresh, do they enter in unto the wheat only? They are sent into the floor together with the threshing engine. But is any thing to be feared by the wheat? Far from it. Nothing save the chaff is chopped up, the wheat is stripped of its incumbrances, and when the fanning cometh, it shall find the mass purified:

whomsoever He findeth wheat, He shall send into His garner, while He shall burn with inextinguishable fire the heap of chaff.

13. Why have I said this? Because we have day in hope. Our day ought to be in Christ. For as long as we are among temptations, it is night. In that night God spareth sinners, that He may not cut them off; He scourgeth them with temptations, that they may be amended; He endureth them in His city. Do we imagine He will alway endure them? If mercy is always, there is no judgment; but if, I will sing unto Thee, O Lord, of mercy and judgment; He at present spareth, He will then judge. But when will He judge? When night shall have passed away. For this reason He hath said; In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. What meaneth, in the morning? When the day shall at last have arrived, night having passed by. In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the earth. Why doth He spare them until the dawn? Because it was night. What meaneth, it was night? Because it was the season for mercy: He was merciful, while the hearts of men were hidden. Thou seest some one living ill; thou endurest him: for thou knowest not of what sort he will prove to be; since it is night; whether he who to-day liveth ill, to-morrow may live well; and whether he who to-day liveth well, to-morrow may be wicked. For it is night, and God endureth all men, since He is of long-suffering: He endureth them, that sinners may be converted unto Him. But they who shall not have reformed themselves in that season of mercy, shall be slain. And wherefore? That they may be scattered abroad from the city of the Lord, from the fellowship of Jerusalem, from the fellowship of the Saints, from the fellowship of the Church. But when shall they be slain? At dawn. What meaneth, at dawn? When night shall have passed away. Wherefore now doth he spare? Because it is the season of mercy. Why doth He not always spare? Because, Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. Brethren, let no man flatter himself: all the doers of iniquity shall be slain; Christ shall slay them at the dawn, and shall destroy them from His city. But now while it is the time of mercy, let them hear Him. Every where He crieth out by the Law, by the Prophets, by the Psalms, by the Epistles, by the Gospels: see that He is not silent; that He spareth: that He granteth mercy; but beware, for the judgment will come.

ADVERTISEMENT

The present Volume is the last but one of St. Augustine's Commentary on the Psalms, translated by the Rev. H. M. Wilkins, M.A. of Merton College, Oxford. The remaining Volume, containing the last twenty-five Psalms, and the Indices, may be expected in about a year. Meanwhile it is hoped that a Volume of St. Athanasius, containing his recently discovered Paschal Epistles, and a Volume of St. Justin Martyr, may be brought out. A statement of the remaining Works, which it is proposed to comprise in the Library, will be found at the end of the Volume.

C. M.

Feast of St. Mark, 1853.

PSALM 102

1. Behold, one poor man prayeth, and prayeth not in silence. We may therefore hear him, and see who he is: whether it be not perchance He, of Whom the Apostle saith, Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich. If it is He, then, how is He poor? For in what sense He is rich, who seeth not? For whence are men rich? I suppose from their gold, and silver, their slaves, their land; but all things were made by Him. What then is richer than He, by Whom riches were made, even those which are not true riches? For through Him we have even these riches, ability, memory, character, health of body, the senses, and the conformation of our limbs: for when these are safe, even the poor are rich. Through Him also are those greater riches, faith, piety, justice, charity, chastity, good conduct: for no man hath these, except through Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Behold, how rich! For which is rich, he who hath what he desireth when another doeth it for him, or he who doth what he desireth when another possesseth it? I conceive that He is richer Who made what thou hast; because thou hast not, what He hath. Behold, how rich! In one so rich, how are we to recognise these words? I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. Have these so great riches come to this? The former state is a very high one, this is a very lowly one. What shall we do? How shall we reconcile these low things with those high ones? They are too far from one another? I do not as yet recognise this poor man: he is possibly some one else; but let us still seek. For as to the reason why He appeareth not the same unto us, it is wonderful if thou dost ask, and dost not dread His riches. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. He who said this, while he was saying it, was rich; how much more rich He of Whom he said, “In the beginning was the Word:” and not any word, but the “Word that was

God:” and not any where only, but “with God:” and not inactive, but “by Whom all things were made?” Did He eat ashes as it were bread: and mingle His drink with weeping? It is to be feared lest our poverty do injury to so great riches. Yet still examine whether this poor man be He; since, The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Reflect also upon these words: I am Thy servant, and the Son of Thine handmaid. Observe, this handmaid, chaste, a virgin, and a mother: for there He received our poverty, when He was clothed in the form of a servant, emptying Himself; lest thou shouldest dread His riches, and in thy beggarly state shouldest not dare approach Him. There, I say, He put on the form of a servant, there He was clothed with our poverty; there He made Himself poor, and us rich. We are now drawing near to understand these things of Him: nevertheless we may not as yet rashly pronounce. The offspring of a virgin was the stone hewn from the hills without hands, where no man laboured: where was no concupiscence handed down, but faith alone was lit up, and the Flesh of the Word conceived. Then He came forth from the womb: the heavens spake; Angels declared it to the shepherds; the star drew the Magi to worship the King; Simeon, filled with the Holy Ghost, recognised the infant God in His Mother’s hands. Age came, not to His Divinity, but to His flesh. Ignorant old men are astonished at the wisdom of a boy of twelve years. Or even if they were learned old men, what was their wisdom to the Word of God? What was their wisdom to the Wisdom of God? Shall not the learned, unless He help them, always perish? He still increaseth in the age of His body: He cometh to the river to be baptized: the baptizer recogniseth God, confessing himself unworthy to loose the string of His sandal. From that moment the blind are enlightened, the hearing of the deaf restored, the dumb speak, the leprous are cleansed, the palsied regain strength, the sick recover, the dead arise.

2. I now indeed acknowledge the poverty of riches, in comparison with that Word, by Whom all things were made; but how far as yet is He from ‘ashes,’ and ‘weeping with His drink?’ As yet, I fear to say, it is Himself; and yet I wish. For there are things here which urge me to wish to do so, and again, reasons which cause me to fear doing so. It is Himself, and yet it is not Himself. He is now in the form of a servant, he as yet carrieth frail and mortal flesh, He now cometh before us as about to die, and yet He is

not understood in this want. I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. Let him add poverty then to poverty: let Him transfigure into Himself our humble body: let Him be our Head, we His limbs, let there be two in one flesh. For that He might at first become poor, taking the form of a servant, He left His Father: and since He was born of a virgin, let Him also leave His mother, and cleave to His wife, and let them be twain in one flesh. For thus the twain shall have one voice also, and in that one voice we shall no longer wonder at our own words. I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. For He hath deigned to hold even us as His limbs. The penitent also are among His limbs. For they are not shut out, nor separated from His Church: nor would He make the Church His spouse, unless by words like these: Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Let us then hear what the head and the body prayeth, the bridegroom and bride, Christ and the Church, both one Person; but the Word and the flesh are not both one thing; the Father and the Word are both one thing; Christ and the Church are both one Person, one perfect man in the form of His own fulness: Till we are all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. But until we are come, poverty is our lot here, toil and groaning is our lot here. Thanks be unto His loving-kindness! Whence hath He toil, whence doth the Word groan, through Whom all things were made? If He hath deigned to submit to our death, shall He not grant unto us His life? He hath raised us up to a great hope, we groan even with great hope. Groaning causeth sorrowfulness, but these are groans that create joy. I believe that Sarah, the barren one, groaned amid her joy, when she was giving birth; and we also from the fear of Thee have conceived and brought forth the Spirit of salvation. Let us hear therefore Christ, poor within us and with us, and for our sakes. For the title itself indicates the poor one. Lastly, remember that I conjectured who that poor one was: let us hear His prayer, and recognise His Person; and mistake not, when thou shalt have heard any thing that cannot apply to His Head; it was for this reason that I have prefaced as I have, that whatever thou shalt hear of this description, thou mayest understand as sounding from the weakness of the body, and recognise the voice of the members in the head. The title is, A Prayer of the afflicted, when he was tormented, and poured out his prayer before the Lord. It is the

same poor one who elsewhere saith: From the ends of the earth will I call upon Thee, when my heart is in heaviness. He is afflicted because He is also Christ; Who in the Prophet's words calleth Himself both Bridegroom and Bride: He hath bound on me the diadem as on a bridegroom, and as a bride hath adorned me with an ornament. He called Himself Bridegroom, He called Himself Bride; wherefore this, unless Bridegroom applieth to the Head, Bride to the body? They are one voice then, because they are one flesh. Let us hear, and recognise ourselves in these words; and if we see that we are without, let us labour to be there.

3. Ver. 1. Hear my prayer, O Lord: and let my crying come unto Thee. Hear my prayer, O Lord, is the same as, Let my crying come unto Thee: the feeling of the suppliant is shewn by the repetition. Turn not Thy face away from me. When did God turn away His Face from His Son? when did the Father turn away His Face from Christ? But for the sake of the poverty of my members, Turn not away Thy face from me: whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me. For I am troubled below; but Thou art above: if I exalt myself, Thou art far from me; if I humble myself, Thou dost incline Thine ear unto me. But what meaneth, whatsoever day I am troubled? For is He not troubled now? or would He speak thus, if He were not troubled? This would therefore suffice; Incline Thine ear unto me, since I am in trouble. Whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me: as if the body were one with its Head: if one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it. Thou art in trouble this day, I am in trouble; another is in trouble to-morrow, I am in trouble; after this generation other descendants, who succeed your descendants, are in trouble, I am in trouble; down to the end of the world, whoever are in trouble in My body, I am in trouble. Whatsoever day I am troubled, therefore, incline Thine ear unto me. Whatsoever day I call, O hear me, and that right soon. This is the same thing. Even now I call; but, Whatsoever day I call upon Thee, hear me right soon. Peter prayed, Paul prayed, the rest of the Apostles prayed; the faithful prayed in those times, the faithful prayed in the following times, the faithful prayed in the times of the Martyrs, the faithful pray in our times, the faithful will pray in the times of our descendants: Whatsoever day I call upon Thee, hear me right soon. Right soon: for I now ask that which Thou art willing to grant. I ask not earthly things, as an earthly man; but redeemed at last from

my former captivity, I long for the kingdom of heaven; Hear me right soon: for it is only to such a longing that Thou hast said, "Even while Thou art speaking, I will say, Here I am." Whatsoever day I call, hear me right soon. Wherefore dost thou call? in what tribulation? in what want? O poor one, before the gate of God all-rich, in what longing dost thou beg? from what destitution dost thou ask relief? from what want dost thou knock, that it may be opened unto thee? Say, let us hear this very want; let us both discover ourselves in it, and pray together with Thee. Hear and recognise, if thou canst.

4. Ver. 3. For my days are consumed away like smoke. O days! if days: for where day is heard of, light is understood. But my days are consumed away like smoke. My days, my times; wherefore, like smoke, unless from the puffing up of pride? Such days proud Adam, of whom Christ received the flesh, was worthy of receiving. Christ therefore is in Adam, and Adam in Christ. He who deigned to accept the voice of the days of smoke, hath indeed rescued from the days of smoke. For my days are consumed away like smoke. See smoke, like pride, ascending, swelling, vanishing: deservedly therefore failing, and not steadfast. For my days are consumed away like smoke: and my bones are scorched up as it were in an oven. Both my bones, and my strength, not without tribulation, not without burning. The bones of the body of Christ, the strength of His body, is it any where greater than in the Holy Apostles? And yet see that the bones are scorched. Who is offended, and I burn not? They are brave, faithful, able interpreters and preachers of the word, living as they speak, speaking as they hear; they are clearly brave, yet all who suffer offences, are an oven to them. For there is love there, and more so in the bones. The bones are within all the flesh, and support all the flesh. But if any man suffer any offence, and endanger his soul; the bone is scorched in proportion as it loveth. Love wanting, no man is scorched; if love exist, and if one member suffereth in sympathy with another that is suffering; how are they scorched who sustain all the members? My bones are scorched up as it were in an oven.

5. Ver. 4. My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass. Look back to Adam, whence the human race sprung. For how but from him was misery propagated? whence but from him is this hereditary poverty? Let him then,

who in his own body was at one time in despair, now that he is set in Christ's body, say with hope, My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass. Deservedly, since all flesh is grass. But how did this happen unto thee? Since I have forgotten to eat my bread. For God had given His commandment for bread. For what is the bread of the soul? The serpent suggesting, and the woman transgressing, he touched the forbidden fruit, he forgot the commandment: his heart was smitten as it deserved, and withered like grass, since he forgot to eat his bread. Having forgotten to eat bread, he drinketh poison: his heart is smitten, and withered like grass. This is that same smitten one in Isaiah, of whom and to whom it is said, I will not contend with you for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit proceedeth from me, and I have made every breath. Because of sin for a little while have I grieved him, and smitten him, and hid my face from him. With reason then it was said here, Turn not away Thy face from me: that is, from the smitten one, of whom Thou hast said, I have smitten him: of whom Thou hast said, "I have seen his ways, and have healed him." My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass: since I have forgotten to eat my bread. Now eat that bread which thou hadst forgotten. But this very Bread hath come, in Whose body thou mayest remember the voice of thy forgetfulness, and cry out in thy poverty, so that thou mayest receive riches. Now eat: for thou art in His body, Who saith, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Thou hadst forgotten to eat thy bread; but after His crucifixion, all the ends of the earth shall be reminded, and be converted unto the Lord. After forgetfulness, let remembrance come, let bread be eaten from heaven, that we may live; not manna, as they did eat, and died; that bread, of which it is said, Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

6. Ver. 5. For the voice of my groaning, the bones cleave unto my flesh. For the voice which I understand, for the voice which I know: for the voice of my groaning, not for the voice of the groaning of those for whom I have a fellow-feeling. For many groan, and I also groan; even for this I groan, because they groan for a wrong cause. That man hath lost a piece of money, he groaneth: he hath lost faith, he groaneth not: I weigh the money and the faith, and I find more cause for groaning for him who groaneth not as he ought, or doth not groan at all. He committeth fraud, and rejoiceth. With

what gain, with what loss? He hath gained money, he hath lost righteousness. For the latter reason, he who knoweth how to groan, groaneth; he who is near the head, who righteously clingeth to Christ's body, groaneth for this reason. But the carnal do not groan for this reason, and they cause themselves to be groaned for, because they do not groan for this reason; nor can we despise them, whether they groan not at all, or groan for the wrong cause. For we wish to correct them, we wish to amend them, we wish to reform them: and when we cannot, we groan; and when we groan, we are not separated from them. For, for the voice of my groaning my bones cleave unto my flesh: the strong cleave unto the weak, the stable cleave unto the unstable. How have they cleaved unto them? For the voice of their own groaning, not for the voice of the groaning of those others. By what law do they cleave, but that which saith, "we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak?" My bones cleave unto my flesh.

7. Ver. 6, 7. I am become like a pelican in the wilderness, and like an owl among ruined walls. I have watched, and am even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top. Behold three birds and three places; may the Lord grant us to explain what they mean, and that ye may hear profitably what is said for your good. What mean the three birds, and the three places? What are the three birds? The pelican, the owl, and the sparrow; and the three places are severally, the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top. The pelican in the wilderness, the owl in the ruined walls, and the sparrow in the house-top. In the first place we must explain, what the pelican signifieth; since it is born in a region, which maketh it unknown to us. It is born in lonely spots, especially those of the river Nile in Egypt. Whatever kind of bird it is, let us consider what the Psalm intended to say of it. It dwelleth, it saith, in the wilderness. Why enquire of its form, its limbs, its voice, its habits? As far as the Psalm telleth thee, it is a bird that dwelleth in solitude. The owl is a bird that loveth night. "Parietinae," or ruins, as we call them, are walls standing without roof, without inhabitants, these are the habitation of the owl. And then as to the house-top and the sparrows, ye are familiar with them. I find, therefore, some one of Christ's body, a preacher of the word, sympathising with the weak, seeking the gains of Christ, mindful of his Lord to come, that He may not say, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put my

money to the exchangers. Let us see these three things from the office of His steward. Hath such a man come among those who are not Christians? He is a pelican in the wilderness. Hath he come among those who were Christians, and have relapsed? He is an owl in the ruined walls; for he forsaketh not even the darkness of those who dwell in night, he wisheth to gain even these. Hath he come among such as are Christians dwelling in a house, not as if they believed not, or as if they had let go what they had believed, but walking lukewarmly in what they believe? The sparrow crieth unto them, not in the wilderness, because they are Christians; nor in the ruined walls, because they have not relapsed; but because they are within the roof; under the roof rather, because they are under the flesh. The sparrow above the flesh crieth out, husheth not up the commandments of God, nor becometh carnal, so that he be subject to the roof. Let not him which is on the house-top come down to take any thing out of the house; and, what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the house-tops. There are three birds and three places; and one man may represent the three birds, and three men may represent severally the three birds; and the three sorts of places, are three classes of men: yet the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top, are but three classes of men.

8. But why so much of these? Let us turn to our Lord Himself, if perchance it be Himself, and so it may be better to recognise Himself as the pelican in the wilderness, as the owl in the ruinous walls, and as the lone sparrow on the housetop. Let that poor one, our Head, speak unto us; let the poor of His own will speak unto the poor of necessity. Let us not pass over what is said, or even read, of this bird, that is, the pelican; not rashly asserting any thing, but yet not passing over what has been left to be read and uttered by those who have written it. Do ye so hear, that if it be true, it may agree; if false, it may not hold. These birds are said to slay their young with blows of their beaks, and for three days to mourn them when slain by themselves in the nest: after which they say the mother wounds herself deeply, and pours forth her blood over her young, bathed in which they recover life. This may be true, it may be false: yet if it be true, see how it agreeth with Him, Who gave us life by His blood. It agreeth with Him in that the mother's flesh recalleth to life her young with her blood; it agreeth well. For He calleth Himself a hen brooding over her young: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often

would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. For He hath the authority of a father and the affection of a mother: even as Paul is both father and mother; not through himself, but through the Gospel: father, where he saith, For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Jesus Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel; and mother where he saith, My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. If, then, it be so truly, this bird doth closely resemble the flesh of Christ, by Whose blood we have been called to life. But how may it agree with Christ, that the bird herself slays her own young? Doth not this agree with it? I will slay, and I will make alive? I will wound, and I will heal. Would the persecutor Saul have died, unless he were wounded from heaven; or would the preacher be raised up, unless by life given him from His blood? But let those who have written on the subject see to this; we ought not to allow our understanding of it to rest upon doubtful ground. Let us rather recognise this bird in the wilderness; as the Psalm expresseth it, A pelican in the solitude. I suppose that Christ born of a Virgin is here meant; for thus He is alone, therefore the word solitude applieth well: He was born in loneliness, because He alone was thus born. After the nativity, we come to His Passion: by whom was He crucified? was it by those who stood? was it by those who mourned? It was, as it were, in the night of their own ignorance, and in the ruins of their own fall. Behold the owl, and it that dwelleth in ruinous walls; He loveth the night too. For if He loved them not, how could He say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Born in the wilderness, because alone so born; suffering in the darkness of the Jews as it were in night, in their sin, as it were in ruins: what next? I have watched. Thou hadst then slept amid the ruins, and hadst said, I laid me down, and slept. What meaneth, I slept? Because I chose, I slept: I slept for love of night: but, I rose again, followeth. Therefore I watched, is here said. But after He watched, what did He? He ascended into heaven, He became as a sparrow by flying; that is, by ascending; alone on the housetop; that is, in heaven. He is therefore as the pelican by birth, as the owl by dying, as the sparrow by ascending again: there in the wilderness, as one alone; here in the ruined walls, as one slain by those who could not stand in the building; and here again watching and flying for our sakes alone on the housetop, He there intercedeth in our

behalf. For our Head is as the sparrow, His body as the turtle-dove. For the sparrow hath found her an house. What house? In heaven, where He doth mediate for us. And the turtle-dove a nest, the Church of God hath found a nest from the wood of His Cross, where she may lay her young, her children. I have watched: and am become even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the housetop.

9. Ver. 8. Mine enemies revile me all day, and they that praised me are sworn together against me. With their mouth they praised, in their heart they were laying snares for me. Hear their praise: Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? Thou trippest up Him whom thou praisest. Wherefore, but that they who praised me are sworn together against me? And whence this evil repute, except because I came to make sinners my members, that by repentance they may be in my body. Thence is all the calumny, thence the persecution. Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick. Would that ye were aware of your sickness, that ye might seek a physician; ye would not slay Him, and through your infatuated pride perish in a false health.

10. Ver. 9. But why do mine enemies revile me all the day long? why do they that praised me conspire together against me? Because I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. Because He chose to have among His members these kinds of men, that they should be healed and set free, thence is the evil repute. Now at this day what is the character of Pagan calumny against us? what, brethren, do ye conceive they tell us? Ye corrupt discipline, and pervert the morality of the human race. Why dost thou attack us; say why? what have we done? By giving, he replieth, to men room for repentance, by promising impunity for all sins: for this reason men do evil deeds, careless of consequences, because every thing is pardoned them, when they are converted. Hence therefore is the evil repute: since I have eaten ashes as it were bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. O thou who abusest us, I invite thee to that bread! For thou durst not say thou art not a sinner. Sift thy conscience, ascend the tribunal of thy mind, spare not thyself, examine thyself, let the marrow of thy heart

address thee; see whether thou darest make profession of innocence. Here, clearly, if he hath looked back upon himself, he will be disturbed; if he hath not flattered himself, he will confess. And what is to become of thee, miserable man, if there shall be no harbour of impunity? If there is only licence for sinning, and no pardon for sins, where wilt thou be, whither wilt thou go? Surely even for thee did it happen, that that afflicted one ate ashes as it were bread, and mingled His drink with weeping. Doth not such a feast now please thee? But nevertheless, he replieth, men add to their sins under the hope of pardon. Nay, but they would add to them if they despaired of pardon. Dost thou not observe in what licentious cruelty gladiators live? whence this, except because, as destined for the sword and sacrifice, they choose to sate their lust, before they pour forth their blood? Wouldest not thou also thus address thyself? I am already a sinner, already an unjust man, one already doomed to damnation, hope of pardon there is none: why should I not do whatever pleaseth me, although it be not lawful? why not fulfil, as far as I can, any longings I may have, if, after these, nothing but torments only be in store? Wouldest thou not thus speak unto thyself, and from this very despair become still worse? Rather than this, then, He who promiseth forgiveness, doth correct thee, saying, Return unto the heart, O ye transgressors. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Doubtless, when this harbour is set before thee, thou furlest the sails of iniquity, turnest thy prow, makest sail on the track of righteousness, and, hoping for life, dost not neglect thy cure. And let not God displease thee in this, as if He had through this promise of forgiveness made sinners careless. For in order that men might not live the worse from despair, He promised a harbour of forgiveness; again, that they might not live the worse from hope of pardon, He made the day of death uncertain: fixing both with the utmost providence, both as a refuge for the returning, and a terror to the loitering. Eat ashes as bread, and mingle thy drink with weeping; by means of this banquet thou shalt reach the table of God. Despair not; pardon hath been promised thee. Thanks be to God, he saith, because it is promised; I hold fast the promise of God. Now therefore live well. To-morrow, he replieth, I will live well. God hath promised the pardon; no one promised thee to-morrow. If thou hast lived ill, live well even now, this very day. Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. I say not, Then whose shall

those things be which thou hast provided? But, according as thou hast lived, where wilt thou be? Amend thyself therefore, that thou mayest in the body of Christ speak these words, which, if I am not deceived, thou dost willingly recognise; For I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping.

11. Ver. 10. And that because of thine indignation and wrath: because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down. This is thy wrath, O Lord, in Adam: that wrath in which we were all born, which cleaveth unto us by our birth; the wrath from the stock of iniquity, the wrath from the mass of sin: according to what the Apostle saith, We also were once the children of wrath, even as others; and according to our Lord's words, The wrath of God abideth on him, because he hath not believed on the only-begotten Son of God. For He saith not, the wrath of God shall come upon him: but, abideth upon him: because that wrath in which he was born is not taken away. Wherefore then, and what is the meaning of that saying, Because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down? For he saith not, Because thou hast taken me up, and hast cast me down; but, Because Thou hast taken me up, for this reason Thou hast cast me down. Therefore Thou hast cast me down, because Thou hast taken me up. Whence this? Man set in honour, is made in the image of God: raised up to this honour, lifted up from the dust, from the earth, he hath received a reasonable soul; by the vivacity of that very reason, he is placed before all beasts, cattle, birds that fly, and fishes. For which of these hath reason to understand? Because none of them is created in the image of God. Just as none of these hath this honour, so none of them hath this misery. For what beast of burden groaneth for its sins? what bird feareth the hell of everlasting fire? Because it hath no share in a life of bliss, it hath also no stings of wretchedness. But man, because he was made for a life of bliss, if he shall have lived well; shall for this reason have a wretched life, if he hath lived ill. Therefore, Because Thou hast taken me up, Thou hast cast me down: punishment followeth me, because Thou hast given me a free choice. For if Thou hadst not given me a free choice, and for this reason didst not make me better than cattle, just condemnation would not follow me when I sinned. Thus Thou hast taken me up in giving me freedom of choice, and by Thy just judgment Thou hast cast me down.

12. Ver. 11. My days have declined like a shadow. For thy days might not have been declining, hadst thou not declined from the true day. Thou hast declined, and hast received declining days. What wonder, if thy days have been made like thyself? For thy days are days of decline, because thou hast declined, as they are days of smoke, because thou hast been puffed with pride. For he had said above, My days are consumed away like smoke; and he now saith, My days have declined like a shadow. In this shadow, day must be recognised; in this shadow, light must be discerned; lest afterward it be said in late and fruitless repentance, What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. Say at this season, all things will pass away like a shadow, and thou mayest not pass away like a shadow. My days have declined like a shadow, and I am withered like grass. For he had said above, My heart is smitten down, and I am withered like grass. But the grass bedewed with the Saviour's blood will flourish afresh. I have withered like grass; I, that is, man, after that disobedience; this I have suffered from Thy just judgment: but what art Thou?

13. Ver. 12. But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever. My days have declined like a shadow, but Thou endurest for ever: let the eternal save the temporal! For not because I have fallen, hast Thou grown old: for Thou art strong to set me free, Who hast been strong to humble me. But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever: and Thy remembrance throughout all generations. Thy remembrance, because Thou dost not forget: throughout all generations, forasmuch as we know the promise of life, both present and future.

14. Ver. 13. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her. What time? But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law. And where is Sion? To redeem them that were under the Law. First then were the Jews: for thence were the Apostles, thence those more than five hundred brethren, thence that later multitude, who had but one heart and one soul toward God. Therefore, Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her, yea, the time is come. What time? Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation. Who saith this? That Servant of God, that Builder, who said, Ye are God's

building: who said, As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation; and, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

15. Ver. 14. Here therefore what saith he? For thy servants take pleasure in her stones. In whose stones? In the stones of Sion? But there are those there that are not stones. Not stones of what? What then followeth? and pity the dust thereof. Let us acknowledge the stones in Sion; let us acknowledge the dust of Sion. For he saith not, they will pity her stones; but what saith he? For thy servants take pleasure in her stones: and pity the dust thereof. I understand by the stones of Sion all the Prophets: there was the voice of preaching sent before, thence the ministry of the Gospel assumed, through their preaching Christ became known. Therefore thy servants have taken pleasure in the stones of Sion. But those faithless apostates from God, who offended their Creator by their evil deeds, have returned to the earth, whence they were taken. They have become dust, they have become ungodly: of whom it is said, As for the ungodly, it is not so with them; but they are like the dust which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth. But wait, Lord; bear with us, Lord; be longsuffering, O Lord: let not the wind rush in, and sweep away this dust from the face of the earth. Let thy servants come, let them come, let them acknowledge in the stones thy voice, let them pity the dust of Sion, let them be formed in thy image: let the dust say, lest it perish, Remember that we are but dust.

And shall pity her dust. This of Sion: was not that, which crucified the Lord, dust? What is worse, it was dust from the ruined walls; altogether dust it was, but nevertheless it was not in vain said of this dust, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. From this very dust there came a wall of so many thousands who believed, and who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet. From that dust then there arose a human nature formed and beautiful. Who among the heathen acted thus? How few are there whom we admire for having done thus, compared with the many thousands of these converts? At first suddenly three, afterwards five thousand; all living in unity, all laying the price of their possessions, when they had sold them, at the Apostles' feet, that it might be distributed to each, as each had need, who had one soul and one heart toward God.

Who made this even of that very dust, but He who created Adam himself out of dust? This then is concerning Sion, but not in Sion only.

16. Ver. 15. What then followeth? The heathen shall fear Thy Name, O Lord; and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty. Now that Thou hast pitied Sion, now that Thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones, by acknowledging the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; now that they have pitied her dust; so that man is formed, or rather re-formed, in life out of dust; hence preaching hath increased among the heathen: let the heathen fear Thy Name, and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty; let another wall approach also from the heathen, let the Corner-Stone be recognised, let the two who come from different regions, but who no longer differ in belief, meet in close union.

17. Ver. 16. For the Lord shall build up Sion. This work is going on now. O ye living stones, run to the work of building, not to ruin. Sion is in building, beware of the ruined walls: the tower is building, the ark is in building; remember the deluge. This work is in progress now, for the Lord shall build up Sion; but when Sion is built, what will happen? and He will appear in His glory. That He might build up Sion, that He might be a foundation in Sion, He was seen by Sion, but not in His glory: we have seen Him, and He had no form nor comeliness. But truly when He shall have come with His Angels to judge, when all nations shall be gathered before Him, when the sheep shall be set apart on the right hand, and the goats on the left, shall they not look then upon Him whom they have pierced? and they shall be put to confusion when too late, who refused confusion in early and healthful repentance. The Lord shall build up Sion, and will appear in His glory. He who was first seen in her in His infirmity.

18. Ver. 17. He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire. This is going on now in the building of Sion: the builders of Sion pray, they groan: He is the one poor, because the poor are many; because the thousands among so many nations are one in Him, because He is the unity of the peace of the Church, He is one, He is many: one, through love: many, on account of His extension. Therefore we now pray, we now run: now, if any man hath used to be otherwise, and lived differently, let him eat ashes as it were bread, and mingle his drink with

weeping. Now is the time, when Sion is in building: now the stones are entering into the structure: when the building is finished, and the house dedicated, why dost thou run, to ask when too late, to beg in vain, to knock to no purpose, doomed to abide without with the five foolish virgins? Therefore now run: for He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire.

19. Ver. 18, 19. Let these things be written for those that come after. When these words were written, they profited not so much those among whom they were written: for they were written to prophesy the New Testament, among men who lived according to the Old Testament. But God had both given that Old Testament, and had settled in that land of promise His own people. But since Thy remembrance is from generation to generation, belongeth not to the ungodly, but to the righteous; “in our generation” belongeth to the Old Testament; while “in the other generation” belongeth to the New Testament; and since the New Testament announceth this that was prophesied, Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord. Not the people which is created, but the people which shall be created. What is clearer, my brethren? Here is prophesied that creation of which the Apostle saith: Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. What meaneth, and all things are of God? both old and new, because Thy remembrance is from generation to generation: and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord. For He hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary. He hath looked down from on high, that He might come unto the humble: from on high He hath become humble, that He might exalt the humble.

sermon ii

On the Second Part of Psalm 102.

1. Yesterday we heard the groaning of some poor one in prayer: and we acknowledged this one as Him Who for our sakes became poor, when He was rich, and the members which cleave unto Him, and speak by means of their Head. For we beheld there even ourselves; if indeed through His grace

even we are any thing. But the words of groaning were now finished, and those of consolation had begun; but these could never have been finished had we treated of them yesterday: in what remain, let us hear to-day the poor no longer groaning, but rejoicing; rejoicing, because hoping; hoping, because not presuming in himself. He foretold in the holy Scriptures the blessedness which men should have, and added, Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord. For He hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary. So far yesterday's discourse reached: consider what followeth.

2. Ver. 19, 20. Out of the heaven did the Lord look down upon the earth: that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of such as are put to death. We have found it said in another Psalm, O let the sorrowful sighs of the fettered come before Thee; and in a passage where the voice of the martyrs was meant. Whence are the martyrs in fetters? Are they not rather in chains? For we know that the holy martyrs of God, led after the judges in their circuit of the provinces, were thrown into chains; but we are not aware that they were thrown into fetters. Fetters are also recognised in the teaching of God, and the fear of Him, concerning which it is said, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. For through this fear the servants of God feared not those who slay the body, but cannot slay the soul: inasmuch as they feared Him Who hath power to slay both body and soul in everlasting fire. For unless the martyrs had been bound by the fetters of fear; when would they have endured all the cruel severities of their persecutors, when they were free to do what they were constrained to, and to escape what they were suffering? But God had bound them with these fetters, hard indeed and painful for a season, but endurable on account of His promises, unto Whom it is said, On account of the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard ways. We must indeed groan in these fetters in order to gain the mercy of God; whence are those words of the martyrs in another Psalm, Let the sorrowful sighing of the fettered come before Thee: yet these fetters must not be shunned, in order to gain a destructive freedom and the temporal and brief pleasure of this life, to be followed by perpetual bitterness. Accordingly Scripture, that we may not refuse the fetters of wisdom, thus addresseth us: Give ear, my son, refuse not my advice, and receive my counsel, and put thy feet into her fetters, and thy neck into her

chain. Bow down thy shoulder, and bear her, and be not grieved with her bonds. Come unto her with all thy heart, and keep her ways with all thy power. Search and seek, and she shall be made known unto thee: and when thou hast got hold of her, let her not go. For at the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy joy. Then shall her fetters be a strong defence for thee, and her chains a robe of glory. For there is a golden ornament upon her, and her bands are purple lace. Thou shalt put her on as a robe of honour, and shalt put her about thee as a crown of joy. Let the fettered therefore cry out, as long as they are in the chains of the discipline of God, in which the martyrs have been tried: the fetters shall be loosed, and they shall fly away, and these very fetters shall afterwards be turned into an ornament. This hath happened with the martyrs. For what have the persecutors effected by killing them, except that their fetters were thereby loosed, and turned into crowns?

3. Out of heaven, therefore, the Lord looked down, that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of those that were put to death. They were put to death: but who are the children of those that were put to death, except ourselves? But how are we loosed, except when we say unto Him, Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder; I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving. For every one is released from the chains of evil lusts, or from the entanglements of his sins. The remission of sins, is the loosing. For what would it have profited Lazarus, that he came forth from the tomb, unless it were said to him, loose him, and let him go? Himself indeed with His voice aroused him from the tomb, Himself restored his life by crying unto him, Himself overcame the mass of earth that was heaped upon the tomb, and he came forth bound hand and foot: not therefore with his own feet, but by the power of Him who drew him forth. This taketh place in the heart of the penitent: when thou hearest a man is sorry for his sins, he hath already come again to life; when thou hearest him by confessing lay bare his conscience, he is already drawn forth from the tomb, but he is not as yet loosed. When is he loosed, and by whom is he loosed? Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, He saith, shall be loosed in heaven. Forgiveness of sins may justly be granted by the Church: but the dead man himself cannot be aroused except by the Lord crying within him; for God doth this within him. We speak to your ears: how do we know what

may be going on in your hearts? But what is going on within, is not our doing, but His.

4. He hath then looked back, that He may deliver the children of them that were put to death. Who these were, and who were their children, ye have heard. For what follows? (Ver. 21.) That the name of the Lord may be declared in Sion. For at first, when the fettered were appointed unto death, the Church was oppressed: since these tribulations the Name of the Lord has been declared in Sion, with great freedom, in the Church herself. For she is Sion: not that one spot, at first proud, afterwards taken captive; but the Sion whose shadow was that Sion, which signifieth a watch-tower; because when placed in the flesh, we see into the things before us, extending ourselves not to the present which is now, but to the future. Thus it is a watch-tower: for every watcher gazes far. Places where guards are set, are termed watch-towers: these are set on rocks, on mountains, in trees, that a wider prospect may be commanded from a higher eminence. Sion therefore is a watch-tower, the Church is a watch-tower. Why a watch-tower? To see afar, this is watching. For toil is before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God: then understand I the end. What sort of vision is this, to understand the end? To pass the sea by sight, not by sailing, and to remain in the uttermost parts thereof; that is, to put our trust in that which will be at the end of the world. If therefore the Church be a watch-tower, the Name of the Lord is already declared there. Not the Lord's Name only is declared in that Sion, but His praise, He saith, in Jerusalem.

5. Ver. 22. And how is it declared? In the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. How is this accomplished, unless by the blood of the slain? How accomplished, but by the groans of the fettered? Those therefore who were in tribulation and humility have been heard; that in our times the Church might be in the great glory which we see her in, so that the very kingdoms which then persecuted her, now serve the Lord.

6. Ver. 23. She answered Him in the way of His strength. Whom did she answer, but the Lord? Who answered, let us see above. And His praise, He saith, in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. She answered Him in the way of

His strength. Who answered Him, in the way of His strength? Let us first then examine who answered, and then we will enquire what is the path of His strength. The preceding words shew, that either His praise, or Jerusalem, answered: for it was said, “And His praise in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. Respondit ei.” We cannot say, “the kingdoms answered,” for he would have said “responderunt.” “Respondit ei.” We cannot say, “the nations answered,” for he would have said, “responderunt,” (in the plural.) Since then it is “Respondit ei,” in the singular, and we look for the singular number above, and find that the words, His praise, and Jerusalem, are the only words in which we find it. But since it is doubtful, whether it be His praise, or Jerusalem, let us expound it each way. How did His praise answer Him? When they who are called by Him thank Him. For He calleth, we answer; not by our voice, but by our faith; not by our tongue, but by our life. For if God calleth thee, and enjoineeth thee to live well, and thou livest ill, thou dost not answer His call, nor doth His praise answer Him from thee; because thy life is such that He is rather blasphemed than worshipped through thee: but when we live in such a way, that through us God is praised, His praise answereth Him. From His elect and holy men, Jerusalem also answereth Him. For Jerusalem also was called: and the first Jerusalem refused to hear, and it was said unto her, Behold, thy house shall be left unto thee desolate. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, (He crieth, and is not answered,) how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! There is no answer: rain cometh from above, and thorns are brought forth instead of fruit. But that Jerusalem, of whom it was written, “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear: break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than those of the married wife.” She hath answered Him. What meaneth, She hath answered Him? She despiseth Him not when He called. What meaneth, She hath answered Him? He sent rain, She gave fruit.

7. She answered Him: but where? in the path of His strength. Did She so in Herself? For what could there be in herself, or what voice could she find within and from herself, except the voice of sin only, the voice of iniquity? Consider her own words; what findest thou but, as ever, I said, Lord, be

merciful unto me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee? Moreover, if she be justified, she answereth Him, not after her own deservings, but from the work of His own hands. Wherein? In the way of His strength. Christ Himself is this: I am, He said, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! But before His resurrection, He was acknowledged by His own people: and when He was crucified through weakness, it was especially hidden Who He was, until by His resurrection He appeared strong. The Church therefore answered Him not in the way of weakness, but in the way of His strength: because after His resurrection He called the Church from the whole world, no longer weak upon the cross, but strong in heaven. For it is not the praise of the Christian faith that they believe that Christ died, but that they believe that He arose from the dead. Even the Pagan believeth that He died; and maketh this a charge against thee, that thou hast believed in one dead. What then is thy praise? It is that thou believest that Christ arose from the dead, and that thou dost hope that thou shalt rise from the dead through Christ: this is the praise of faith. For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. He saith not, if thou shalt believe that God gave Him up to be slain: but, if thou shalt believe—that God hath raised Him from the dead, then shalt thou be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. But wherefore do we believe that He died also? Because we cannot believe that He arose from the dead, unless we believe that He died first. For who riseth again, who hath not died? who waketh from sleep, unless he hath slept before? but shall not he who sleepeth, also rise again? This is the faith of Christians. In this faith then, in which the Church is gathered, in which “the children of the barren one are more than those of her that hath the husband;” She hath answered Him. She gave Him worship according to His commandments; in the path of His strength, not in the path of His weakness.

8. How she answered Him, ye have already heard above. In the gathering of the nations into one, and the kingdoms, that they might serve the Lord. Herein she answered Him, in unity: he who is not in unity, answereth Him not. For He is One, the Church is unity: none but unity answereth to Him who is One. But there are those who assert: “this hath already happened; the

Church hath answered Him in all nations, bringing forth many more children than the married wife; she hath answered in the path of His strength; for she hath believed in the resurrection of Christ, all nations have believed in Him; but that Church which was the Church of all nations no longer existeth; she hath disappeared.” This is what they who are not in her say. O impudent words! Hath she ceased to be, because thou art not in her? Beware lest thou shouldest cease to be, for this very reason; for she will remain, although thou dost not. The Spirit of God hath foreseen this abominable, detestable assertion, full of presumption and falsehood, supported by no truth, enlightened by no wisdom, seasoned with no salt, vain, rash, headlong, destructive, and as if specially against these men the Spirit declaring the unity of the Church: in gathering the people together into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord; and when He had added, She hath answered Him, that is, His worship, that is, Jerusalem our Mother, doomed to be recalled from her wandering, prolific with many sons, more than the married wife; since some were destined to say against her, She hath existed, and no longer doth exist; Shew me, He saith, the shortness of my days, what is it, that I know not what apostates from me murmur against me? why is it that lost men contend that I have perished? For they surely say this, that I have been, and no longer am: Shew me the shortness of my days. I do not ask from Thee about those everlasting days: they are without end, where I shall be; it is not those I ask of: I ask of temporal days; shew unto me my temporal days; shew me the shortness, not the eternity, of my days. Declare unto me, how long I shall be in this world; on account of those who say, She hath been, and is no more: on account of those who say, The Scriptures are fulfilled, all nations have believed, but the Church hath become apostate, and hath perished from among all nations. What meaneth this, Shew me the shortness of my days? He hath declared, that word too was not in vain. Who, but the Way Himself, hath declared? How hath He declared? Behold, I am with you, even unto the end of the world.

9. But here also they meet us, and say, Behold, I am with you. He said, unto the end of the world; because He foresaw us, and that we, the party of Donatus, would be on the earth. Was it this sect which said, Shew me the shortness of my days; and not She rather who thus spoke above; In

gathering the nations into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord? Why is your heart grieved? Because even emperors enact prohibitions against heretics, therein are fulfilled the words, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. For ye are not the sons of those that were put to death, whose voice when in their fetters was heard by the Lord. Far from it: your deeds shew not this; your pride sheweth not this, your vanity sheweth not this: ye have no savour, and are cast out of doors: ye are the salt that hath lost its savour, and for this reason also ye are trodden down by men. Hear what he saith: what is the Church? She who gathered the nations into one. What is the Church? She who gathered together the kingdoms to serve the Lord. Moved by your words and your false opinions, She asketh of God that He will declare unto Her the shortness of Her days, and findeth that the Lord hath said, Behold, I am with you, even unto the end of the world. Here ye say: He said this of us; we exist, we shall exist even unto the end of the world. Let Christ Himself be asked, for unto Him it was said, "Declare unto me the shortness of my days." The Gospel of the kingdom, He replieth, shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. Why didst thou say, This indeed was, and hath ceased? Hear the Lord declaring the shortness of my days. This Gospel, He saith, shall be preached. Where? in the whole world. Unto whom? for a witness unto all nations. What after this? and then shall the end come. Seest thou not that there are still nations among whom the Gospel hath not been preached? Since then it is needful that what the Lord spoke shall be fulfilled, declaring unto the Church the shortness of my days, that this Gospel be preached in all nations, and then that the end may come, why is it that thou sayest that the Church hath already perished from among all nations, when the Gospel is being preached for this purpose, that it may be in all nations? Therefore the Church remaineth even unto the end of the world, in all nations; and this is the shortness of Her days, because all that is limited is short; so that She may pass into eternity from this brief existence. May heretics be lost, may that which they are be lost, and may they be found, that they may be what they are not. Shortness of days will be unto the end of the world: shortness for this reason, because the whole of this season, I say not from this day unto the end of the world, but from Adam down to the end of the world, is a mere drop compared with eternity.

10. Ver. 24. Let not therefore heretics flatter themselves against me, because I said, the shortness of my days, as if they would not last down to the end of the world. For what hath he added? O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days. Deal Thou not with me according as heretics speak. Lead me on unto the end of the world, not only to the middle of my days; and finish my short days, that Thou mayest afterwards grant unto me eternal days. Wherefore then hast thou asked concerning the shortness of thy days? Wherefore? Dost thou wish to hear? Thy years are in the generation of generations. This is why I asked concerning those short days, because although my days should endure unto the end of the world, yet they are short in comparison of Thy days. For Thy years are in the generation of generations. Wherefore doth he not say, Thy years are unto worlds of worlds; for thus rather is eternity usually signified in the holy Scriptures; but he saith, Thy years are in the generation of generations? But what are thy years? what, but those which do not come, and then pass away? what, but they which come not, so as to cease again? For every day in this season so cometh as to cease again; every hour, every month, every year; nothing of these is stationary; before it hath come, it is to be; after it hath come, it will not be. Those everlasting years of thine, therefore, those years that are not changed, are in the generation of generations. There is a "generation of generations;" in that shall thy years be. There is one such, and if we acknowledge it aright, we shall be in it, and the years of God shall be in us. How shall they be in us? Just as God Himself shall be in us: whence it is said, That God may be all in all. For the years of God, and God Himself, are not different: but the years of God are the eternity of God: eternity is the very substance of God, which hath nothing changeable; there nothing is past, as if it were no longer: nothing is future, as if it existed not as yet. There is nothing there but, Is: there is not there, Was, and Will be; because what was, is now no longer: and what will be, is not as yet: but whatever is there, simply Is. God justly sent His servant Moses thus: for he asked the name of Him that sent him; he asked, and heard, nor was the longing of a good desire forsaken. But he asked, not from presumptuous curiosity, but from his own need in His service: What, he asked, shall I say unto the children of Israel, if they shall say to me, Who sent thee unto us? and He, exhibiting Himself as the Creator to the created, God unto man, Immortal unto mortal, Eternal unto temporal: I, He replied, Am That I Am. Thou

wouldest say, I am. Who? Gaius: another, Lucius: another, Marcus. Wouldest thou say any thing else than thy name? This was expected of God. For it was this which was asked. What art Thou called? From Whom shall I answer to those who ask, that I am sent? “I Am”—who?—“That I Am.” Is this Thy name? is this all that Thou art called? Would Thy name be To Be, unless whatever else “Is,” when compared with Thee, was found not to Be truly? This is Thy Name: explain it more clearly. Go, He saith, and say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. I Am That I Am: I Am hath sent me unto you. Behold this great I Am! What is man’s being to this? To this great I Am, what is man, whatever he be? Who can understand that To Be? who can share it? who can pant, aspire, presume that he may be there? Despair not, human frailty! I am, He saith, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Thou hast heard what I am in Myself: now hear what I am on thy account. This eternity then hath called us, and the Word burst forth from eternity. It is now eternity, it is now the Word, and no longer time. Why not time? Because time also was created. How so? All things were made by Him: and without Him was not any thing made that was made. O Word before seasons, through Whom seasons were created, born also in time, though It be eternal life, calling the temporal, making the eternal. This is the “generation of generations.” For one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh. Now ye see the generations of men exist upon the earth as leaves do on a tree; on the olive, however, or the laurel, or any other evergreen. Thus the earth beareth the human race as it were leaves: it is full of men, while those who die are continually succeeded by others being born. For that tree is ever adorned with a green garment: but observe how many dry leaves thou treadest on beneath.

11. There was then a generation under Adam; it passed away. Even at that season some were thence born who should share in God’s eternity: for thence sprung Abel, thence Seth, thence Enoch. That generation passed away, the deluge came, one family remained. Even that generation gave some, Noah himself, his three sons, and three daughters in law; for in the whole of this family of eight, only one sinner was found. The former generation was increased in numbers. Next the whole world was filled from the three sons of Noah, as it were with three measures of meal. Abraham

was chosen, Isaac, and Jacob; they were holy men, patriarchs, who pleased God. This generation produced also others following, which gave birth to the prophets, gave birth to the messengers of God. Afterwards our Lord Jesus Christ Himself also came; He sent the leaven into the three measures of meal, until the whole should be leavened. In the times while His flesh was still upon the earth, the Apostles lived, and the saints; after them other saints: and whatever saints there now are in the name of Christ, and whatever saints there shall be after us, and down to the end of the world whatsoever saints shall be. From so many generations thou wilt gather together all the holy offspring of all generations, and wilt form one generation thence: In this generation of generations are Thy years, that is, that eternity will be in that generation, which is collected from all generations, and reduced into one; this shall share in Thy eternity. Other generations are born for fulfilling their times, out of which this one is regenerated for ever; though changed it shall be endued with life, it shall be fitted to bear Thee, receiving strength from Thee. In the generation of generations are Thy years.

12. Ver. 25. Thou, O Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth. I know Thy eternity, in which Thou art before all the things Thou hast made. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the Heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same. Who art Thou? Thou art the same. Thou Who hast said, I Am That I Am, art the same. And although these things would have no being but from Thee, and through Thee, and in Thee, yet are they not what Thou art Thyself: for Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Those years of Thine shall not fail, those years of Thine, which shall be in the generation of generations, shall not fail. Knowing this, then, I would ask the shortness of my days of Thee, did I not know that all the days of the world from the beginning to the end are short when compared with Thy eternity. I know therefore why I have asked. Let not the heretics puff themselves up, as if the days of the Church were brief, diffused as she is over the whole world; for even though her days last unto the end, they are short. Why are they brief? Because at some period they must cease. Those years that shall be in the generation of

generations, these are to be loved, these we ought to long and to sigh for; on account of these we must remain in unity, on account of these all the evil caused by heretics must be shunned, on account of these we must answer the lost, on account of these we must recover those who had perished, and gain those who had strayed: there our longings ought to be. Yet, that I may answer the talkative, idle tattlers, the slanderers, whisperers, and detractors, for this reason, Tell me the shortness of my days; and take me not away in the midst of my days, so as to withdraw me from the earth, before the whole world be filled with the Gospel, against the answer of my Lord, Who saith, The Gospel must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. What can we add to these words, brethren? They are plain, they are clear; God laid the foundation of the earth, we know: the heavens are the works of His hands. For do not imagine that God doth one thing with His hand, another by His word. What He doth by His word, He doth by His hand: for He hath not distinct bodily members, Who said, I Am That I Am. And perhaps His Word is His hand, assuredly His hand is His power. For inasmuch as it is said, Let there be a firmament, and there was a firmament; He is understood to have created it by His Word; but when He said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; He seemeth to have created him by His hand. Hear therefore: The heavens are the work of Thy hands. Lo, what He created by His word, He created also by His hands; because He created them through His excellence, through His power. Observe rather what He created, and seek not to know in what manner He created them. It is much to thee to understand how He created them, since He created thyself so, that thou mayest first be a servant obeying, and afterwards perhaps a friend understanding. Therefore, the heavens are the works of Thy hands.

13. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure. The Apostle Peter saith this openly: By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, to be reserved unto fire. He hath said then that the heavens have already perished by the flood: and we know that the heavens perished as far as the extent of this atmosphere of ours. For the water increased, and filled the whole of that space in which birds fly;

thus perished the heavens that are near the earth; those heavens which are meant when we speak of the birds of heaven. But there are heavens of heavens higher than these in the firmament: but whether these also shall perish by fire, or those only which perished also by the flood, is a much harder question among the learned, nor can it easily, especially in a limited space of time, be explained. Let us therefore dismiss or put it off; nevertheless, let us know that these things perish, and that God endureth. And if some things which were made by God remain with God, they do not endure in themselves, but in God, by not departing from God. For what? Are we to say, brethren, that the Angels will perish in the fire with which the world shall burn? Far be it! But what? Shall we say that God made not the Angels? Far be it! But what shall we say? and whence could they exist, if they were not made by Him? For He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. Now this was said in the course of a commemoration of His works, among which the Angels also are mentioned. The Angels therefore will be with Him, even when the world is blazing with fire; and there will be a conflagration of the world, that shall not burn the saints of God: what the monarch's furnace was to the three youths, this the burning world will be to the righteous sealed in the Trinity.

14. Perhaps by the heavens we here may understand, without being far-fetched, the righteous themselves, the saints of God, abiding in whom God hath thundered in His commandments, lightened in His miracles, watered the earth with the wisdom of truth, for The heavens have declared the glory of God. But shall they perish? Shall they in any sense perish? In what sense? As a garment. What is, as a garment? As to the body. For the body is the garment of the soul; since our Lord called it a garment, when He said, Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? How then doth the garment perish? Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. They then shall perish: but as to the body: But Thou shalt endure. If then they shall perish according to the body, where then is the resurrection of the flesh? Where is the example for the members which went before in the Head? Where? Dost thou wish to hear? It shall be changed; it shall not be such as it was. Hear the Apostle, saying, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. How shall we be changed? It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. It is sown

corruptible, it shall be raised incorruptible. We are therefore expecting a change: thus shall the heavens perish, and the heavens shall be changed. But perhaps the heavens are not correctly taken for the bodies of the saints? If they bear not God, let them not be heavens. Yet whence, thou sayest, dost thou prove to me that they bear God? Hast thou then so far forgotten, glorify and bear God in your body? Such heavens therefore shall perish; not, however, for ever; they shall perish, that they may be changed. Doth not the Psalm say this? Read the following: They shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Thou hearest of the garment, of the vesture, and dost thou understand any thing but the body? We may therefore hope for the change of our bodies also, but from Him Who was before us, and abideth after us; from Whom we are what we are, to Whom we shall come when we shall have been changed; He Who changeth, and is not changed; Who createth, without being created; Who moveth, yet abideth; and as it may be understood by flesh and blood, I Am That I Am: therefore Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. But what are we to those years with these beggarly years? and what are they? Yet we ought not to despair. He had already said in His great and exceeding Wisdom, I Am That I Am; and yet He saith to console us, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: and we are Abraham's seed: even we, although abject, although dust and ashes, trust in Him. We are servants: but for our sakes our Lord took the garb of a servant: for us who are mortal the Immortal One deigned to die, for our sakes He shewed His example of resurrection. Let us therefore hope that we may reach these lasting years, in which days are not spent in a revolution of the Sun, but what is abideth even as it is, because it alone is truly.

15. Ver. 28. But say whether we may ever be there. Hear and consider whether thou oughtest to despair; hear what followeth: The children of Thy servants shall dwell there. Where, but in the years that shall not fail? The children of Thy servants shall dwell there: and their seed shall stand fast for ages: for the age of ages, the age of eternity, the age that abideth. But, the children, he saith, of Thy servants: it is to be feared lest we be the servants of God, and our children, and not ourselves, dwell there? Or if we are the children of the servants, inasmuch as we are the Apostles' children, what

are we to say? Can those children rising after have so unhappy a presumption, as to boast in their late succession, and so to venture to say, We shall be there; the Apostles will not be there? May this be far from from their piety as children, from their faith as little ones, from their understanding when of age! The Apostles also will be there: rams go before, lambs follow. Wherefore then, the children of Thy servants; and not in brief, Thy servants? Both they are Thy servants, and their children are Thy servants; and the children of these, their grandsons, what are they but Thy servants? Thou wouldest include them all briefly, if Thou shouldest say, Thy servants shall dwell therein. Let us consider what he wished to teach us. For a thing was done in the former ages. For forty years the children of Israel were worn in the wilderness: not one of them entered into the land of promise, but their children did; two indeed, as we now call to mind, did enter; if I am right, the rest did not. Two out of so many thousands entered. So much toil was borne with them: but God toileth not; surely His servants toiled. How much did Moses bear, what revilings did he hear, for the sake of men who were never to enter into the land of promise? Their children entered, what signifieth this? New men entered: the old men entered not yet; of these, two did enter, One and Unity, Head as it were and body, Christ and the Church, with all the youth, I mean, the children. Therefore, The children of Thy servants shall dwell therein. The children of Thy servants, are the works of Thy servants; no one shall dwell there, but through his own works. What therefore meaneth, Their children shall dwell? Let no man boast that he shall dwell there, if he calleth himself God's servant, and hath not works; for none but children shall dwell there. What meaneth therefore, The children of Thy servants shall dwell there? Thy servants shall dwell there by their own works, Thy servants shall dwell there through their own children. Be not therefore barren, if thou dost wish to dwell there; send before the children whom thou mayest follow, by sending them before thee, not by burying them. Let thy children lead thee to the land of promise, the land of the living, not of the dying: whilst thou art living here in this pilgrimage, let them go before thee, let them receive thee. For the sake of providing for the flesh, his son went before Jacob into Egypt, and saith to his father and his brethren, "I came before you to prepare food for you." Let therefore thy children go before thee, let thy

works go before thee; such children as thou hast sent before, such shalt thou follow.

PSALM 103

A Sermon delivered on a feast of the Martyrs.

1. Ver. 1. In every gift of the Lord our God, in every consolation of His, in every chastisement of His, in the grace which He hath deigned to grant, in the indulgence with which He hath recompensed not as we deserved, in all His works, let our soul praise the Lord. For it is this that we have sung; thence beginneth the Psalm, of which we will speak, whatever we can do being His gift, Whom our soul blesseth. Let each one of us arouse and exhort his soul, and say unto it, Bless the Lord, O my soul. Both all of us, and all the brethren every where in Christ, must, as one man, whose Head is in Heaven, individually exhort his own soul, and say unto it, Bless the Lord, O my soul. He listeneth, he obeyeth, he doth this, he is persuaded of it, not from our gift, but from His Whom our soul blesseth. For this Psalm undertakes to shew us wherefore our soul blesseth the Lord, as if the soul had replied unto it, Wherefore sayest thou unto me, Bless the Lord? Let us therefore hear, let our soul itself hear, let it weigh all the causes which arouse it, that it may not be slothful in blessing the Lord; and let it consider whether what is said to it be just, Bless the Lord, O my soul: let it consider whether it ought to bless any thing beside the Lord. Bless, it saith, the Lord, O my soul!

2. It repeateth this, and saith more expressly what it had said, Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, His holy Name. I suppose that he speaketh not of what is within the body; I do not suppose him to mean this, that our lungs and liver, and so forth, are to burst forth into the voice of blessing of the Lord. There are lungs in our breast indeed, like a kind of bellows, which send forth successive breathings, which breathing forth of the air inhaled is pressed out into voice and sound, when the words are articulated; nor can any utterance sound forth from our mouth, but what the pressed lungs have given vent to; but this is not the meaning here; all this

relateth to the ears of men. God hath ears: the heart also hath a voice. A man speaketh to the things within him, that they may bless God, and saith unto them, all that is within me bless His holy Name! Dost thou ask the meaning of what is within thee? Thy soul itself. In saying then, all that is within me, bless His holy Name, it only repeateth the above, Bless the Lord, O my soul: for the word Bless, is understood. Cry out with thy voice, if there be a man to hear; hush thy voice, when there is no man to hear thee; there is never wanting one to hear all that is within thee. Blessing therefore hath already been uttered from our mouth, when we were chanting these very words: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, His holy Name. We sung as much as sufficed for the time, and were then silent: ought our hearts within us to be silent to the blessing of the Lord? Let the sound of our voices bless Him at intervals, alternately, let the voice of our hearts be perpetual. When thou comest to church to recite a hymn, thy voice soundeth forth the praises of God: thou hast sung as far as thou couldest, thou hast left the church; let thy soul sound the praises of God. Thou art engaged in thy daily work: let thy soul praise God. Thou art taking food; see what the Apostle saith: Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God. I venture to say; when thou sleepest, let thy soul praise the Lord. Let not thoughts of crime arouse thee, let not the contrivances of thieving arouse thee, let not arranged plans of corrupt dealing arouse thee. Thy innocence even when thou art sleeping is the voice of thy soul. Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, His holy Name.

3. Ver. 2. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards. Bless, he saith, the Lord, O my soul. What is, thy soul? all that is within thee. Bless the Lord, O my soul. The repetition giveth force to the exhortation. But that thou mayest ever bless God, forget not all His rewards. If thou dost forget, thou wilt be silent. But the rewards of the Lord cannot be before thine eyes unless thy sins are before thine eyes. Let not delight in past sin be before thine eyes, but let the condemnation of sin be before thine eyes: condemnation from thee, forgiveness from God. For thus God rewardeth thee, so that thou mayest say, How shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me? This it was that the martyrs considering, (whose memory we are this day celebrating,) and all the saints who have despised this life, and as ye have heard in the Epistle of St. John, laid down their lives for the

brethren, which is the perfection of love, even as our Lord saith: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: this the holy martyrs, then, considering, despised their lives here, that they might find them there, following our Lord's words when He said, He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall keep it unto life eternal. For they wished to pay their reward: who? and what reward? and unto whom? Men paid the reward of their ministry to God even unto death. What paid they that He had not given them? what gave they that they received not? He therefore truly rewardeth, Who alone giveth; but He rewardeth not our sins; for other rewards than those which were due have been paid us. Forget not, he saith, all His rewards: not awards, but rewards. For something else was due, and what was not due hath been paid. Whence also these words: What, he asketh, shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me? He saith not, His awards, but His rewards. Thou hast rewarded good with evil: He rewardeth evil with good. How hast thou, O man, rewarded thy God with evil for good? Thou who hast once been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, hast rewarded blasphemies. For what good things? First: because thou art: but a stone also is. Next, because thou livest: but a brute also liveth. What reward wilt thou give the Lord, for His having created thee above all the cattle; and above all the fowls of the air, in His image and likeness? Seek not how to reward Him: give back unto Him His own image: He requireth no more; He demandeth His own coin. But thou instead of giving thanks, instead of humility, of obedience, of religious worship, that is, instead of all these good things which thou didst owe to thy God, for the good things which thou hast received, which I have described, hast rewarded blasphemies. What then doth He? Confess: I forgive thee. I also reward: but not as thou hast rewarded: thou hast rewarded evil for good: I reward good for evil.

4. Think thou, soul, of all the rewards of God, in thinking over all thy wicked deeds: for as many as are thy sins, so many are His rewards of good. And what present, what offering, what sacrifice, canst thou ever tender unto Him? If thou dost not forget His rewards, He is pleased with this sacrifice: Bless the Lord, O my soul. "The sacrifice of praise honoureth Me:" "Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows to the Most Highest." God wisheth Himself to be praised: and this, that thou mayest profit, not

that He may be exalted. It is not possible that thou canst reward Him; and what He requireth, He requireth not for Himself, but for thee; thee it shall profit, for thee it is reserved. He loveth not that from thee which may honour Him, but which may lead thee to Him. For this reason the martyrs sought, and failed in a manner in discovering, and said, How can I reward the Lord, for all His rewards unto me? and they found no reward that they could give, except this: I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. What wilt thou reward the Lord with? For thou wast reflecting, and couldest not find: I will receive the cup of salvation. What? hath not the Lord Himself given the cup of salvation? Reward Him from thine own, if thou canst. I would say, No, do it not; reward Him not from thine own; God doth not will to be rewarded from thine own. If thou rewardest Him from thine own, thou rewardest sin. For all that thou hast thou hast from Him: sins only thou hast of thine own. He doth not wish to be rewarded from thine, He doth will from His own. Just as, if thou shouldest bring to a husbandman, from the land which he hath sown, an ear of wheat, thou hast rewarded him from the husbandman's own produce; if thorns, that hast offered him of thine own. Reward truth, in truth praise the Lord: if thou shalt choose to reward Him from thine own, thou wilt lie. He who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. If he who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own: so he who speaketh truth, speaketh of the Lord's. But what is to receive the cup of salvation, but to imitate the Passion of our Lord? This did the Martyrs. This He said to the proud, and those who were seeking exalted seats, and who were avoiding the vale of lamentation, who wished to sit, one at the right hand, the other at the left. What then said He? Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Now therefore the Martyr ready for the holy offering saith, I will receive the cup of salvation: I will receive the cup of Christ, I will drink of our Lord's Passion. Beware that thou fail not. But, I will call upon the Name of the Lord. They then who failed, called not upon the Lord; they presumed in their own strength. Do thou so return, as remembering that thou art returning what thou hast received. So then let thy soul bless the Lord, as not to forget all His rewards.

5. Ver. 3–5. Hear ye all His rewards. Who forgiveth all thy sin: Who healeth all thine infirmities; Who saveth thy life from corruption; Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness. Who satisfieth thy mouth with good

things, making thee young and lusty as an eagle. Behold His rewards. What, save punishment, was due unto the sinner? What was due to the blasphemer, but the hell of burning fire? He gave not these rewards: that thou mayest not shudder with dread: and without love fear Him. Forget not all His good rewards; and now change, lest thou experience His—what shall I say? Evil rewards? if just, not evil. To thee evil, therefore: but with respect to God, what thou sufferest is not evil: for if just, it is good; but to thee, who sufferest, these things are evil. Thou dost not wish that those things, which in God are just, should be evil unto thee? Let not thy wickedness be evil in the sight of God. For He hath not ceased to call thee, or neglected to strengthen thee when called, or ceased to perfect thee when strengthened, or neglected to crown thee when perfected. What sayest thou? That thou art a sinner? Turn again, and receive these His rewards: He forgiveth all thy sin. After the remission of thy sins thou bearest a body that is infirm: there must needs be some carnal desires to tickle thee, and to suggest to thee illicit delights; they come in consequence of thy infirmity. For as yet thou bearest flesh that is weak: death hath not as yet been swallowed up in victory: not as yet hath this corruptible put on incorruption: as yet even after remission of sins the soul herself is shaken by certain passions; still is she amid the dangers of temptation, still is she pleased with certain suggestions; with some she is not pleased, and sometimes she consenteth unto some of those with which she is pleased: she is taken. This is infirmity: but He healeth all thine infirmities. All thine infirmities shall be healed: fear not. They are great, thou wilt say: but the Physician is greater. No infirmity cometh before the Almighty Physician as incurable: only suffer thou thyself to be healed: repel not His hands; He knoweth how to deal with thee. Be not only pleased when He cherisheth thee, but also bear with Him when He useth the knife: bear the pain of the remedy, reflecting on thy future health. For consider, my brethren, in these bodily infirmities how much men bear, that after living for a few days they may die, and these few, days of uncertainty. For many after they have borne great pains when they were under the physician's knife, have either died under the physician's hands, or, some fresh attack coming on, have sunk beneath it. If they believed death so near them, would they endure those great pains? Thou dost not endure in uncertainty: He Who promised thee health, cannot be deceived. The physician is often deceived: and promiseth

health in the human body. Why is he deceived? Because he is not healing his own creature. God made thy body, God made thy soul. He knoweth how to restore what He hath made, He knoweth how to fashion again what He hath already fashioned: do thou only be patient beneath the Physician's hands: for He hateth one who rejects His hands. This doth not happen with the hands of a human physician. Men choose to be bound, and to suffer the operation; ready to admit certain pain for uncertain recovery, a high price. God both surely, and without charge, healeth thee, whom He created. Bear then His hands, O soul, who blessest Him, not forgetful of His rewards: for He healeth all thine infirmities.

6. Who redeemeth thy life from corruption. He healeth all thine infirmities, because He saveth thy life from corruption. Behold, the body which is corrupted, weigheth down the soul. The soul then hath life in a corruptible body. What sort of life? It suffereth burdens, it beareth weights. How great obstacles are there to thinking of God Himself, as it is right that men should think of God, as if interrupting us from the necessity of human corruption? how many influences recall us, how many interrupt, how many withdraw the mind when fixed on high? what a crowd of illusions, what tribes of suggestions? All this in the human heart, as it were, teemeth with the worms of human corruption. We have set forth the greatness of the disease, let us also praise the Physician. Shall not He then heal thee, Who made thee such as to be in health, hadst thou chosen to keep the law of health which thou hadst received? Did He not arrange and enjoin to thee what thou shouldest touch, and what thou shouldest not touch, in order to retain thy health? Thou wouldest not hear to retain thy health, hear therefore in order to recover it. By thine infirmity thou hast experienced how justly He had thus ordered. At last then, let man who kept not the Law when he was warned, keep it now he hath had experience of it. How great is that hardness, which not even experience teacheth? Shall not He then heal thee, Who created thee such as that thou shouldest never feel sickness, hadst thou chosen to keep His commandments? Shall not He heal thee Who made the Angels, and Who will make thee equal with the Angels when thou art restored? Shall not He heal one who was created in His own image—He Who made Heaven and earth? He will heal thee: but thou must wish to be healed. He indeed healeth all the infirm, whomsoever; but He healeth no man against

his will. What can be more happy than thou, who canst hold thy health as it were in thine own hands, that is, in thine own free-will? If thou didst wish for some exalted honour in this world; if thou wast ambitious of a duchy, a proconsulate, a prefecture; couldst thou at once have as thou wast desirous? would power be in attendance upon thy first wish? Many wish to attain these things, but cannot: and if they could, of what use is honour to the sick? For who is not sick in this life? who doth not drag on tedious infirmity? To be born here in a mortal body, is to begin to be sick. Our wants are supported by daily medicines, the means of restoration for all wants are daily medicines. Would not hunger cause thy death, unless thou didst apply what would cure it? would not thirst destroy thee, unless thou didst by drinking satisfy it for a season, though not for ever? For thirst will return in a short interval, though checked. We therefore by these means of healing do assuage the troubles of our distempered state. Thou wast wearied with standing, by sitting down thou art refreshed; the very act of sitting is the cure of thy fatigue: by this very remedy thou art in turn fatigued; thou canst not long sit. Whenever one cause of fatigue is counteracted, a fresh one is created. Why then, infirm as thou art, dost thou long for these things? First think of thine own health. Sometimes a man is stricken in his own house, on his bed, with a more than usually manifest disorder; although this disorder too, which men dislike to contemplate, be plain; yet each man may be attacked with that sickness for which human physicians are sought, and may gasp with fever in his bed; perhaps he may wish to consider of his domestic affairs, to make some order or disposition relating to his estate or his house; at once he is recalled from such cares by the anxiety of his friends, plainly expressed around him, and he is advised to dismiss these subjects, and first to take thought for his health. This then is addressed unto thee, and to all men: if thou art not sick, think of other things: if thy very infirmity prove thee sick, first take heed of thy health. Christ is thy health: think therefore of Christ. Receive the cup of His saving Health, Who healeth all thine infirmities; if thou shalt choose, thou shalt gain this Health. When thou hast sought for honours and wealth, thou wilt not gain them at once, though thou wishest: this is even more precious, and it followeth thy will. He Who healeth all thine infirmities: and Who redeemeth thy life from corruption. There shall all thine infirmity be healed, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption. For thy life hath been redeemed from corruption:

rest secure now: the contract of good faith hath been entered upon; no man deceives, no man circumvents, no man oppresses, thy Redeemer. He hath here made a barter, He hath already paid the price, He hath poured forth His blood. The only Son of God, I say, hath shed His blood for us: O soul, raise thyself, thou art of so great price. He redeemeth thy life from corruption. He hath shewn by His example, what He hath promised in the reward. He died for our transgressions, and rose again for our justification. Let the members hope for that which hath been shewn in the Head. Will He not heal those members of His own, whose Head He raised into heaven? Therefore, He redeemeth thy life from corruption.

7. Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness. Thou hadst perhaps begun to be in a manner proud, when thou didst hear the words, He crowneth thee. I am then great, I have then wrestled. By whose strength? By thine, but supplied by Him. For thou dost strive, it is clear, and therefore thou shalt be crowned, because thou wilt conquer: but see Who conquered first, Who hath made thee a conqueror, even though in the second place. I have overcome the world, He said: be of good cheer. And whence are we of good cheer, if He hath overcome the world? as if we overcame it? Surely for this reason we rejoice, because we ourselves have overcome it. We who were overcome in ourselves, have in Him overcome. He crowneth thee, because He is crowning His own gifts, not thy deservings. I laboured more abundantly than they all, said the Apostle; but see what he addeth: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. And after all his toils he hopeth for the crown itself, and saith, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. Why? Because I have fought a good fight. Wherefore? Because I have finished my course. Wherefore? Because I have kept the faith. How hast thou fought? By what power hast thou kept the faith? Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. It is then by His mercy that thou art crowned; in nothing be proud; ever praise the Lord; forget not all His rewards. It is a reward when thou, a sinner and an ungodly man, hast been called, that thou mayest be justified. It is a reward, when thou art raised up and guided, that thou mayest not fall. It is a reward, when strength is given thee, that thou mayest persevere unto the end. It is a reward, that even that

flesh of thine by which thou wast oppressed riseth again, and that not even a hair of thy head perisheth. It is a reward, that after thy resurrection thou art crowned. It is a reward, that thou mayest praise God Himself for evermore without ceasing. Forget not all His rewards, if thou dost wish that thy soul may praise the Lord, Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness.

8. And what shall I do when crowned? Lo, I was supported while I was striving; I shall be crowned when the fight is finished; there will be no longer any remaining suggestion or corruption of the enemy with which to strive. For in this life we are ever striving with this corruption; but what is written? The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. After the destruction of death thou shalt fear no enemy: thenceforward death is swallowed up in victory. Then therefore will be the victory, then the crown. After the battle, then, I shall be crowned; after the crown, what shall I do? He Who satisfieth thy longing with good things. For at present thou hearest of good, and dost pant for it: thou hearest of good, and sighest for it: and even whenever thou sinnest, it is perhaps because thou art mistaken in the eagerness of thy choice of good; and in this thou art liable to condemnation, that thou hearest not the good counsel of God, as to what ought to be spurned, and what to be chosen; in that perhaps thou neglectest to learn, if thou wast deceived in thy choice of good. Wherever thou sinnest, thou art as it were seeking for a good, longing for refreshment. These objects of thy search are good; but unto thee they will be evil, if He by Whom they were made good be forsaken. Seek thy own good, O soul. For one thing is good to one creature, another to another, and all creatures have a certain good of their own, to the completeness and perfection of their nature. There is a difference as to what is essential to each imperfect thing, in order that it may be made perfect; seek for thy own good. There is none good but One, that is, God. The highest good is thy good. What then is wanting unto him to whom the highest good is good? For there are inferior goods, which are good to different creatures respectively. What, brethren, is good unto the cattle, save to fill the belly, to prevent want, to sleep, to indulge themselves, to exist, to be in health, to propagate? This is good to them: and within certain bounds it hath an allotted measure of good, granted by God, the Creator of all things. Dost thou seek such a good as this? God giveth also this: but do not pursue it alone. Canst thou, a coheir of Christ, rejoice in

fellowship with cattle? Raise thy hope to the good of all goods. He will be thy good, by Whom thou in thy kind hast been made good, and by Whom all things in their kind were made good. For God made all things very good. If therefore we say that That good, which is God, is very good, it hath already been said of the creation: God made every thing very good. What therefore is that good whereof it is said, There is none good but One, that is, God? Do we say that it is very good? We call to mind that this is said of the whole creation, God made all things very good. What then are we to say? Our words are wanting, but not our feeling. Let us remember the Psalm lately treated of: we cannot express our feeling; let us shout for joy. God is good. What sort of good, who can say? Lo, we cannot say, and we are not allowed to be silent. If then we cannot say, and for our joy are not able to be silent; let us neither speak, nor be silent. What then are we to do, neither speaking, nor silent? Let us shout for joy. Jubilate unto the God of our salvation. Jubilate unto God, every land. What meaneth, Jubilate? Utter the ineffable accents of your joy, and let your delight burst forth before Him. And what will this burst be after the full feast, if even now after slight refreshment the soul is so much affected? what will it be, when it shall be done after our redemption from all corruption, as is said in this Psalm, He shall satisfy thy longing with good things?

9. And as if thou didst ask, when doth He satisfy us? for at present I am not satisfied; whatever I turn myself unto, becometh vile when gained, although it incited me when desired; when I despise all those things after attaining them, which I love only when I have them not, what good thing will satisfy me? The praise of God? Even by this, while the corrupt body weigheth it down, and its earthly abode overpowers the reflecting mind, the soul, not satisfied, is not perfected; other pleasures attached to my wants, and arising from corruption, turn me aside from it. When shall my longing be satisfied with good things? when, dost thou ask? Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. Dost thou then ask when thy soul is to be satisfied with good things? When thy youth shall be restored. And he addeth, as an eagle's. Something here lieth hidden; what however is said of the eagle, we will not pass over silently, since it is not foreign to our purpose to understand it. Let this only be impressed upon our hearts, that it is not said without cause by the Holy Spirit, Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. For it hath

intimated unto us a sort of resurrection. And indeed the youth of the eagle is restored, but not into immortality, for a similitude hath been given, as far as it could be drawn from a thing mortal to signify a thing immortal, not to demonstrate it. The eagle is said, after it becometh overpowered with bodily age, to be incapable of taking food from the immoderate length of its beak, which is always increasing. For after the upper part of its beak, which forms a crook above the lower part, hath increased from old age to an immoderate length, the length of this increase will not allow of its opening its mouth, so as to form any interval between the lower beak and the crook above. For unless there be such an opening, it hath no power of biting like a forceps, by which to shear off what it may put within its jaws. The upper part therefore increasing, and being too far hooked over, it cannot open its mouth, and take any food. This old age doth to it, it is weighed down with the infirmity of age, and becometh too weak from want of power to eat; two causes of infirmity assaulting it, old age, and want. By a natural device, therefore, in order in some measure to restore its youth, the eagle is said to dash and strike against a rock the upper lip of its beak, by the too great increase of which the opening for eating is closed: and by thus rubbing it against the rock, it breaketh off the weight of its old beak, which impeded its taking food. It cometh to its food, and every thing is restored: it will be after its old age like a young eagle; the vigour of all its limbs returneth, the lustre of its plumage, the guidance of its wings, it flieth aloft as before, a sort of resurrection taketh place in it. For this is the object of the similitude, like that of the Moon, which after waning and being apparently intercepted, again is renewed, and becometh full; and signifieth to us the resurrection; but when it is full it doth not remain so; again it waneth, that the signification may never cease. Thus also what hath here been said of the eagle: the eagle is not restored unto immortality, but we are unto eternal life; but the similitude is derived from hence, that the rock taketh away from us what hindereth us. Presume not therefore on thy strength: the firmness of the rock rubbeth off thy old age: for that Rock was Christ. In Christ our youth shall be restored like that of the eagle. For we have grown old among our enemies, in the well-known words of the Psalm, I have grown old amid all mine enemies. How have we grown old? By our mortal flesh, by that flesh of grass: and therefore, My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. I have forgotten, he

saith, to eat my bread. Old age hath increased, it hath closed the mouth, let it be rubbed away by the rock.

10. Thus also in this Psalm which we are now concerned with, when he had said, He satisfieth thy mouth with good things, the soul seemeth to reply, I will not be satisfied with things perishable, with things temporal; let Him give me something everlasting: let Him grant me His Wisdom, His Word: let Him give me God with God, and Himself God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I stand as a beggar before His door, He whom I call upon sleepeth not, let Him give me Three Loaves. Remember the Gospel: behold what it is to know the words of God; they who have read them are moved. For ye remember that a person in want came to the house of his friend, and begged of him three loaves. And he, it is said, while in bed answered him, saying, The door is now shut; and my children are with me in bed. He through persevering entreaty, extorted by importunity what he could not of his own deserts. But God is willing to give: but He giveth not except to him who asketh, that He may not give to him who receiveth not. He wants not to be aroused by thine importunity. For when thou prayest, thou art not troublesome as to one who sleepeth. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. Once hath Christ slept, that from His side a wife might be created: He slept on the Cross, it is clear. For He died, so that He said, I have laid me down and slept. But shall not he who sleepeth also rise? For this reason it is said, I rose up again, for the Lord sustained me. But what doth the Apostle say? Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death shall have no more dominion over Him. He therefore doth not sleep: beware lest thy faith sleep. Let then the soul that longeth to be satisfied with some exalted, ineffable good, to which it rather shouteth for joy, and for which it rather shouteth, than uttereth any description; for it already wisheth, it already perceiveth somewhat thereof: it seeth that it is hindered by the weighing down of the body, that it cannot be satisfied in this life; let it answer, and say, What sayest thou to me? Shall my longing be satisfied with good things? I know that good of His which I am to desire, I know what is enough for me, I see this in Philip: Shew us, he said, the Father, and it sufficeth us. He seemingly longed for the Father alone: our Lord shewed that three loaves were to be desired: He Who is one loaf shewed him this, saying, Have I been so long time with you, and hast

thou not known the Father, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. He promised also the Holy Ghost: Whom the Father, He said, will send in My Name; and again He saith, Whom I will send you from the Father: His own gift coequal with Himself. I know what I long for: but when shall I be satisfied with it? Lo, now my thoughts are of the Trinity, in such wise as I can about the Trinity, I hardly dare to perceive any thing even darkly in a looking-glass; when shall I be satisfied? Thy youth shall be renewed as an eagle's. Thou art not satisfied at present, because thy soul is not fit for that great and solid food; for when thy beak is closed, it is not fit for it. Old age hath closed thy mouth, for this reason is the Rock given, where, oldness rubbed off, thy youth may be restored as that of an eagle; that thou mayest be able to eat thy bread, Him Who saith, I am the living bread, Who came down from Heaven. Thy youth shall be renewed as an eagle's: then shalt thou be satisfied with good things.

11. Ver. 6. The Lord executeth mercy and judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong. He doth so now, brethren, before we come to our restoration like that of the eagle, before we are satisfied with good things. For what here, what in this pilgrimage, what in this life? are we forsaken? No. The Lord executeth mercy. Now see how He executeth mercy, not leaving us in the desert, not leaving us in the wilderness, until we reach our country: He executeth mercy; but unto whom? Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy, ye have heard lately, brethren, while the Gospel was being read. Let not therefore any man imagine, that the mercy of God will light upon him, if he is unmerciful himself. But hear what is the measure of mercy, lest perhaps it be only towards a friend, and not towards an enemy. It is said, Love your enemies. Thou dost wish to be satisfied with the good things of God; let mercy be satisfied within thee. Full mercy, this is perfect mercy; it is this which loveth, which loveth him even who hateth herself. But what shall I do? thou sayest. If I begin to love mine enemy, shall I receive injuries, and bear injuries, and shall not I seek redress, when the laws protect me? It is right for thee to redress thyself; it is allowed, that it is just: see whether thou hast nothing to redress within thyself, and redress it. For thou speakest thus, shall I not then redress myself? as if God were restraining the justice of redress, and not extinguishing the pride of him who redresseth. Or was not that adulterous woman worthy of being

stoned? or if she were stoned, would an act of injustice have been done? If it were unjust, the commandment was unjust; but the Law commanded it, God commanded it. Yet, O ye avengers, see whether ye be not sinners. An adulterous woman is brought forward to be stoned according to the Law, but she is brought before the Lawgiver Himself. Thou who bringest her forth, dost rage against her: see who thou art who art cruel, and against whom thou art cruel; if sinner against sinner, be cruel no more, first confess; if thou a sinner dost rage against a sinner, leave her; He knoweth what to think of her, what to judge, how to spare, how to heal. Art thou angry according to the Law? He Who made the Law, which causeth thy rage, knoweth better what to do. Our Lord, at the time she was brought before Him, bending His Head, began writing on the earth. When He bent Himself down upon the earth, He then wrote on the earth: before He bent upon the earth, He wrote not on the earth, but on stone. The earth was now something fertile, ready to bring forth from the Lord's letters. On the stone He had written the Law, intimating the hardness of the Jews: He wrote on the earth, signifying the productiveness of Christians. Then they who were leading the adulteress came, like raging waves against a rock: but they were dashed to pieces by His answer. For He said to them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again bending His head, He began writing on the ground. And now each man, when he asked his own conscience, came not forward. It was not a weak adulterous woman, but their own adulterate conscience, that drove them back. They wished to punish, to judge; they came to the Rock, their judges were overthrown by the Rock.

12. The Lord doeth mercies: but unto whom? Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Be merciful unto all men. What mercy art thou to shew to the righteous? Only in his bodily wants; if they are not supported by thee, they will not be abandoned by God. What therefore thou dost, profiteth thyself more. Thou givest to a beggar when passing by and asking alms: thou seekest also a righteous man unto whom thou mayest give, through whom thou mayest be received into eternal tabernacles; since he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, receiveth a righteous man's reward. A beggar seeketh thee: do thou look for a righteous man. For of one thing it is said, Give to every man that asketh of thee: and

of another, "Let almsgiving toil in thy hand, until thou find a righteous man, to whom thou mayest give. And if after a long time he be not found; seek long: thou wilt find." But what wilt thou give? is not more given thee? If we have sown unto you, saith the Apostle, spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Thence also is the passage which we have already expounded by our Lord's permission, that the earth bringeth forth grass for cattle, that is, carnal things for those who thresh the wheat: for, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Whence we have exhorted you to be in this matter diligent, cautious, sober; that ye think your works your treasures. But do we, brethren, say this, that these works may be done towards ourselves? I think that although from weak men, this exhortation may be nevertheless made in the name of the Lord, and Apostolic; but it is profitable unto you, as the Apostle saith, Not because I desire a gift, but that I desire fruit that may abound to your account. What alms then wilt thou give to the righteous? The widow did not feed him, the crow fed him; because He Who made the crow fed him: Elias, I mean. There is therefore no deficiency in what God giveth to His own: do thou see what thou art buying, when thou mayest buy, and at what price? For thou art buying the kingdom of heaven: and there is no time for buying, except in this life. Remark also, at how low a price thou buyest. Its value to thee is that of all that thou canst ever possess.

13. Execute mercy to the wicked, not as being wicked. Do not receive the wicked, in so far forth as he is wicked: that is, do not receive him as if from inclination towards and love for his iniquity. For it is forbidden to give unto a sinner, and to receive sinners. Yet how is this, Give unto every man that asketh of thee? and this, if thine enemy hunger, feed him? This is seemingly contradictory: but it is opened to those who knock in the name of Christ, and will be clear unto those who seek. Help not a sinner: and, give not to the ungodly; and yet, give unto every man that asketh of thee. But it is a sinner who asketh of me. Give, not as unto a sinner. When dost thou give as unto a sinner? When that which maketh him a sinner, pleaseth thee so that thou givest. Attend for a short space, beloved, until this matter, which is very useful to understand, be unfolded by illustrations. He said this, If any man be hungry, if thou hast whence to give, give; if thou seest that thou oughtest to give in order to his support, give. Let not the bowels of mercy

become sluggish within thee, because a sinner meeteth thee: the sinner who meeteth thee is a man. When I say, the sinner who meeteth thee is a man, I mention two names; these two names are not superfluous: two names, one that he is a man, another that he is a sinner; that he is a man, is the work of God: that he is a sinner, is the work of the man: give unto the work of God, give not to that of man. Yet how, thou askest, dost thou forbid me to give to the work of the man? what is to give to the man's work? To give to the sinner in consideration of his sin, because he pleaseth thee by his sin. And who will do this, sayest thou? Who will do this? Would that no man would, would that few only, would that it were not in public! Let those who give to a man, who fights with wild beasts, tell me why they give? Why doth he give to this man? He loveth that in him, in which consists his greatest sin; this he feedeth, this he clotheth in him, wickedness itself, made public by all witnessing it. Why doth the man give, who giveth to actors, or to charioteers, or to courtesans? Do not these very persons give to human beings? But it is not the nature of God's work that they attend to, but the iniquity of the human work. Dost thou wish to see what thou art honouring in the man who encounters beasts, when thou clothest him? Suppose it is said unto thee: Become like him: thou lovest him, thou rejoicest in him, thou art seemingly glad to strip thyself, and to clothe him; take it not as an insult, if it be said to thee, May thy sons be such as this man! This is an insult, thou sayest. Why an insult, save because that is wickedness? Why an insult, unless because that is infamy? When therefore thou givest, thou givest to infamy, not to bravery. As then he who giveth to the fighter of beasts, giveth not to the man, but to a most infamous profession; for if he were only a man, and not a fighter of beasts, thou wouldest not give; thou honourest in him vice, not nature: so on the other hand, if thou give to the righteous, if thou give to the prophet, if thou give to the disciple of Christ any thing of which he is in want, without thinking that he is Christ's disciple, that he is God's minister, that he is God's steward; but art thinking in that case of some temporal advantage, for instance, that when perchance he shall be needful to thy cause, he may be bought for thee, because thou hast given him something; thou hast no more given to the righteous, if thou hast thus given, than he gave to the man, when he gave to the beast-fighter. The matter, then, most beloved, is quite open to us, and I conceive, that although it was obscure, it is now clear. It was to this that the Lord bound

thee, when He said, He who hath received the righteous man. That were enough. But as the righteous may be received with another intention, when it is imagined that he may be profitable for some temporal purpose, perhaps to supply thy greedy desires, perhaps to assist in the circumvention or oppression of another man; thou perhaps receivest him, because thou art seeking some such service from him: He denied thee the reward of the righteous man, except with this addition. For He saith, He who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man: that is, receiving him in consideration of his righteousness: and, he who receiveth a prophet; and not simply receiveth a prophet, but, in the name of a prophet: honouring in him his being a prophet: lastly, whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these least ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple; that is, because he is Christ's disciple, because he is a steward of the Mystery: Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward: as therefore thou understandest, he who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward; so understand, he who receiveth a sinner in the name of a sinner shall lose his reward.

14. Therefore, brethren, exercise mercy. There is no other bond of charity, there is no other vehicle to lead us out of this life into that country: extend your love even unto your enemies: be without apprehension. For this reason came Christ, to Whom so long before it had been said, Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger: where some copies read, "defender:" but "avenger" is the truer reading. The Lord wished to still the avenger, that is, him who would avenge himself, so that such an one's sins should not be remitted him. What then, sayest thou? Shall discipline sleep? Shall all punishment be removed? It shall not. For what wilt thou do with a profligate son? Wilt thou not chastise, wilt thou not scourge him? Wilt thou curb thy very servant, if thou shalt see him living ill, with some punishment, yea with strokes? Be it so, be it so: God alloweth it: indeed He blameth, if it be not done; but do it in the temper of affection, not in that of revenge. But when thou shalt have suffered from the injuries of some of the more powerful, where thou hast neither power of correcting them by discipline, nor even perhaps of admonishing and counselling: bear, bear fearlessly: hear the Gospel that hath just been read, Blessed shall ye be

when men shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake. And He added there for whose sake, lest the revilings thou bearest be not of thine own deserving, not for the sake of God's righteousness. For a man is not righteous because he is reviled: but he who being righteous is unjustly reviled; and if he be unjustly reviled, a reward is given unto him. On this account therefore be merciful without fear, extend love even unto thine enemies: punish those who chance to belong to thy government, restrain them with affection, with charity, in regard to their eternal salvation; lest while thou sparest the flesh, the soul perish. Do this: and though thou have to endure many, over whom thou canst not exercise discipline, because thou hast no lawful authority over them; bear their injuries; be without apprehension. For the Lord executeth mercy and judgment unto all them that are oppressed with wrong. Thus will He shew mercy unto thee if thou shalt have been merciful: thou shalt be merciful, without the injuries thou sufferest losing their punishment; To Me belongeth vengeance, I will repay, saith the Lord.

15. Ver. 7. He made His ways known unto Moses. What ways of His hath He made known to Moses? Why is Moses here chosen? By Moses understand all the righteous, all saints: He hath mentioned one, let all be understood. Nevertheless, by Moses was the Law given, and the very delivery of the Law hath somewhat obscure. For the Law was given with this view, that the sick might be convinced of his infirmity, and pray for the physician. This is the hidden way of God. Thou hadst long ago heard, Who healeth all thine infirmities. Their infirmities were as yet hidden in the sick, the five books were given to Moses: the pool was surrounded by five porches; he brought forth the sick, that they might lie there, that they might be made known, not that they might be healed. The five porches discovered, but healed not, the sick; the pool healed when one descended, and this when it was disturbed: the disturbance of the pool was in our Lord's Passion. For when He came, and was unknown, when it was said by some, He is Christ; by others, He is not Christ; He is righteous, He is a sinner; He is a master, He is a seducer: He disturbed the water, that is, the people; and in the whole of that disturbance of the water one was healed, because in the Lord's Passion unity is healed. He who shall be without the pale of unity, although he shall lie in the porches, cannot be healed: although he holdeth the Law,

he reacheth not salvation. Since therefore this is a mystery there, he teacheth that the Law was given that sinners might be convinced of their sin, and call upon the Physician in order to receive grace. How was he convinced, whom the Apostle Paul representeth by himself, in the words, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For through the commandment there had been shewn to him a kind of strife within himself, whereof he saith, I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. He acknowledged himself in misery, in groaning, in strife and contention; he himself not agreeing with himself, at variance with himself, recoiling from himself: and what saith he, wishing for peace, true peace, peace above? O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ: for where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Whence did sin abound? The Law entered in, that sin might abound. But why did sin abound when the Law entered in? Because men would not confess themselves sinners; when the Law was given them, they became also transgressors: for none is a transgressor, but he who hath transgressed the Law. The Apostle himself saith this: for where no law is, there there is no transgression. Sin therefore abounded, that grace might still more abound. Therefore, as I had begun to say, because this is a great mystery in the Law, that it was given with this view, that by the increase of sin, the proud might be humbled, the humbled might confess, the confessing might be healed; these are the hidden ways, which He made known to Moses, through whom He gave the Law, by which sin should abound, that grace might more abound. God did not this in cruelty, but with the design of healing. For sometimes a man seemeth to himself well, when he is really ill; and since he is ill without being aware, he seeketh not a physician; the disease is increased, the trouble is augmented, the physician is sought, and the whole is healed. He hath made His ways known unto Moses: His good pleasure unto the children of Israel. To all the children of Israel? To the true children of Israel; yea, to all the children of Israel. For the treacherous, the insidious, the hypocrites, are not children of Israel. And who are the children of Israel? "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

He hath made known His good pleasure unto the children of Israel.

16. Ver. 8. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: long-suffering, and of great mercy. Why so long-suffering? Why so great in mercy? Men sin and live; sins are added on, life continueth: men blaspheme daily, and He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the wicked. On all sides He calleth to amendment, on all sides He calleth to repentance, He calleth by the blessings of creation, He calleth by giving time for life, He calleth through the reader, He calleth through the preacher, He calleth through the innermost thought by the rod of correction, He calleth by the mercy of consolation: He is long-suffering, and of great mercy. But take heed lest by ill using the length of God's mercy, thou treasure up for thyself, as the Apostle saith, wrath in the day of wrath. For this the Apostle saith: or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance? Because He spareth thee, dost thou imagine that thou pleasest Him? These things hast thou done, He saith, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest of iniquity that I am even such a one as thyself. Sins please Me not, but with long-suffering I seek good deeds. If I were to punish sinners, I should not find confessors. God therefore by His long-suffering in sparing leadeth thee to repentance: but whilst thou daily sayest, This day is over, and thus will I be to-morrow also, for to-morrow will not be my last day; and so on the third day; then suddenly His anger cometh. Brother, defer not to turn unto the Lord. For some there are who prepare to turn, and yet put it off, and in them crieth out the raven's voice, "Cras! Cras!" The raven which was sent from the ark, never returned. God seeketh not procrastination in the raven's voice, but confession in the wailing of the dove. The dove, when sent forth, returned. How long, To-morrow! To-morrow!? Look to thy last morrow: since thou knowest not what is thy last morrow, let it suffice that thou hast lived up to this day a sinner. Thou hast heard, often thou art wont to hear, thou hast heard to-day also; daily thou hearest, and daily thou amendest not. But thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: who will render to every man according to his deeds. Let not God seem to thee in such wise merciful as to forego justice. The Lord is merciful, and a shewer of mercy. I hear, and I rejoice: so thou sayest. Hear and rejoice; he hath added further, long-suffering, and of great mercy: and at the end, and true. At the former words thou rejoicest: at the

latter tremble. He is long-suffering and merciful, so as also to be true. When thou shalt have treasured up unto thyself wrath in the day of wrath, shalt thou not find Him just, whom thou hast despised when merciful?

17. Ver. 9. He will not alway be chiding: neither keepeth He His anger for ever. Since it is in consequence of His anger that we live in the scourges and corruption of mortality: we have this in punishment for the first sin. My brethren, we ought not only to consider how we may avoid His future threats, but also His present wrath; for this is His wrath, of which the Apostle calleth himself and us sons, when he saith, We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. It is therefore in consequence of His anger that man is a pilgrim here, that he toileth. Is it not through His anger, my brethren, that in the sweat of thy face and in toil thou shalt eat bread, and the earth shall bear thorns and thistles unto thee? This was said to our forefathers. Or if our life is different from this; if thou canst, turn unto some pleasure, where thou mayest not feel thorns. Choose what thou hast wished, whether thou art covetous or luxurious; to name these two alone; add a third passion, that of ambition; how great thorns are there in the desire of honours? in the luxury of lusts how great thorns? in the ardour of covetousness how great thorns? What troubles are there in base loves? What terrible anxieties here in this life? I omit hell. Beware lest thou even now become a hell unto thyself. The whole of this, my brethren, is the result of His anger: and when thou hast turned thyself unto works of righteousness, thou canst not but toil upon earth; and toil endeth not before life endeth. We must toil on the way, that we may rejoice in our country. He therefore consoleth by His promises thy toil, thy labours, thy troubles, saying to thee, He will not alway be chiding: neither will He keep His anger for ever.

18. Ver. 10, 11. He hath not dealt with us according to our sins. Thanks unto God, because He hath vouchsafed this. We have not received what we were deserving of: He hath not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses. For as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him. The Lord hath confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him, so great—as what?—as the height of heaven above the earth. What hath he said? If

the heaven can ever cease to protect the earth it covereth, at some time God may cease to protect them who fear Him. Observe the heaven: every where on every side it covereth the earth, nor is there any part of the earth not covered by the heaven. Men sin beneath heaven: they do all evil deeds beneath the heaven; yet they are covered by the heaven. Thence is light for the eyes, thence air, thence breath, thence rain upon the earth for the sake of its fruits, thence all mercy from heaven. Take away the aid of heaven from the earth: it will fail at once. As then the protection of heaven abideth upon the earth, so doth the Lord's protection abide upon them that fear Him, Thou fearest God, His protection is above thee. But perhaps thou art scourged, and conceivest that God hath forsaken thee. God hath forsaken thee, if the protection of heaven hath forsaken the earth: for as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him.

19. What then hath He done? He hath not rewarded us according to our sins.

Ver. 12. Look, how wide the east is from the west; so far hath He set our sins from us. According to the height of the heaven above the earth, hath the Lord confirmed His mercy towards them that fear Him. I have said wherefore: for our protection. How so? How wide the east is from the west, so far hath He set our sins from us. They who know the Sacraments know this; nevertheless, I only say what all may hear. When sin is remitted, thy sins fall, thy grace riseth; thy sins are as it were on the decline, thy grace which freeth thee on the rise. Truth springeth from the earth. What meaneth this? Thy grace is born, thy sins fall, thou art in a certain manner made new. Thou shouldest look to the rising, and turn away from the setting. Turn away from thy sins, turn unto the grace of God; when thy sins fall, thou risest and profitest. But the part of heaven which riseth, again falleth. Illustrations can not be drawn in exact analogy from all topics: but the subjects themselves may be paralleled with those which they are used to illustrate: as he said of the eagle, as of the moon, so also here. One region of the heaven falleth, another riseth: but the region which is now rising will set after twelve hours. Not like this is the grace which riseth unto us: both our sins fall for ever, and grace abideth for ever.

20. Ver. 13. But why hath He set our sins as far as the east is from the west, so far from us, so that while our sins fall, our grace riseth? Why, do ye conceive? Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so hath the Lord had mercy on them that fear Him. Let Him be as angry as He shall will, He is our Father. But He hath scourged us, and afflicted us, and bruised us: He is our Father. Son, if thou bewailest, wail beneath thy Father; do not so with indignation, do not so with the puffing up of pride. What thou sufferest, whence thou mournest, it is medicine, not punishment; it is thy chastening, not thy condemnation. Do not refuse the scourge, if thou dost not wish to be refused thy heritage: do not think of what punishment thou sufferest in the scourge, but what place thou hast in the Testament. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him.

21. Ver. 14. For He knoweth our forming: that is, our infirmity. He knoweth what He hath created, how it hath fallen, how it may be repaired, how it may be adopted, how it may be enriched. Behold, we are made of clay: The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. He sent even His own Son, Him Who was made the second man, Him Who was God before all things. For He was second in His coming, first in His returning: He died after many, He arose before all. He knoweth our forming. What forming? Ourselves. Why sayest thou that He knoweth? Because He hath pitied. Remember that we are but dust. Addressing God Himself, he saith, Remember, as if God could forget: He perceiveth, He knoweth in such a manner that He cannot forget. But what meaneth, Remember? Let thy mercy continue towards us. Thou knowest our forming; forget not our forming, lest we forget thy grace. Remember that we are but dust.

22. Ver. 15. Man, his days are but as grass. Let man consider what he is; let not man be proud. His days are but as grass. Why is the grass proud, that is now flourishing, and in a very short space dried up? Why is the grass proud that flourisheth only for a brief season, until the sun be hot? It is then good for us that His mercy be upon us, and from grass make gold. For, Man, his days are but as grass: for he flourisheth as a flower of the field. The whole splendour of the human race; honour, powers, riches, pride, threats, is the

flower of the grass. That house flourisheth, and that family is great, that family flourisheth; and how many flourish, and how many years do they live! Many years to thee, are but a short season unto God. God doth not count, as thou dost. Compared with the length and long life of ages, all the flower of any house is as the flower of the field. All the beauty of the year hardly lasteth for the year. Whatever there flourisheth, whatever there is warmed with heat, whatever there is beautiful, lasteth not; nay, it cannot exist for one whole year. In how brief a season do flowers pass away, and these are the beauty of the herbs! This which is so very beautiful, this quickly falleth. All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness of man is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of the Lord standeth for ever. Inasmuch then as He knoweth as a father our forming, that we are but grass, and can only flourish for a time; He sent unto us His Word, and His Word, which abideth for evermore, He hath made a brother unto the grass which abideth not for evermore: He hath made His Only-Begotten by nature, the only One born of His own Substance, brother unto so many adopted brethren. Wonder not that thou shalt be a sharer of His Eternity; He became Himself first a sharer of thy grass. Will He Who assumed from thee what was lowly, deny unto thee what is exalted in respect of thee? Man then, as far as pertaineth unto man, his days are but as grass: as a flower of the field so shall he flourish.

23. Ver. 16. The wind shall go over on it, it shall not be; and the place thereof shall know it no more. As it were a kind of destruction; as it were a kind of perishing. Behold he who puffeth himself up. Behold he who dwelleth with pride. Behold he who lifteth himself up. The wind shall go over him, he shall not be: and his place shall know him no more. See them daily dying; and this will be all, this will be their end. For he is not speaking of grass, but of that for whose sake even the Word became grass. For thou art man, and on thy account the Word became man. All flesh is grass: and the Word was made flesh. How great then is the hope of the grass, since the Word hath been made flesh? That which abideth for evermore, hath not disdained to assume grass, that the grass might not despair of itself.

24. Ver. 17. In thy reflections therefore on thyself, think of thy low estate, think of thy dust: be not lifted up: if thou art any thing better, thou wilt be

so by His Grace, thou wilt be so by His mercy. For hear what followeth: but the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear Him. Ye who fear not Him, will be grass, and in grass, and in torment with the grass: for the flesh shall arise unto the torment. Let those who fear Him rejoice, because His mercy is upon them.

25. Ver. 18. And His righteousness upon children's children. He speaketh of reward, upon children's children. How many servants of God are there who have not children, how much less children's children? But He calleth our works our children; the reward of our works, our children's children. His righteousness upon children's children; even upon such as keep His covenant. Let men beware that all may not conceive what is here said to belong to themselves: let them choose, while they have the choice. Upon such as keep His covenant: and keep in memory His commandments to do them. Thou wast already disposed to flatter thyself, and perhaps to recite to me the Psalter, which I have not by heart, or from memory to say over the whole Law. Clearly thou art better in point of memory than I, better than any righteous man who doth not know the Law word for word: but see that thou keep the commandments. But how shouldest thou keep them? Not by memory, but by life. Such as keep in memory His commandments: not, to recite them; but, to do them. And now perhaps each man's soul is disturbed. Who remembereth all the commandments of God? who remembereth all the writings of God? Lo, I wish not only to hold them in my memory, but also to do them in my works: but who remembereth them all? Fear not: He burdeneth thee not: on two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. But I wish to keep all the Law in my mind. Keep it, if thou canst, when and how thou canst. Whatever page thou shalt have enquired of, will answer thee this; whatever thou hast, keep: keep charity: the end of the commandment is charity. Think not of the multitude of boughs, hold the root, and the whole tree is in thee. And upon such as keep in memory His commandments to do them.

26. Ver. 19. The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven. Who but Christ hath prepared His throne in heaven? He Who descended and ascended, He Who died, and rose from the dead, He Who lifted up to heaven the manhood He had assumed, hath Himself prepared His throne in heaven.

The throne is the seat of the Judge: observe therefore ye who hear, that He hath prepared His throne in heaven. Let each man do what he wisheth on earth, the sin will not be unpunished, righteousness will not be fruitless; since the Lord, Who was mocked before the throne of a man His judge, hath prepared His throne in heaven. The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven: and His kingdom shall rule over all. The kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall be the Governor among the people. And His kingdom shall rule over all.

27. Ver. 20. Bless ye the Lord, ye Angels of His, ye that are mighty in strength: ye that fulfil His word. By the word of God, then, thou art not righteous, nor faithful, unless when thou dost it. Ye that are mighty in strength, ye that fulfil His commandment, and hearken unto the voice of His words.

28. Ver. 21. Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts: ye servants of His that do His pleasure. All ye angels, all ye that are mighty in strength: ye that do His word: all ye His hosts, ye servants of His that do His pleasure, do ye, ye bless the Lord. For all they who live wickedly, though their tongues be silent, by their lips do curse the Lord. What doth it profit if thy tongue singeth a hymn, while thy life breatheth sacrilege? By living ill thou hast set many tongues to blasphemy. Thy tongue is given to the hymn, the tongues of those who behold thee, to blasphemy. If then thou dost wish to bless the Lord, do His word, do His will. Build upon the rock, build not upon the sand. To hear and not to do, is to build upon the sand: to hear and to do, is to build upon a rock: neither to hear, nor to do, is not to build at all. If thou buildest on the sand, thou buildest ruin: if thou buildest nothing, exposed to rain, rivers, winds, thou wilt be hurried away before thou hast gained thy footing. We must not therefore loiter, but build; nor build so, that a ruin be built; but we must build upon a rock, that temptation may not overwhelm us. If it be thus with thee, bless the Lord; if it be not thus, flatter not thy tongue; question thy life, let it answer thee. Thou findest out the evil that is in thee: groan, confess; thy confession must be a blessing of God; but let thy changed state persevere in blessing Him.

29. Ver. 22. Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His, in all places of His dominion. Therefore in every place. Let Him not be blessed where He

ruleth not: in all places of His dominion. Let no man perchance say; I cannot praise the Lord in the East, because He hath departed unto the West; or, I cannot praise Him in the West, because He is in the East. For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor yet from the desert hills. And why? God is the Judge. He is every where, in such wise that every where He may be praised: He is in such wise on every side, that we may be joyful in Him on every side: He is in such wise blessed on every side, that on every side we may live well. Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His. For when in a good life thou hast begun to bless the Lord, His works bless Him, not thy deservings. For through thee and in thee He worketh good, as the Apostle saith: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you. That thou mightest not extol thyself, then, because thou dost fulfil His word, because thou dost fulfil His will, He chose thou shouldest be humbled, by looking back to His grace, whence thou hast gained this. In every place of His dominion: bless thou the Lord, O my soul! The last verse is the same as the first: blessing is at the head of the Psalm, blessing at the end; from blessing we set out, to blessing let us return, in blessing let us reign.

PSALM 104

Exposition

Discourse I. on the first part of the Psalm.

Three days since, if ye deign to remember it, ye were abundantly refreshed: but since even after so long a discourse ye left me very anxious to hear more, I think ye ought not, holy brethren, to be defrauded of what is due to you on this day: so that this will be only what is due to you, the former will be your gain. The Psalm which has been read, almost wholly consists of figures and of mysteries, and hath need not only of mine, but of your diligent attention; although even all that is said, may be taken literally in a religious sense. For although all the works of God are not enumerated, yet many are, and they are known to all who look upon them, who know even from these things which are made and seen, to behold in the mind His invisible things. For we see an ample fabric of the world consisting of heaven and earth, and of all the things which in them are; and from the magnitude and beauty of this fabric, we already love even though we as yet see not the inestimable magnitude and beauty of Him Who made it. For He, Who cannot as yet be seen in the purity of our heart, hath not ceased to place His works before our eyes, that seeing what we are able, we may love Him Whom we are not able to see, that by the merit of that love we may at length be enabled to see. Yet in all of what is said, a spiritual meaning must also be sought for, to discover which your longings in Christ's Name will help us.; by which as it were with invisible hands ye knock at an invisible door, that it may be invisibly opened unto you, and ye may enter invisibly, and invisibly be healed.

2. Ver. 1. Bless the Lord, O my soul, therefore, let us all say. Let us all address our own soul: because the soul of all of us by one faith is one soul; and all of us who believe in Christ, through the unity of His body, are one

man. Let our soul praise the Lord for so great blessings of His, for so numerous and so great gifts of His graces, which gifts we discover in considering this Psalm, and shaking off the cloud of carnal thought, as far as we can with mind aroused, and as far as we can with uplifted gaze, and as far as we can with the eye of our heart pure, as far as this life hindereth not, as far as desires of things present engage us not, as far as worldly lust blindeth us not. Thus eager then, we are about to hear those great, joyful, beautiful, desirable gifts of His, so full of delight and happiness; which he who had conceived this Psalm already saw in mind, and in the exultation of that sight burst forth in the words, Bless the Lord, O my soul.

3. O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious. Behold the glorious things which he is about to describe; in which glorious things He only is to be praised Who is the Author of all glorious things. Thou art clothed with confession and honour. O Lord my God, Who art become exceeding glorious, whence hast Thou become exceeding glorious? Art Thou not always great, art Thou not always glorious? Art Thou in aught imperfect, that Thou mayest increase? Art Thou failing, so that at some time Thou mayest decrease? But because Thou art what Thou art, and truly art, Thou hast spoken Thy Name to Thy servant Moses, I am That I am: Thou art indeed great, and Thy greatness is eternal, neither beginning nor ending; neither doth it begin from the beginning of time, nor doth it run out at the end of time, nor doth it suffer any thing in the interval: for Thy greatness is unchangeable. How then art Thou become exceeding glorious? Another Psalm teacheth us: for it saith, Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me. If it be rightly said, Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me; it is rightly said, Thou art become exceeding glorious, O Lord God, from me. But this also must be further enquired into. Is my God made glorious through me? Through me then He becomes great. Our daily prayer for our salvation teacheth us also somewhat. Hallowed be Thy Name: each day we ask, each day we beg, that this may be. Suppose some one were to ask us, why is it that ye ask that God's Name may be hallowed? is it then at some times not hallowed, so that it may now be hallowed? and yet unless we wished this to happen, we should not beg that it might happen. For thanksgiving is different from prayer: we give thanks for what already doth exist: we pray that what is not, may be. What then meaneth,

Hallowed be Thy Name? and we understand the words here, O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious. This is the meaning of, Hallowed be Thy Name. May Thy Name be hallowed among men. For Thy Name is ever hallowed, but unto some unclean ones Thy Name is not yet hallowed. For the Apostle saith, Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure. If nothing is pure to the defiled and unbelieving, I seek the reason: but, he addeth, even their mind and conscience is defiled. If nothing is pure unto them, neither is God: unless indeed ye imagine that God seemeth pure unto those who daily blaspheme Him. If He be pure, let Him please them; if He pleaseth them, let Him be praised: but if He is blasphemed, He displeaseth them; and if He displeaseth them, how can He who displeaseth thee be pure unto thee? Why then do we pray, Hallowed be Thy Name? That unto those men who through their unbelief hold not as yet God's Name hallowed, it may become hallowed, unto whom He is not as yet holy, Who by Himself, and in Himself, and in His own saints, is holy. We pray for the human race, for the whole world, for all nations, who daily sit and dispute that God is not righteous, and that God judgeth not righteously; that sometime they may amend themselves, and bring a righteous heart unto His righteousness; and thus, cleaving unto Him, made straight by Him Who is straight, may no longer blame Him, but He who is righteous may please them, become righteous themselves; since, Truly God is loving unto Israel: but unto such as are of a right heart. When therefore the Psalmist, that is, we ourselves, the body, the limbs of Christ, saw how great gifts God had bestowed upon the human race, he who before thought not of any God, or of a false one, or of God as not so great, when he saw Him in His works; O Lord my God, he said, Thou art become exceeding glorious; that is, I who did not as yet understand Thee, understand Thee now to be great. Ever great, even when hidden; but unto me now (made manifest as) great, when Thou hast appeared. Through me therefore Thou hast become exceeding glorious: as Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me; for it hath been made to be admired through me. I wonder at it now that I am turned towards it; but it, although I am not turned, although after conversion I again turn away, abideth whole. But I am now become great in it, and having been made whole in it when I was incomplete before, wonder at what I knew not; not that since I learnt, it hath lately become great, but that I am become

great since I learnt it. Now hear wherein God seemeth to have become exceeding glorious, Who is ever glorious; for He hath become exceeding glorious in His works towards us.

4. Thou hast clothed thyself with confession and honour. Before honour he hath set confession, honour is in beauty. Thou seekest beauty: thou art seeking a good thing. But wherefore seekest thou beauty, O soul? That thy Betrothed may love thee; for thou displeasest him by thy deformity. For what is He like? Fairer than the sons of men. Thou who art deformed dost wish to kiss Him Who is beautiful; but thou heedest not that thou thyself art full of iniquities. And full of grace are Thy lips. For thus it is said of Him: Fairer than the sons of men: full of grace are Thy lips; for which the maidens love Thee. There is then one who is beautiful and fairer than the sons of men; although a son of man, yet fairer than the sons of men. Dost thou wish to please Him, O human soul, O thou one in many? Let us hear of the Church, that they had one heart and one soul unto God; the Psalm addresseth the Church. Dost thou wish to please Him? Thou canst not, as long as thou art deformed: what wilt thou do that thou mayest be beautiful? First let thy deformity displease thee, and then thou wilt deserve beauty from Him, unto Whom it is thy wish to be pleasing by thy beauty. For He who fashioned thee, shall fashion thee anew. Heed therefore first who thou art, that thou mayest not dare in thy deformity to seek the kisses of the beautiful. Looking upon what, thou askest, shall I see myself? He hath set before thee a mirror in His Scriptures: it is read to thee. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. A mirror hath been set before thee in this verse, see if thou art what it saith; if as yet thou art not, groan that thou mayest be. The mirror will disclose unto thee thy face: as thou wilt not find a flatterer in the mirror, so flatter not thyself. This brightness sheweth thee the very thing that thou art: see what thou art: if it displease thee, seek that thou mayest not be such. For if while thou art deformed thou art displeasing to thyself, thou already dost please the beautiful. What then? Since thy deformity displeaseth thee, thou beginnest with confession unto Him; as it is elsewhere said, Begin with confession unto the Lord. First accuse thy deformity: for the deformity of the soul cometh of sins, of iniquities. Begin to praise Him by accusing thine own deformity, by thy confession thou

beginnest to be adorned: who adorning thee, save He who is fairer than the sons of men?

5. But that He might render her beautiful, I venture to assert, He loved her when deformed. What meaneth this, He loved her when deformed? For Christ died for the ungodly. What a life doth He keep for thee when justified, Who gave thee when ungodly His own death? Lo, He, beautiful and fairer than the sons of men, because He is preeminently righteous above the sons of men, since He came to the deformed, to render her beautiful, (I will say this also, since I find it in Scripture,) He became Himself deformed. Not to me listen ye in this, lest I may have rashly slipped into this expression. For as I had said, He loved her even when deformed; and this I had not said as it were agreeably to some that love Him, unless testimony bore me out; I said also what the Apostle said: dost thou wish to know that He loved her even when deformed? Christ died for the ungodly; so also, how shall I prove what I just now asserted, that He became Himself deformed, that He might come unto her who was deformed; since the divine voice hath already spoken of Him as fairer than the sons of men? But again, I find in this very divine voice the words, We have seen Him: He had no form or comeliness. Fairer than the sons of men: we have seen Him: He hath no form or comeliness. He said not, we have not seen, and therefore we knew not whether He had form or comeliness: behold, “we have seen Him, and He had no form or comeliness.” Where then did he, who said, He was fairer than the sons of men, see Him? and where did he, who said, He hath no form or comeliness, see Him? Hear where he, who spoke of Him as fairer than the sons of men, saw Him. Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Justly fairer than the sons of men, because equal with God: behold, O man, understand, and acknowledge where he, who said, “Fairer than the sons of men,” saw Him. For he answered us, Dost thou ask where I saw Him? “In the form of God.” And by what means hast thou seen Him in the form of God? How hast thou seen Him in the form of God? Because the invisible things of Him are understood by the things that are made. Very well: I understand, I recognise Whom thou hast seen, and in what form, where, and by what means. Whom hast thou seen? Our Betrothed. In what form? Fairer than the sons of men. Where hast thou seen Him? When in the form of God. By what means? His

invisible things are understood by the things that are made. Let us see what another prophet also, but not another spirit, (for they do not disagree with one another,) saith of Him. One hath displayed Him unto us, “fairer than the sons of men let the other also display Him in his own words; “We have seen Him: He hath no form or comeliness.” One Apostle Paul connects both prophets; one chapter of Paul gives testimony to either prophet. There I find Him Who was “fairer than the sons of men.” Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Here he speaketh of Him as another also saw Him, “having no form or comeliness:” for He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Justly they saw Him, and He had not form or comeliness. Justly before the Cross they wagged their heads, asking, Is this all the Son of God? If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. But He had not form or comeliness. Even so, O ye whom He pleaseth not, because He had no form or comeliness! O ye who wagged your heads before the Cross, and who fixed not your head upon that Head which hung upon the Cross! The head of those who mocked Him wags deservedly, until He Himself who was insulted becometh their head. Lo, He resumeth beauty and great beauty. Behold, what thou sayest is less than what He hath achieved. Thou sayest, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross: behold, He hath not come down from the Cross, but hath arisen from the tomb.

6. Therefore, O soul, thou canst not be beautiful, unless thou hast confessed thy deformity to Him Who is evermore beautiful, but was for thy sake for a season not beautiful: and in such a manner not beautiful for a season in the form of a servant, as never to have abandoned that beauty which is in the form of God. Thou, therefore, O Church, hast beauty. It is said unto thee also in the Song of Songs, O thou fairest among women. It is also said of thee, Who is this that cometh up, made white? What meaneth, made white? Illumined: not whitened, as by a dye, even as women paint themselves white when they wish to seem other than what they are: not whitened like a whitened wall; for the whitened wall, that is, hypocrisy and semblance, shall be destroyed, as the Apostle saith. The whitened wall is clean plaster

without, filth within. She therefore is not thus whitened; but she is whitened, illumined, in that she is not of herself white. Formerly, he saith, I was a blasphemer; and, We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Grace cometh, illumining and whitening: at first thou wast black, but thou hast become white by His grace. For ye were sometimes darkness: but now are ye light in the Lord. Of thee also it is therefore said, Who is this that cometh up, made white? She is now to be admired, now hardly to be gazed upon. For it is for one who admireth to say, Who is this who cometh up white, so beautiful, so luminous, so free from spot or wrinkle? Is it not she who once lay in the mire of her iniquities? is it not she who once lay in the fornication of idols? is it not she who was once unclean in every carnal lust and desire? Who then is she who cometh up, become white? Consider who is He Who for her became without form or comeliness, and thou wilt understand how bright is this honour. If thou dost admire His humility for her sake, do not any longer wonder at her elevation on His account. How great is the happiness of this whitened one, in that even when she was black, she brought down unto herself the beautiful Betrothed, who should die for the ungodly. Our Lord then hath clothed Himself with confession and beauty, He hath clothed Himself with the Church: for the Church herself is confession and beauty. First confession, then beauty: confession of sins, beauty of good works: Thou hast put on confession and beauty.

7. Ver. 2. Thou deckest Thyself with light as it were with a garment. This is His garment, of which I have already spoken: without spot or wrinkle. It is called light; and this I have already said: Ye were sometime darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord. Not in yourselves, therefore; for in yourselves ye are darkness but light in the Lord. Therefore, Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment; and spreadest out the heavens like a skin. How He hath clothed Himself with the light of the Church as with a garment, he wishes to describe by certain figurative emblems: let us hear, how the Church hath been made light, how she became without spot or wrinkle, how she became white, splendid, refulgent in the garb of her Betrothed, cleaving unto Him. Thou spreadest the heaven like a hide. Now this indeed I see; for, save God, Who spread out this heaven, which we gaze upon with our fleshly eyes? These words, Thou spreadest it out like a hide, refer to the ease with which it was spread out, if thou understandest it

literally. For when thou hast seen this great fabric, (since if any man hath spread out even one small vault, he doth it with a great effort, with much toil and difficulty, and long work,) that human weakness might not imagine toil of this sort in the works of God, he mentioneth a thing that is easy in proportion to thy power, that thus thou mayest begin to believe that God worketh easily, and not to imagine that He hath spread out the heavens with as much toil as thou hast the roof of thy house; but that it was as easy for Him to spread out so broad a heaven, as for thee to stretch out a single hide. Wonderful ease: but even yet in thee the Spirit speaketh to one of slow comprehension. For God doth not spread out heaven, as thou dost a hide. For if He doth thus spread it out, behold the hide is placed before thee either wrinkled or rolled; command it to be spread out, by thy word spread out the hide. I cannot, thou sayest. Therefore even in spreading out the hide thou art far from the ease of God. For, He spake, and they were made: He said, Let there be a firmament between water and water, and it was so. Yet in order to signify the ease of this work, thou mayest in the mean while take it in a literal sense, according to thy understanding.

8. But if, figuratively, we wish somewhat hidden to be revealed, and to knock at what is closed, we find that God hath spread out heaven as a hide, so that we may understand by heaven holy Scripture. This authority God first placed in His Church; thence He began to follow out the rest: for He set the heaven, and spread it out like a hide, and not like a hide without a meaning. First, He hath spread out the report of His preachers as a hide: the hide signifieth mortality: for this reason also those two first parents of ours, the authors of the sin of the human race, Adam and Eve, when in Paradise, in contempt of God's commandment, they had transgressed what God had ordered by yielding to the serpent's suggestion, being made mortal, were dismissed from Paradise; and that this mortality of theirs might be signified, they were clothed with garments of hides, for they received garments made of hides: but hides are only stripped from dead animals: by hides therefore that state of mortality is signified. What then, if divine Scripture is here signified under the name of a hide, how did God make heaven from a hide, and spread out the heaven like a hide? Because they by whom Scripture was preached to us, were mortal. That word of God indeed is evermore the same, ever immutable, and never failing. Behold, In the beginning was the

Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Was it so, and is it not so now? It both is, and ever will be. If then the Word of God is God with God, read it if thou canst. But what sayest thou? that it is above, and that therefore thou canst not read? The Word of God is every where; it reacheth from one end to another mightily: it passeth and goeth through all things by reason of its pureness. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him: and when He came, He was here; for He came in the flesh, never absent in the Godhead. Why then couldest thou not read? Because in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, placed there by the wisdom of God, (for therein are all things, and if that be subtracted, all things are nought,) placed there thou couldest not by wisdom know God: therefore what followeth was necessary, It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. If they who believe were to be saved by the foolishness of preaching, God hath chosen certain mortal things, He hath chosen men mortal, and doomed unto death; using the human tongue, He hath spoken in a human voice; using the stewardship of mortals, He hath used mortal instruments, and in Him a heaven hath been made in thy sight, that thou mightest in what is mortal recognise the Immortal Word, and that thou also by sharing in the same Word mightest become immortal. Moses lived, and died: for God said unto him, Get thee up into this mountain, and die. Jeremiah and so many Prophets have died; and their words though they be dead abide even to our posterity, because they were not theirs, but His by them, Who spreadeth out the heaven like a hide. Behold the Apostle, who said, that to depart, and to be with Christ, was far better, now liveth with Christ, released from this life, even as all those Prophets live with Christ: but by what instrument did He bestow upon us what we read? By what was mortal, by mouth, by tongue, teeth, hands. All those means by which the Apostle achieved the whole work which we read of, are functions of the body, but at the command of the soul which God commanded: for this reason the heaven is spread out like a hide. We are now reading beneath the heaven, as it were beneath the hide of the divine Scriptures, when it is spread. For afterwards, the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. It is not without meaning, brethren, in this passage said to be as a hide, in the former a scroll. Somewhat is here figured unto us. With respect to holy Scripture, the discourse of the dead is spread: for this reason then it is spread out as a hide; and much more spread out, since they are dead. For

after death the Apostles and Prophets became more known; they were not so well known while alive; Judæa only possessed the Prophets when alive, all nations when they were dead. For while they lived, the hide was not as yet spread out, the heaven was not yet outspread, that it might cover the whole world. He, therefore, spread out the heaven like a hide.

9. Ver. 3. Who covereth the upper parts of it with waters. We read this also, and it is well understood after the letter. For when He commanded that a firmament should be made between waters and waters, it was made, so that there are lower waters which overflow the earth, and waters above, removed from our sight, but presented to our faith. Let the waters praise Him, he saith, which are above the heavens; for He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. The sense therefore hath been explained to the letter; for He covereth the upper parts of it with waters. What is its meaning figuratively? Since we have interpreted figuratively the hide as holy Scripture, and the authority of the divine Word dispensed unto us by mortals, through whom when dead the report of the same dispensation is spread abroad; according to this exposition, in what sense doth He cover the upper parts of it with waters? The upper parts of what? Of heaven. And what heaven? The holy Scripture. What are the upper parts of holy Scripture? What do we find higher than the rest in the holy Scriptures? Ask Paul. I shew unto you, he saith, a more excellent way. What doth he call the more excellent way? Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. If therefore nothing can be found in holy Scripture more excellent than charity, how are the upper parts of heaven covered with waters, if the higher commandments of Scripture are those of charity? Hear in what way; The love of God, he saith, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. In the expression shed abroad, understand waters in the love of the Holy Spirit. These are the waters, respecting which it is said in a passage of Scripture: Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad in thy streets; let them be only thine own, and not stranger's with thee. For all who are strangers from the way of truth, whether Pagans, or Jews, or heretics, and all wicked Christians, may have many good gifts, love they cannot have. How great a gift is this! not to speak of other outward gifts, which all men have, because He maketh His

sun to arise over the good and the bad: they are the gifts of God, and not only common to good and bad men, but also to beasts and to cattle. Existence itself, life, sight, feeling, hearing, and the discharge of the other functions of the senses, are God's gifts: but consider with what creatures, and with how many, they are enjoyed in common, and with those whom thou wouldest not choose to imitate. Even an acute intellect the worst men have, even the vilest stage players are skilful and industrious in their arts, even robbers have riches, many wicked men have wives and children, all are God's fair gifts, no one gainsayeth; but consider with whom they are in common. Look back upon the gifts of the Church herself. What sort of gift is that of the Sacraments, in Baptism, in the Eucharist, in the other holy Sacraments? Even the sorcerer Simon attained this gift. What sort of gift is Prophecy? Even Saul the wicked monarch prophesied, even then did he prophesy, when he was persecuting holy David. Remark: I said not, when he had persecuted him; for perchance after having persecuted him, he repented, and became worthy of the spirit of prophesying. He prophesied not when he had, nor when he was about to persecute, but whilst he was persecuting. He sent his officers to arrest David: David was at that season among the prophets, where also was holy Samuel; the messengers were filled with the spirit of prophecy, and they prophesied. But perhaps these came with good intentions, or from the necessity of their office, or not intending to execute what was commanded. He sent others also; this happened unto them too; let us understand their intentions to have been the same. Since they were long, he came in person, raving, breathing slaughter, thirsting for the blood of the innocent saint, to whom he was withal ungrateful; and he also was filled with the prophetic spirit, and prophesied. Let not therefore those men be boastful, who perchance have enjoyed without love this holy gift of God, even as holy Baptism; but let them reflect what account they will have with God, who do not use holy things holily. Among these will be those who shall say, In Thy Name we have prophesied. It will not be said unto them, Ye lie: but, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. For though I have all prophecy, and have not charity, I am nothing. Saul even prophesied, but he was working iniquity. But who worketh iniquity, except he who hath not charity? For, Love is the fulfilment of the Law. Therefore, He covereth the upper parts of it with the waters. What hath he said? In all the Scriptures charity obtaineth

the most excellent way, and the most excellent place; none but the good approach it, the wicked share it not with us: they may share Baptism, they may share the other Sacraments, they may share prayer, they may share these walls and this meeting; charity they cannot share with us. For He is their own fountain to the good, their own to saints, of which it is said, Let no stranger have it in common with thee. Who are strangers? All they that hear, I know you not. For if they are not known, doubtless they are strangers, to whom it is said, I know you not. Therefore the more excellent way of charity hath in it those who properly belong to the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the commandment of charity is above the heavens, above all books; for books are subservient to it, every tongue of the saints serves under it, and every movement of the stewards of God, both of mind and body. That way therefore is excellent above all, and is well said to 'protect in waters the upper parts of heaven,' because you find nothing higher than charity in the books of God.

10. But hear now yet more distinctly, what is the 'water.' For we said, that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us. We said also, Let thy waters run abroad in the streets. And some one saith to me, it is not there expressly said, whether I ought to understand charity: what if another understand something else? Only remember what the Apostle saith, The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Whence? By the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us. Hear now the Lord, the Master of the Apostles: If any one thirst, let him come and drink. Let Him also say, He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. What is this? Let the Evangelist expound. But this, saith he, He said of the Spirit, Which they that believed on Him should receive. For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Therefore, brethren, if for this reason the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified; when He is glorified and ascended into heaven, the Spirit was sent, and the Apostles were filled with charity, shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who was given unto them, because the upper parts of heaven are covered with waters. And rightly, because the Lord ascended into the heavens, so as to be above the heavens, and thence to send charity. For God doth not so cover as to be in any wise sustained by that which He covereth. He lifteth up, and doth not press down, whom He

covereth. So, therefore, doth He cover the heaven with waters, that it is rather lifted up by the Divine Spirit. What lifteth is above; what is lifted is beneath: one holdeth up, the other hangeth. If then that lifteth, this hangeth; hear that this 'heaven' of the Scriptures hangeth upon charity. For there are those two well-known commandments of love: On these two commandments hangeth all the Law and the Prophets. "Who covereth with waters the higher parts thereof."

11. Ver. 3. Who placeth clouds His ascent. This is also well understood after the letter. The Lord visibly ascended into Heaven. How were clouds set the ascents of heaven? When He had said these things, a cloud received Him. You have it also foretold of the resurrection: And the dead, he saith, in Christ shall rise first; afterward also we that are alive shall be caught up with them in clouds to meet Christ into the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Thou hast clouds the ascent of Heaven: I will shew thee also clouds the ascent of this Heaven, that is, of the Divine Scriptures. What is this, brethren? I would the Lord may deign to number me among those clouds, such as they be; He will see how misty a cloud I am; yet all the preachers of the word of truth, you are to understand, are clouds. Whosoever therefore of their infirmity cannot ascend into this Heaven, that is, to the understanding of the Scriptures, let them ascend by the clouds. For perchance it is even now doing in yourselves, if we effect any thing, if our labour and sweat is not fruitless, ye ascend into the Heaven of the Divine Scriptures, that is, into the understanding of them, by our preaching. How high was the Heaven in this Psalm! For no one of you saw what was that in figure: He stretcheth out the Heaven like a skin, Who covereth the upper parts of it in water. This very thing which was said, Who placeth clouds the ascent of it, behold, is now understood, so far as the Lord hath granted, by our preaching; for the clouds rain not by their own gift. Do ye by understanding ascend, in that ye understand bear fruit; lest ye be like that vineyard of which it is said in the Prophet, I will command my clouds that they rain not upon it. For a certain vineyard was accused, that for grapes it had borne thorns, and had made no worthy return for sweet rain. For he who heareth good things, and worketh evil things, is rained on with sweet rain, and beareth thorns. We may not suspect, brethren, that the Lord spake of any earthly vineyard, and of this visible kind. For these, lest under the

obscurity of speech the excuse of wickedness should find shelter, the Lord Himself expounded unto what vineyard He spake, and of what vineyard He said those things. The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, He saith, is the House of Israel. Why wander your hearts, ye unrighteous, over the mountains and hills of the vinedressers? I know, He saith, of what vineyard I speak, I know where I sought grapes and found thorns: without reason do ye suspect and imagine one thing and another, unwilling to understand that ye may do well. For this also is written, He would not understand, that he might do well. Away with all your guesses. The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah His beloved plant. Beloved when it was planted; condemned when it bore thorns. Therefore, brethren, perchance the House of Israel was a vineyard, and we are not a vineyard? With fear let us listen to what we see was said to the Jews. See how the Apostle alarms the branches grafted in, from the branches broken off; and in the case of the broken branches sets forth severity to be feared, in the grafted branches sets forth goodness to be loved. Be not unfruitful in goodness, lest, being barren, thou feel severity. But I am not a vine, thou sayest to me. Where is the saying of the Lord; I am the Vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the Husbandman? Where is the saying of the Apostle, Who planteth a vineyard, and receiveth not of its fruit? Thou, O Church, thou art a vineyard, and hast God for thy Husbandman. No man that is an husbandman raineth on his own vineyard. Therefore, most beloved brethren, bowels of the Church, pledges of the Church, children of Mother Church, hear, when there is time. God threatened that vineyard with a most dreadful commination. I will command my clouds, He said, that they rain not upon it. And so it was; the Apostles came to the Jews, they rejected them, and they said to them, Unto you we were sent, but since ye have rejected the word of God, we go to the Gentiles. Ye see how in the same Spirit of God, He commanding within Who dwells in the hearts of His own, it was commanded the clouds of God that they should not rain on the vineyard, which, when it was expected it should bear grapes, bore thorns. Therefore also He made the clouds the ascent of it, and stretched forth the Heaven like a skin. There is no reason for you to complain: the authority of the Scriptures is spread out over the world, clouds are not wanting, the word of truth is preached, all things that are obscure are expounded, that your hearts may ascend by the clouds. Look how ye believe, look what ye receive: after the preacher will come the

Judge, after the dispenser will come the exactor. Who placeth clouds the ascent of it.

12. Who walketh above the wings of the wind. This it is now hazardous to take to the letter. Or what are the wings of the wind? Or, however, as in a picture, are we to make ourselves winds flying and having wings? There is no wind, brethren, but that we feel, a certain motion, and as it were wave of the air, driving what it can according to its strength. What wings are those of the wind? But again, what wings of God? And yet it was said, Under the shadow of Thy wings they shall hope. Let us endeavour, therefore, to take this also of the letter, as it was properly done in the case of that creature. Perchance the swiftness of the word is what the Scripture commendeth; of which swiftness we have already before spoken on another Psalm, where it is written, Even unto swiftness His word runneth; because men know nothing swifter than the wind. Even as that ease was set forth in the skin; for nothing is easier for a man to stretch out than a skin: so also here, signifying that God, or His word, every where present, by swiftness of motion leaveth not any thing, because thou knowest not any thing swifter than the wind, he saith, He walketh above the wings of the wind, that is, His swiftness surpasseth the swiftness of the wind: so that by the wings of the wind thou mayest understand the swiftness of the wind, and the word of God thou mayest understand to be swifter than all winds. And thus in the first view of consideration: let us knock for something more inward, and let these literal sayings point out something to us in a figure.

13. The winds indeed we understand in a figure not unfitly of souls; not that the soul is wind, but because the wind is invisible, though a bodily thing, moving bodies; yet as it evades the sight of the human eye, and the soul is invisible, therefore we may well understand souls by wind. Thence it is that God is also said to have breathed the breath of life into man, when He had formed him, and man became a living soul. Therefore winds are not unfitly taken in allegory for souls. But beware lest you suppose that when I named allegory, I spoke of any thing like a pantomime. For some words, because they are words, and proceed from the tongue, are used by us in common with ridiculous and unworthy subjects, yet those words have their place in the Church, and their place on the stage. For I did not say any thing but

what the Apostle said when he spoke of the two sons of Abraham: which are, he saith, in allegory. It is called allegory, when any thing appears to sound in words of one thing, and in meaning to signify another. As Christ is called a Lamb: is He cattle? Christ a Lion: is He a wild beast? Christ a Rock: is He hardness? Christ a Mountain: is He a swelling of the earth? and so many things seem to have one sound and another meaning, and that is called allegory. For he that thinks I said allegory with reference to the theatre, let him think that the Lord also spake “parabola” of the amphitheatre. Ye see what comes of a city where shows abound! I should speak more safely in the country; for there perchance men would not have learned what allegory is, save in the Scriptures of God. Therefore, in that we say a figure is an allegory, allegory is a sacred meaning figured. And for what do we take here, He walketh above the wings of the winds? We said that the winds might well be taken for souls. The wings of the winds, the wings of souls, what are they but that whereby they are raised upward? The wings of souls, then, are virtues, good works, right deeds. In two wings they have all their feathers, for all the commandments are in two commandments. Whoever loves God and his neighbour, has a winged soul, with free pinions, with holy love flying to the Lord. Whoever is entangled in carnal love has birdlime on his wings. For if the soul has not wings and feathers, whence saith that one groaning in his tribulations, Who will give me wings like a dove’s? and it follows, And I will fly away, and be at rest. Also in another place, Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, and whither shall I fly from Thy face? If I shall ascend into Heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into Hell, Thou art present. If I shall take my wings, like a dove, and shall fly into the uttermost parts of the sea. As though he should say, Thus I am able to fly from the face of Thy wrath, if I shall take wings as a dove, and fly into the uttermost parts of the sea. To fly into the uttermost parts of the sea, is to carry forward hope even to the end of the world; as he who saith, This is a labour before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand for the last things. And how came he into the uttermost parts of the sea, even when he had taken wings? For there, he saith, Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall guide me. For even with my wings I shall fall, except Thou lead me. Therefore those souls have good and free wings, and bound with no birdlime, that well fulfil the commandments of God, holding charity of a pure conscience and faith

unfeigned. But howsoever they be endued with the virtues of charity, what is it to that love of God, with which they were loved even while they were yet entangled in birdlime? Greater therefore is the love of God toward us, than ours toward Him. Our love is our wings, but He walketh even above the wings of the winds.

14. Now the Apostle said to some, I bend my knees for you unto the Father—that He may give you, after the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love. He already gives them love, He already gives them wings and feathers, that ye may be able, He saith, to comprehend what is the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth. Perhaps he signifieth the Cross of the Lord. For there was breadth, to which the hands were stretched out; a length rising from the earth, on which the Body was fixed; a height which standeth out above from that hanging beam; a depth, where the Cross was fixed, and there all the hope of our life. For breadth is in good works, length in persevering even to the end, height because of ‘Lift up the heart,’ that we may do all our good works, in which we persevere even to the end, having breadth in which we work well, and length in which we persevere even to the end, no otherwise than in the hope of heavenly rewards. For that is height, not to seek reward here, but above, lest it be said to us, Verily I say unto you, they have had their reward. But what I called depth, where a part of the Cross was fixed, which was not seen; thence arose the parts that were seen. What is that which is hidden, and is not public in the Church? The Sacrament of Baptism, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. For our good works even pagans see, but Sacraments are hidden from them. But from these which they do not see, arise those which they see; as from the depth of the Cross, which is fixed in the earth, rises the whole Cross which appears and is seen. And what afterwards? When the Apostle had said this, he added, to know also the knowledge, which is above all, of the love of Christ: when he had already said, rooted and grounded in love. For ye love Christ, and therefore ye work in the Cross. But do ye love as much as He loved? But by loving as much as ye do love, ye fly to Him, that ye may know how much He hath loved you: that is, that ye may know the exceeding excellency of the love of Christ. For ye love as much as ye can, and fly as much as ye can: but He walketh even above the wings of the winds. Who walketh above the wings of the winds.

15. Ver. 4. Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers. And this, although we see not the appearance of angels; for it is hidden from our eyes, and is in a certain vast realm of God's empire, yet we know that there are angels from faith, and we read it written that they have appeared to many, and we hold it, nor is it allowed us to doubt of that. But the angels are spirits, and when they are spirits they are not angels; when they are sent, they become angels. For angel is a name of office, not of nature. Thou askest the name of this nature, it is spirit; thou askest the office, it is angel; by that it is, it is spirit; by that it does, it is angel. See the same in man. Man (homo) is the name of nature, soldier of office: man (vir) is the name of nature, herald of office. For a man becometh a herald; that is, he that was before a man becomes a herald, not he that was before a herald a man. Thus, therefore, those who were already made spirits by God the Creator, them He maketh angels, by sending them to declare what He hath commanded, and He maketh a flaming fire His ministers. We read that a fire appeared in the bush. We read also that fire was sent from above, and fulfilled what was commanded. It ministered, therefore, when it fulfilled: when it existed, it was in its own nature: when it did what was commanded, it fulfilled a ministry. Thus after the letter in the creature.

16. But what is it figuratively in the Church? How do we take, Who maketh spirits His Angels, and flaming fire His ministers? Spirits He calleth spiritual men. Well is He said to make spiritual men His Angels, that is, the messengers of His word, for He that is spiritual judgeth all things, but himself is judged of no man. Behold a spiritual man made an Angel of God. I could not, he saith, speak unto you as to them that are spiritual, but as unto the carnal. Of a certain spiritual affection He was sent unto the carnal, as though an angel from Heaven to earth. How saith he, and a flaming fire His ministers, save as he saith, Fervent in spirit? For being thus fervent in spirit, every minister of God is a flaming fire. Did not Stephen burn? With what fire did he burn? And what was that fire, when he was stoned, and prayed for them that were stoning him? When thou hearest the minister of God is a fire, dost thou think he will burn? Let him burn, but let it be thy straw, that is, all thy carnal desires let the minister of God burn up, preaching the word of God. Hear him: Thus let a man account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. But how did he burn when he said,

Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged? He burned and flamed with charity, and went towards them to set them on fire. This fire the Lord said He would send on earth when He said, I came to send fire on earth. As a sword, so fire. The sword divideth carnal affection, the fire consumeth it. Understand the whole in the Word of God, know the whole in the Spirit of God. Begin to be fervent with charity through the Word of God which thou hearest, and see what effect the fire, the minister of God, hath had on thee. Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire his ministers.

17. Ver. 5. He hath founded the earth upon its firmness, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever. To take this of this earth, I know not if there be any opening; whether it be rightly said, It shall not be bowed for ever and ever, whereof it is said, Heaven and earth shall pass away. Here there is a difficulty, if you try to take it to the letter. For as to that He saith, He hath founded the earth upon its firmness; perchance there is some firmness hidden from us, which upholdeth the earth; and this he meant by founded. Upon what? Upon the firmness of the earth itself, which He put under it that it might be upheld, which perchance escapeth thine eyes. Let there be then dark things in the creature, the Creator shall not be hidden from the darkness of the creature. What we are able let us see; from these which we see, let us praise Him and love Him. Let us turn ourselves to seek something here put in a figure. He hath founded the earth, I understand the Church. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. I understand the Church by the earth. She is that thirsty land, she it is that saith in the Psalms; for one saith it from all; My soul is like earth without water unto Thee. What is, without water? Thirsty. So doth my soul thirst toward Thee, as earth without water: for unless it thirsteth, it will not be rightly watered. Rain on a drunken soul is a deluge, she must be thirsty. For, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. And she must say, My soul is as earth without water unto Thee: because she saith elsewhere, My soul hath thirsted for the living God. The earth, therefore, I understand the Church. What is its firmness, on which it is founded, save its foundation? Do we unfitly understand the firmness on which the earth is founded of the foundation on which the Church is established? What is that foundation? Other foundation, he saith, can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ

Jesus. There, therefore, we are founded. Truly, because we are there founded, we shall not be bowed for ever and ever: for nothing is firmer than that foundation. Weak thou wast, but a firm foundation beareth thee. In thyself thou couldst not be firm: thou wilt be firm always, if from that firm foundation thou depart not. It shall not be bowed for ever and ever. It is the predestined pillar and ground of the truth.

18. Ver. 6–17. The deep, as a garment, is its clothing: above the mountains shall the waters stand. 7. From Thy rebuke they shall flee, from the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid. 8. The mountains go up, and the plains descend, into the place which Thou hast founded for them. 9. Thou hast set a bound, which they shall not pass, nor return to cover the earth. 10. Who sendest out waters in the valleys, between the midst of the mountains shall the waters pass through. 11. All the beasts of the field shall drink, the wild asses shall take for their thirst. 12. On them the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit, from the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice. 13. Watering the mountains from His higher places: from the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied. 14. Bringing forth hay for the cattle, and herb for the service of men. 15. That he may bring out bread from the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man. That He might brighten His face with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. 16. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, and the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted. 17. There the sparrows shall build nests: the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them. Ye observe the heaven stretched out. Ye wish to ascend in understanding, and I see it. Yet how high it is, I think that your love observeth, as well as myself. For therefore I thought fit to pronounce a number of verses, that ye may see how high aloft are placed the mysteries of God, lest we should disdain them when offered, lest when at hand they be held cheap, that always after seeking, though with difficulty, they may be found with the greater pleasure. Amongst other things, however, brethren, which may be taken to the letter; on this too, which was said, There the sparrows shall build nests, the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them. Is the house of the waterfowl the leader of sparrows? or is the house of the waterfowl the leader of cedars? For this also is there, And the cedars of Libanus, which He hath planted, there the sparrows shall build nests, the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them. And indeed in the Latin language we

cannot understand of them (masculine) of the cedars; for cedars are of the feminine gender. The house of the waterfowl, therefore, how is it the leader of sparrows? For this can in no wise be understood of that creature which is before our eyes. For we know that waterfowl are birds of the sea or of lakes. Let the house of the waterfowl be the nest of the waterfowl: how then is the house of the waterfowl the leader of sparrows? Wherefore doth the Holy Spirit mix up amongst the visible things some that are in a manner absurd, if it be not that from that which we cannot take to the letter, He may compel us to enquire into those things in a spiritual sense?

19. Therefore if, as I said before, ye desire to ascend unto the heaven in understanding, unto that skin extended, and He hath made clouds the ascent thereof; this cloud which speaketh unto you is not able this day to explain all those things. Make allowance, if not for your own, at least for my infirmity. Your eagerness, indeed, I see to be such, that ye are always ready to hear, but there are two things of which the consideration is not to be despised. For both the weakness of our body is to be considered, and our memory of the very things that are under exposition. Meanwhile think upon what ye have heard. What did I say? Ruminde that ye have eaten. For thus will ye be clean animals, and fit for the feasts of God. But your fruit observe in your works. For he digesteth very ill, who heareth well, and worketh not well: because the Lord our God faileth not to feed. It is known to all, that of the bread which we have received, and which we expend, we shall have to give account. Your love knoweth very well, for the sacred page is not silent toward us, nor doth God flatter us. From this place ye may take notice how free we are toward you: and if perchance I am not free enough, or if all we, that speak to you in this place, are wanting in freedom, certainly the word of God itself feareth no man. But we, whether we fear or are free, are compelled to announce Him Who feareth no man. This not men but God gave you, that even by the fearful ye should hear Him that is free. Excuse in God's Judgment ye will have none, unless ye shall have practised yourselves in good works, and borne some fruit suitable to the rain, as it were, of the things ye have heard. Suitable fruit are good works; suitable fruit is unfeigned love, not only of a brother, but also of an enemy. Scorn none that entreateth thee, and when thou canst not give any that he asketh, spurn him not: if thou canst give it, give; if thou canst not, shew thyself

affable. God crowneth will within, when He findeth not ability. Let no one say, 'I have nothing.' Charity is not served out from the bag: because whatsoever things we say, and whatsoever we have said, and whatsoever we shall ever be able to say, either we, or any after us, or they that were before us, have no end save charity; because the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. Question your own hearts, when ye pray to God: see how ye utter that verse. Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Thou wilt not be praying, unless thou sayest that (prayer): if thou sayest another, He heareth thee not; because it is not the one which the Advocate Whom He sent thee dictated. It is necessary therefore that even when we say our own words in prayer, we pray after the manner of that, and that when we say the very words, we should rightly understand what we say, because God willed that it should be manifest. If therefore ye shall not pray, ye will have no hope: if ye shall pray otherwise than the Master taught, or if ye shall be false in prayer, ye shall not obtain. Therefore ye must both pray, and ye must say truth, and ye must so pray as He taught. Whether thou wilt or wilt not, thou wilt be saying daily, 'Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.' Wouldest thou say it without fear? Do what thou sayest.

Discourse II

I know that ye hold us debtors, not by necessity, but, what is stronger, by charity. But we owe this in the first place to the Lord our God, Who dwelling also in you requireth these things of us, next to our Lord and Father who is present, and bids me, and prays for me; and then to your violence, by which ye extort it even from our insufficient strength. Yet, so much as the Lord may grant, Who I pray may grant strength to you also as ye pray, since we have already treated of the first parts of this Psalm on the day lately past, what follows too must be taken up, and by His help in Whose name we began must be finished. Now we had set before you all, who were present, that the whole of this Psalm was inwoven with figured mysteries, whence that which is sought with more labour useth to be found with more pleasure. Nor think ye that these things are hidden from you by obscurity, but seasoned by difficulty, for this purpose, which we have often mentioned before, that it may be given to them that ask, and that they that

seek may find, and they that knock have entrance. But we have need of somewhat more both of silence and of patience from you, that the few words we have to say may not, through the noise, take up too much time. For the straitness of the time compels us to say but little, because your Love also knoweth that we owe the solemn attendance to the funeral of the body of a Believer. See then, let us not be compelled now to repeat what has been said, and to expound the same again; if any were absent, there would not be wanting some who have not heard; but it is good perhaps for them that they do not hear now, what those heard who were present, that they also may learn to be here. Let us then read it cursorily.

2. Ver. 1. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Let the soul of us all, made one in Christ, say this. O Lord my God, Thou art magnified exceedingly! Where art Thou magnified? Confession and beauty Thou hast put on. Confess ye, that ye may be beautified, that He may put you on. (Ver. 2.) Clothed with light as a garment. Clothed with His Church, because she is made light in Him, who before was darkness in herself, as the Apostle saith; Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord.

Stretching out the heaven like a skin: either as easily as thou dost a skin, if it be 'as easily,' so that thou mayest take it after the letter; or let us understand the authority of the Scriptures, spread out over the whole world, under the name of a skin; because mortality is signified in a skin, but all the authority of the Divine Scriptures was dispensed unto us through mortal men, whose fame is still spreading abroad now they are dead.

3. Ver. 3. Who covereth with waters the upper parts thereof. The upper parts of what? Of Heaven. What is Heaven? Figuratively only we said, the Divine Scripture. What are the upper parts of the Divine Scripture? The commandment of love, than which there is none more exalted. But wherefore is love compared to waters? Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who is given unto us. Whence is the Spirit Himself water? because Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Whence do we prove that it was said of the Spirit? Let the Evangelist himself declare, who followeth it up, and saith,

But this spake He of the Spirit, which they were to receive, who should believe on Him.

Who walketh above the wings of the winds; that is, above the virtues of souls. What is the virtue of a soul? Love itself. But how doth He walk above it? Because the love of God toward us is greater than ours toward God.

4. Ver. 4. Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers: that is, those who are already spirits, who are spiritual, not carnal, He maketh His Angels, by ending sthem to preach His Gospel. And flaming fire His ministers. For unless the minister that preacheth be on fire, he enflameth not him to whom he preacheth.

5. Ver. 5. He hath founded the earth upon its firmness. He hath founded the Church upon the firmness of the Church. What is the firmness of the Church, but the foundation of the Church. What is the foundation of the Church, but that of which the Apostle saith, Other foundation can no man lay but that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. And therefore, grounded on such a foundation, what hath she deserved to hear? "It shall not be bowed for ever and ever." He hath founded the earth upon the firmness of it. That is, He hath founded the Church upon Christ the foundation. The Church will totter if the foundation totter; but when shall Christ totter, before Whose coming unto us, and taking flesh on Him, all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made; Who holdeth all things by His Majesty, and us by His goodness? Since Christ faileth not, she shall not be bowed for ever and ever. Where are they who say that the Church hath perished from the world, when she cannot even be bowed.

6. But whence did the Lord begin to maintain this Church, to reveal, to commence, to display, to spread her abroad? Whence did He begin this? What was in the first place? because He hath founded the earth on its firmness thereof, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever.

Ver. 6. The deep, like a garment, is its clothing. Whose? Is it perchance God's? But he had already said of His clothing, Clothed with light as with a garment. I hear of God clothed in light, and that light, if we will, are we. What is, if we will? if we are no longer darkness. Therefore if God is

clothed with light, whose clothing, again, is the deep? For an immense mass of waters is called the deep. All water, all the moist nature, and the substance every where shed abroad through the seas, and rivers, and hidden caves, is all together called by one name, the Deep. Therefore we understand the earth, of which he said, He hath founded the earth upon the firmness thereof, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever. Of it I believe he said, The deep, like a garment is its clothing. For the water is as it were the clothing of the earth, surrounding it and covering it. But some time in the deluge this clothing of the earth so increased, that it quite covered over all things, and rose above the highest mountains, as the Scripture witnesseth, by about fifteen cubits. Perchance it was that very time this Psalm signified, when he said, The deep, like a garment is its clothing.

7. Above the mountains the waters shall stand: that is, the clothing of the earth, which is the deep, so increased, that the waters stood even above the mountains. We read of this taking place, as I said, in the deluge. Is the prophet speaking of that? Was he relating to us past events, or foretelling future? But if he were relating the past, he would not say to us, Above the mountains the waters shall stand; but, 'above the mountains the waters did stand.' For that the past tense useth to be put for the future in the Scriptures, the Spirit foreseeing things that are to come, in such wise as if they had already taken place, we are accustomed to read. Thence it is that we all know, that in another Psalm, where there is as it were a Gospel recited, They pierced My hands and My feet, they numbered all My bones, upon My vesture did they cast lots. All things are commemorated as already done, which in fact were foreseen as yet to come. But how much can our diligence effect? Nay, what can be done with so much occupation? or when are we so at leisure that we can say for certain it is so? We have observed the Prophets often express in the past tense things that were future, but that they express the past in the figure of the future doth not easily occur to one in reading. I dare not say there is no instance; but I would certainly point out to students in such learning what they may look for. If they shall have found it, and brought it to us, we busy old men shall congratulate the young on their studies, and shall learn something ourselves too from their ministering to us. For we do not disdain it, since Christ teaches from all. This therefore he saith: Above the mountains the waters shall stand. The

Prophet minding to foretel future things, not to relate the past, therefore said it, because he would have it understood that the Church should be in a deluge of persecutions. For there was a time when the floods of persecutors had covered God's earth, God's Church, and had so covered it, that not even those great ones appeared, who are the mountains. For when they fled every where, how did they but cease to appear? And perchance of those waters is that saying, Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul. Especially the waters which make the sea, stormy, unfruitful. For whatsoever earth the sea-water may have covered, it will not rather make it fruitful than bring it to barrenness. For there were also mountains beneath the waters, because above the mountains waters stood. The resisting nations had conquered the authority of all that every where boldly preached the word of God, the waters had covered them, and the waters stood over them; they said "Press," "Press," and they pressed: "Extinguish! Let them no more be seen!" They said these things, and they prevailed over the Martyrs, and the Christians fled every where, and in some sort of flight even the Apostles were hidden. Why were the Apostles hidden by flight? Because above the mountains the waters stood. The power of the waters was great, but how long? Hear what followeth.

8. Ver. 7. From Thy rebuke they shall fly. And this was done, brethren; from God's rebuke the waters did fly; that is, they went back from pressing on the mountains. Now the mountains themselves stand forth, Peter and Paul: how do they tower! They who before were pressed down by persecutors, now are venerated by emperors. For the waters are fled from the rebuke of God; because the heart of kings is in the hand of God, He hath bent it whither He would; He commanded peace to be given by them to the Christians; the authority of the Apostles sprang up and towered high. Had the greatness of the mountains failed even when the waters were above? But yet, my brethren, that all might see the height of the mountains, through which mountains salvation was to come to the human race, because I have lifted up mine eyes unto the hills, whence shall come help for me; the waters fled from the rebuke of God. From the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid. Now who is there that would not be afraid, from the voice of God through the Apostles, the voice of God through the Scriptures, through His clouds? The sea is quieted, the waters have been made afraid, the

mountains have been laid bare, the emperor hath given the order. But who would have given the order, unless God had thundered? Because God willed, they commanded, and it was done. Therefore let no one of men arrogate any thing to himself; the waters were afraid, but from the voice of Thy thunder. For behold, when God would, the waters fled, no longer to press the mountains. Before that was done, even under the waters the mountains were firm.

9. Ver. 8. The mountains ascend, and the plains go down, into the place which Thou hast founded for them. He is still speaking of waters. Let us not here understand mountains as of earth; nor plains, as of earth: but waves so great that they may be compared to mountains. The sea did sometime toss, and its waves were as mountains, which could cover those mountains the Apostles. But how long do the mountains ascend and the plains go down? They raged, and they are appeased. When they raged they were mountains: now they are appeased they are become plains: for He hath founded a place for them. There is a certain channel, as it were a deep place, into which all those lately raging hearts of mortals have retired. How many now are both salt and bitter, and yet quiet? How many are there who are unwilling to grow sweet? Who are they that will not grow sweet? They that still will not believe in Christ. And although there are many, who have not yet believed, what do they to the Church? They were mountains formerly, now they are plains: yet, my brethren, even a dead calm is sea. For wherefore are they not now violent? wherefore do they not rage? Wherefore do they not try, if they cannot overthrow our earth, at least to cover it? Wherefore not? Hear. (Ver. 9.) Thou hast set a bound which they shall not pass over, neither shall they turn again to cover the earth.

10. What then, because now the bitterest waves have received a measure, that we must be allowed to preach such things even with freedom; because they have had their due limit assigned, because they cannot pass over the bound that is set, nor shall they return to cover the earth; what is doing in the earth itself? What workings take place therein, now that the sea hath left it bare? Although at its beach slight waves do make their noise, although Pagans still murmur round; the sound of the shores I hear, a deluge I dread not. What then; what is doing in the earth? (Ver. 10.) Who sendeth out

springs in the little valleys. Thou sendest out, he saith, springs in the little valleys. Ye know what little valleys are, lower places among the lands. For to hills and mountains, valleys and little valleys are opposed in contrary shape. Hills and mountains are swellings of the land: but valleys and little valleys, lownesses of the lands. Do not despise low places, thence flow springs. Thou sendest out springs in the little valleys. Hear a mountain. The Apostle saith, I laboured more than they all. A certain greatness is brought before us: yet immediately, that the waters may flow, he hath made himself a valley: Yet not I, but the grace of God with me. It is no contradiction that they who are mountains be also valleys: for as they are called mountains because of their spiritual greatness, so also valleys because of the humility of their spirit. Not I, he saith, but the grace of God with me. Not I, is the valley, and the grace of God with me is the spring. Who sendeth out springs in the little valleys. That which I just now quoted was said of the Spirit, If any man thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink: He that believeth in Me, from his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this He said of the Spirit, which they that were to believe in Him should receive. Let us see if they be valleys, that springs may be sent forth in the valleys. Hear the Prophet: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest, save on the humble and quiet one, and him that feareth My word? What is, Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Upon the humble and quiet one. Who shall have My spring? The little valley.

11. Between the midst of the mountains the waters shall pass through. Thus far the Psalm was recited by the Reader. Thus far let it suffice your love. This we will say, and in the Name of God will end our discourse. What is, In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through? We have heard who are the mountains, the great Preachers of the word, the exalted Angels of God, though still in mortal flesh; lofty not by their own power, but by His grace; but as far as relates to themselves, they are valleys, in their humility they send forth springs. In the midst, he saith, between the mountains, the waters shall pass through. Let us suppose this said thus, “In the midst between the Apostles shall pass through the preachings of the Word of Truth.” What is, in the midst between the mountains waters shall pass through? What is, in the midst between the Apostles? What is called in the midst, is common. A common property, from which all alike live, is in

the midst, and belongs not to me, but neither belongs it to thee, nor yet to me. Therefore we speak thus also of some men. They have peace between themselves, they have good faith between themselves, they have love between themselves: so certainly we speak. What is, between themselves? In the midst of themselves. What is, in the midst of themselves? It is common to them. Hear the waters in the midst between the mountains. Because the faith was common to them, nor had each one the waters as if appropriated and his own. For if they are not in the midst, they are as it were private, they flow not for public use, and I have mine, and he has his own, it is not in the midst for both me and him to have it; but such is not the preaching of peace. But that in the midst between the mountains waters may flow, hear the voice of a mountain: The God of peace, he saith, grant you to be of one mind toward one another. And again, That ye may be all of one mind, and that there be no divisions among you. What I think, thou thinkest, the water floweth in the midst: I have it not as private of my own, nor thou private of thy own. Let the Truth be neither my private property nor thine, that it may be both thine and mine. In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through. Hear the Mountain himself, as I said, because in the midst between the mountains waters shall pass through. But whether it be I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Fearless he said, whether it be I, or they, so we preach, and so ye have believed; for in the midst between the mountains the waters flowed; there was no disagreement of the mountains about the waters, but the peace of consent, and the partnership of charity. But if any one wished to preach another thing, then he would be preaching of his own, not of that in the midst. And hear what is said of him even by Him Who sent forth springs in the little valleys: He that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. Therefore lest any mountain should be accepted sending forth a stream of his own, not from the midst, the Apostle saith, Whosoever shall have preached unto you a Gospel other than ye have received, let him be anathema. And behold how he would not that there should be any presuming upon the mountain; lest perchance a mountain depart from the waters running through the midst, and choose to flow in with any thing of his own. Yea even if we—(and how great a mountain said this! How abundantly did water flow from his valley! Yet he would have this run in the midst between the mountains, and that there should be the certain faith of the nations, the same which the Apostles held amongst

themselves in the midst and in common)—Yea even if we, he said. And thou, Paul, canst thou preach any thing otherwise? The question is of Paul; hear what followeth: Yea even if we, or an Angel from Heaven, shall have declared unto you otherwise than ye have received, let him be anathema. If a mountain come preaching another Gospel, let him be anathematized: if any Angel come preaching another Gospel, let him be anathematized. Whence this? Because he hath chosen to give a stream of his own, not from the midst. And this, perchance a man hampered with the clouds of the flesh, and driven from the common fountain to his own falsehood, may do: can an Angel too? Truly, can an Angel too? If an Angel, streaming forth of his own, had not been listened to in Paradise, we had not been cast down into death. The water was placed in the midst for men, the commandment of God. The water in the midst, water in a manner public, was good without deceit, as we said to your Love, it flowed without taint, without mire. If that same water were always drunk, there were life for evermore. An angel came, fallen from Heaven, become a serpent, because he wished now insidiously to scatter his venom: he gave out his venom; he spake of the private stock, of his own; because he that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own; and the unhappy creatures, by hearing him, lost what was common, what made them blessed; and they were reduced to what was their own, while wishing, perversely, to be like God, (for this he had said to them, Take, and ye shall be as gods;) desiring what they were not, they lost what they had received. Therefore, brethren, let what we have said to your Love serve to this purpose, because of the springs: that they may flow from you, be ye valleys, and communicate with all that which ye have from God. Let the waters flow in the midst, envy ye no one, drink, be filled, flow forth when ye are filled. Every where let the common water of God have the glory, not the private falsehoods of men.

Discourse III

That for the treating of the remaining parts of this Psalm we are debtors, your Love remembereth. There is no need, then, that I should engage your attention by any preface. For I see that ye are in the suspense of full eagerness to understand the prophetic mysteries, nor is there any need for my discourse to make those attentive, whom the Spirit of God has already

made so. This rather let us do, which is needful. Of the springs sent forth in the little valleys, and of the waters passing through in the midst of the mountains, we have already spoken: but thus far have we spoken, from this point forward let us begin.

2. Ver. 11. For it follows, All the beasts of the wood shall drink. What shall they drink? The waters passing through in the midst between the mountains. What shall they drink? Springs sent forth in the little valleys. And who shall drink? The beasts of the wood. We do indeed see this also in the visible creation, that the beasts of the wood drink of springs, and of streams that run between the mountains: but now since it hath pleased God to hide His own wisdom in the figures of such things, not to take it away from earnest seekers, but to close it to them that care not, and open it to them that knock; it hath also pleased our Lord God Himself to exhort you by us to this, that in all these things which are said as if of the bodily and visible creation, we may seek something spiritually hidden, in which when found we may rejoice. The beasts of the wood, we understand the Gentiles, and Holy Scripture witnesses this in many places. But yet two most evident proofs readily occur, namely, that in Noah's ark, by which no one of us doubts but the Church was prefigured, there would not have been included all sorts of animals, unless in that unity of structure all nations were signified: unless perchance we think that if all such things had been utterly destroyed by the deluge, God would have wanted the power to bid the earth produce them, as at His first word it had produced. Not therefore in vain, not by chance, not by any want in God, or lack of power, were those animals ordered to be shut up in the ark. For after that the time came; (for now we must add also another most evident testimony;) when, therefore, the time came for that which had been prefigured in the ark now to be fulfilled in the Church, Peter the Apostle, hesitating to give the Sacrament of the Gospel to uncircumcised Gentiles; nay, not doubting, but altogether thinking it was not to be given; on a certain day being hungry, when he wished to dine, went up to pray. This in the Acts of the Apostles is known to all that read well and hear well. He, then, praying, there came on him that transport of mind which the Greeks call ecstasis; that is, his mind was turned from corporeal usage to contemplate a certain vision, being transported out of present things. Then he saw a certain vessel, like a sheet, let down by four

cords from Heaven, where were all animals, beasts of every kind; and a voice sounded to him, Peter, kill and eat. But he, who had been instructed in the Law, and had grown up in Jewish practice, and held the commandment given through Moses the servant of God, and had kept it faithfully all his life, answered, Far be it from me, O Lord; never did any thing common enter into my mouth. But that 'common' means unclean with the Jews and with the Law, they know well who have studied the learning of the Church. And the voice said to him, What God hath chosen, that call not thou unclean. But this was done thrice, and that circle was taken away, which was shewn thrice let down from Heaven. The circle that was held by four lines, is the round world, in its four parts. These four parts Scripture doth often mention, the East and the West, the North and the South. Therefore because the whole world was called by the Gospel, four Gospels were written. But the vessel thrice let down from Heaven signifies this, that it was said to the Apostles, Go ye, and baptize all nations, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Thence is formed, as ye already know, also the number twelve, the number of the Disciples. For it was not without cause that He would have twelve: and so consecrated was that number, that in the place of one that fell there could not be but another ordained. Wherefore twelve Apostles? For because there are four parts of the world, and the whole world was called in the Gospel, whence four Gospels were written, and the whole world is called in the name of the Trinity, that the Church may be gathered; four taken thrice, make twelve. Let us not therefore wonder if of those waters passing in the midst between the mountains, in that teaching of the Apostles which flows in the midst, because of the agreement of communion, all beasts of the field drink. For all were in the ark, all in the round vessel; all doth Peter kill and eat; because Peter is the rock, the rock the Church. What is it to kill and eat? To kill in them that they were, and to take them into one's own bowels. Thou hast persuaded a pagan to leave his sacrileges, thou hast slain that he was: by giving him the Sacrament of Christ, thou hast taken him into the body of the Church, thou hast eaten him.

3. These beasts, then, drink those waters, but passing; not staying, but passing; for all that teaching which in all this time is dispensed passeth. Thence the Apostle saith, Both knowledge shall be done away, and

prophecy shall be made void. Wherefore shall those things be made void? For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be made void. Unless perchance your Love thinketh that in that city to which it is said, Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion; for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates; when the bars are now strengthened and the city closed, whence, as we said some time since, no friend goeth out, no enemy entereth; that there we shall have a book to read, or speech to be explained as it is now explained to you. Therefore is it now treated, that there it may be held fast: therefore is it now divided by syllables, that there it may be contemplated whole and entire. The Word of God will not be wanting there: but yet not by letters, not by sounds, not by books, not by a reader, not by an expositor. How then? As, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For He did not so come to us as to depart from thence; because He was in this world, and the world was made by Him. Such a Word are we to contemplate. For the God of gods shall appear in Zion. But this when? After our pilgrimage, when the journey is done: if however after our journey is done we be not delivered to the Judge, that the Judge may send us to prison. But if when our journey is ended, as we hope, and wish, and endeavour, we shall have reached our Country, there shall we contemplate What we shall ever praise; nor shall That fail Which is present to us, nor we, who enjoy: nor shall he be cloyed that eateth, nor shall that fail which he eateth. Great and wonderful shall be that contemplation, and who speaketh worthily of it in this time, while the waters flow between the mountains? In the mean time, therefore, let the waters flow between the mountains, and pass: when the waters pass through, there is drink for us in our pilgrimage, lest for thirst on the way we faint. All the beasts of the wood shall drink. Thence ye came, from the wood ye were gathered. And what a wood? No man used to pass there, because no prophet had been sent thither. But to build the Ark, timbers of the wood were cut: thence were the timbers, thence the beasts, thence ye came. Therefore drink. All the beasts of the wood shall drink.

4. The onagers shall take for their thirst. By onagers he meaneth some great beasts. For who knoweth not that wild asses are called onagers? He meaneth, therefore, some great untrained ones. For the Gentiles had no

yoke of the Law: many nations lived after their own customs, ranging in proud boastfulness as in a wilderness. And so indeed did all the beasts, but the wild asses are put to signify the greater sort. They too shall drink for their thirst, for for them too the waters flow. Thence drinks the hare, thence the wild ass: the hare little, the wild ass great; the hare timid, the wild ass fierce: either sort drinks thence, but each for his thirst. The water doth not say, 'I am enough for the hare,' and refuse the wild ass; nor doth it say, 'Let the wild ass come, the hare, if he cometh, shall be swept away.' So faithfully and gently doth it flow, as at once to satisfy the wild ass, and not to alarm the hare. The sound of Tully's voice rings out, Cicero is read, it is some book, it is a dialogue of his, whether his own, or Plato's, or by whatever such writer: some hear that are unlearned, weak ones of less mind; who dareth to aspire to such a thing? It is a sound of water, and that perchance turbid, but certainly flowing so violently, that a timid animal dare not draw near and drink. For whom hath sounded, In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth, and he hath not dared to drink? To whom soundeth a Psalm, and he saith, It is too much for me? Behold now what the Psalm soundeth; certainly they are hidden mysteries, yet so it soundeth, that even children are delighted to hear, and the unlearned come to drink, and when filled burst forth in singing. These drink, then, lesser hearts and greater; but the greater more largely, because the wild asses shall take for their thirst. Let the lesser drink that which is said, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ hath loved the Church. Let the women be subject to their own husbands. Let the lesser drink. It was said unto the Lord, Is it lawful to put away a wife for every cause? The Lord forbade, and said that it was not lawful. Know ye not, said He, that God from the beginning made them male and female? What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Then He added, Whosoever shall have put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and if he shall have taken another, he committeth adultery. He hath confirmed the word: this is expedient to him that is bound; he should have looked to it sooner not to be bound. Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed. If thou art not yet a wild ass, and art free from a wife, thou hast there what thou mayest drink even as a hare: and if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned. But when the Disciples heard it said by the Lord, that it was not lawful for marriages to be loosed in any wise except for the cause of

fornication, If such, they said, is the case with a wife, it is not expedient to take one. But are only the wild asses to drink? Not all men receive this saying, many receive it not. And who are they that receive it? The wild asses shall take for their thirst. What is, The wild asses shall take for their thirst? “He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

5. Then the Psalm goes on in its text, (ver. 12.) Upon them the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit. Upon which? Upon the wild asses, or rather upon the mountains? For from them the sense runs, In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through; all the beasts of the wood shall drink; the wild asses shall take for their thirst: upon them the fowls of the air shall have their habitation. We more suitably understand it, upon the mountains, because this is also like this creation. Upon the mountains fowls may inhabit, not upon wild asses: this we should understand, if necessity compelled. Upon the mountains, then, the fowls of the air shall have their habitation. We see these birds dwell upon the mountains, but many of them dwell in plains, many in valleys, many in groves, many in gardens, not all upon mountains. There are some fowls that dwell not save on the mountains. Some spiritual souls doth this name denote. Fowls are spiritual hearts, which enjoy the free air. In the clearness of heaven these birds delight, yet their feeding is on the mountains, there will they dwell. Ye know the mountains, they have been already treated of. Mountains are Prophets, mountains are Apostles, mountains are all preachers of the truth. Whosoever would be spiritual, there let him dwell: let him not wander away in his own heart; let him inhabit, let him carry by flying. We have birds that signify something spiritual. It is not in vain that it is said, Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's. Not in vain is it said of Abraham, But the birds he divided not. Abraham, in that very mystical sacrifice, took three animals, a ram of three years old, a heifer of three years old, a she goat of three years old, and a turtle dove and a pigeon. The ram was divided, and the parts placed opposite each other; the she goat was divided, and equally the parts were placed opposite one another; the heifer was divided, and it was done in like manner with its flesh: and the Scripture hath added, but the birds he divided not. Then it is said, a ram of three years old, a heifer of three years old, a she goat of three years old; of the age of the birds there is no mention. Whence, I pray you, but that in the birds are denoted some spiritual ones,

whose temporal age is therefore not named, because they meditate on eternal things, and in longing and understanding go beyond all temporal things? Spiritual men are they that judge of all things, and are judged of no man: therefore they alone are not divided into heresies and schisms. In the ram are understood they that are set over others, for they lead the flocks. In the cow is understood the common people of the Jews, for it had the yoke of the Law, under which it laboured. In the she goat is understood the Church from the Gentiles; for it used to leap with a kind of free springings, and to feed on the bitter wild olive. These animals were said to be of three years old, because in the third period grace was revealed. For the first was before the Law; the second from the time the Law was given; the third, that which now is, since the kingdom of Heaven hath been preached. What then do we say, that the ram is not divided? Have not bishops been authors of schisms and heresies? Then, however, if the people themselves had not been divided, that is, if the cow were not divided, they might perchance have been put to shame in their divisions, and returned to the bond of unity. The leaders are divided, the peoples are also divided, that the blind may follow the blind, and they may fall together into the ditch; they are placed opposite one another. But the birds he divided not: spiritual men have no division, they do not think of schisms: there is peace in them, they keep it in others as much as they can; when they fail in others, they keep it in themselves. If there shall be there, He saith, a son of peace, your peace shall rest upon him: if not, it shall return unto you. He is not a son of peace, he hath chosen to be divided, thy peace shall return unto thee; because the birds he divided not. The furnace also shall come, for Abraham sat there until the evening, and the great terror of the Day of Judgment came. For that evening is the end of the world, and that furnace that came the Day of Judgment. The furnace also divided between the midst of those things that were divided. If the furnace passed between the midst of them, it separated some to the right, others to the left. There are therefore some that are carnal, and yet are held in the bosom of the Church, living after a certain manner of their own, for whom we fear lest they be seduced by heretics. For as long as they are carnal, they are liable to division. The birds, that is, he divided not: the carnal are divided. I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. And how is it proved that carnal ones come to be divided? He addeth, for when each one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I

of Cephas, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? I ask you, brethren, listen, and improve; shake yourselves out of the carnal place, go to the turtle dove and the pigeon; for the birds he divided not. But whosoever shall have remained such, and after a certain manner of life suited to the carnal, and not departed from the bosom of the Church, and not been led away by heretics, so as to be divided on the contrary part, the furnace shall come, and he will not be able to be put on the right side without the furnace. But if he would not suffer the furnace, let him go to the turtle dove and the pigeon. He that can receive it, let him receive it. But if it shall not be so, and he shall have built on the foundation wood, hay, stubble, that is, hath built worldly attachments on the foundation of his faith; yet if Christ be in the foundation, so that He have the first place in the heart, and nothing absolutely is preferred to Him; even such are borne, even such are tolerated. The furnace shall come, it shall burn the wood, the hay, the stubble: But himself, he saith, shall be saved, yet so as by fire. This shall the furnace do, some it shall sever to the left, others it shall in a manner melt out to the right. But the birds he divided not. But let the birds see whether they are such birds as dwell upon those mountains: they must not follow the height of their own heart, like those of which it is said, They have set their mouth unto heaven. Lest they be taken up by the winds, let them rest on the mountains. They have the authority of the Saints, let them rest on the mountains, on the Apostles, on the Prophets: there let such birds dwell, because in the mountains they find rocks, certain firm places of commandments. For as that One Rock is Christ, the Word of God, so are many words of God, many rocks, and those rocks in the mountains. Behold, the birds there dwelling: upon them the fowls of heaven shall have their habitation.

6. But think not that those fowls of heaven follow their own authority; see what the Psalm saith: From the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice. Now, if I shall say to you, Believe, for this said Cicero, this said Plato, this said Pythagoras: which of you will not laugh at me? For I shall be a bird that shall send forth my voice not from the rock. What ought each one of you to say to me? what ought he who is thus instructed to say? If any one shall have preached unto you a gospel other than that ye have received, let him be anathema. What dost thou tell me of Plato, and of Cicero, and of

Virgil? Thou hast before thee the rocks of the mountains, from the midst of the rocks give me thy voice. From the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice. Let them be heard, who hear from the rock: let them be heard, because also in those many rocks the One Rock is heard: for the Rock was Christ. Let them therefore be willingly heard, giving their voice from the midst of the rocks. Nothing is sweeter than such a voice of birds. They sound, and the rocks resound: they sound; spiritual men discuss: the rocks resound, testimonies of Scripture give answer. Lo! thence the fowls give their voice from the midst of the rocks, for they dwell on the mountains.

7. The mountains themselves, and those rocks, whence have they a voice? For that we may be watered with the Scriptures, we fly to the Apostle Paul. Whence hath he them? We fly to Isaiah. Isaiah whence? Hear whence. (Ver. 13.) Watering the mountains from the higher places. Now if a Gentile uncircumcised man comes to us, about to believe in Christ, we give him baptism, and do not call him back to those works of the Law. And if a Jew asks us why we do that, we sound from the rock, we say, This Peter did, this Paul did: from the midst of the rocks we give our voice. But that rock, Peter himself, that great mountain, when he prayed and saw that vision, was watered from above. Paul the Apostle saith to the Gentiles, If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. Paul saith this as a mountain: thence we say it, sounding from the rock. Let the Lord water the rock itself from His higher places. For when that rock was yet rough in unbelief, willing to bedew it from His higher places, that water might flow in the valley, He cried, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? He did not read to him a Prophet, He did not read to him another Apostle; for the great mountain would despise all those things: He watered him from his higher places; and immediately, when watered, and willing to flow, Lord, he said, what biddest Thou me to do? Take that mountain or rock, whence thou mayest be able to give thy voice; take him, and see him watered from above, and flowing out below. Hear this also in one place. Whether, he saith, we be out of our minds unto God, or whether we be sober unto you. What he saith, we be out of our minds, ye cannot understand. For we have gone out of all those carnal things, ye are yet carnal. To God, therefore, we have gone out of our minds, and what we see when we are out of our minds, we cannot utter. For there he heard unutterable words, which it is not

permitted a man to speak. What then, say those carnal ones, those hares, are we not to be watered? shall nothing come to us? And how doth He send out springs in the little vallies? and how in the midst between the mountains shall the waters pass? To this therefore belongs, whether we be sober unto you. Whence is this? Whom do we imitate? The love of Christ, he saith, compelleth us. Thou a partaker of the word, although to-day spiritual, yesterday carnal, disdainest thou to descend to the carnal, when the Word Itself was made flesh, to dwell among us.

8. Let us therefore bless the Lord, and praise Him Who watereth the mountains from the higher places. Thence shall come watering for the earth, thence also the low places shall be satisfied. For He proceedeth,

From the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied. What is, From the fruit of Thy works? Let no man glory in his own works: but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. With Thy grace he is satisfied, when he is satisfied: let him not say that grace was given for his own merits. If it is called grace, it is gratuitously given; if it is returned for works, wages are paid. Freely therefore receive, because ungodly thou art justified. From the fruit of Thy works the earth shall be satisfied.

9. Ver. 14. Bringing forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. This is true, I perceive; I recognise the creation: the earth doth bring forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. But I perceive other cattle of the Lord also, which are signified by the words, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn: for one of these very cattle saith, Doth God take care for oxen? For our sakes therefore the Scripture saith it. How then doth the earth bring forth grass for the cattle? Because the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. He sent preachers, saying unto them, Eat such things as are set before you of them: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. For when He had said, Eat such things as are set before you; that they might not say, Shall we be importunate beggars at other men's tables when we are in want, wilt Thou have us so shameless? No, He replieth, it is not their gift, but your wages. Wages for what? What do they give, and what do they receive? They give spiritual, they receive carnal things; they give gold, they receive grass. For, All flesh is grass; and all the goodness thereof is as

the flower of the field. All the temporal things whereof thou hast abundance and superfluity are the grass of the cattle. Why? Because they are carnal? Hear unto what cattle the grass doth belong. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? This the Apostle said, a preacher so laborious, so indefatigable, so well tried, that he giveth this very grass to the earth. Nevertheless, he saith, we have not used this power. He sheweth that it is due to him, yet he received it not; nor hath he condemned those who have received what was due. For those were to be condemned who exact what is not due, not they who accept their recompense: yet he gave up even his own recompense. Thou dost not cease to owe to another, because one hath given up his dues, otherwise thou wilt not be the watered earth which bringeth forth grass for the cattle. The earth, he saith, shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works, bringing forth grass for the cattle. Be not thou barren, bring forth grass for the cattle: if the cattle decline thy grass, nevertheless let them not find thee barren. Thou receivest spiritual things, give carnal things in return: to the soldier they are due, to the soldier thou returnest them; thou art the paymaster of Christ. Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? I speak not thus, that it should be so done unto me. There has been such a soldier as gave up his rations of food even to the paymaster: yet let the paymaster pay the rations. But to use the figure of this Psalm, I will call them cattle: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn. Bringing forth, he saith, grass for the cattle; and as if in exposition of this he addeth, and green herb for the service of men: lest thou shouldest not understand the words, it bringeth forth grass for the cattle, he hath by the repetition explained what he placed first. For the word green herb answereth to grass: and for the cattle findeth its equivalent in for the service of men. For the service then, and not for freedom. What meaneth then, ye have been called unto liberty? But hear the very same Apostle; for though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To whom said he, Ye have been called unto liberty? and what hath he added? Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. Those whom he had called free, he maketh servants; not by their condition, but by Christ's redemption; not by necessity, but by love; By love, he saith, serve one another. But, he saith,

we serve Christ mutually: not the people, not the carnal, not the weak. Thou servest Christ well, if thou servest those whom Christ hath served. Was it not said of Him, well serving many? It is a Prophet we read: it is usually understood of none save Christ. Nevertheless, let us hear His actual words in the Gospel: Whosoever, He saith, will be chief among you, let him be your servant. He hath made thee my servant, who made thee free with His own blood. Say this to us, for ye say the truth. Hear Him in another passage: but ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. Love well your servants, but in your Lord. May He enable us to serve well! For whether we will or no, we are servants: and, nevertheless, if we are willing, we serve not by compulsion, but from love. The servant's pride seemed in some measure offended, when our Lord said, Whosoever shall be great among you, let him be your minister. For the sons of Zebedee were already seeking the highest seats; one wished to sit on the right hand, the other on the left, expressing through their mother their own desires. The Lord did not grudge them those seats, but first He shewed the valley of lamentation, as much as if He said, Ye wish to reach unto where I am? Come by the same path as I. What is, Come by the same path as I? By humility. I descended from on high, and having been humbled, I ascend: I found you on earth, and ye wish to fly before ye be fed; first be reared, brought up, bear to be in the nest. For what said He? How did He recal those to humility, who were already seeking exaltation? Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? They, proud even in this, reply, We are able. Just as Peter said, I will go with Thee, even unto death. Valiant man he was, until a woman said, This man also was with them. Thus they also: We are able. Are ye able? We are able? And He then said, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, although ye cannot now, ye shall drink indeed; as He said unto Peter, Thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards. Ye shall indeed drink of My cup; but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give. What meaneth, Is not Mine to give? It is not Mine to give to the proud. At present ye to whom I speak are proud; on this account I said, It is not Mine to give. But perhaps they might say, We will be humble. In that case ye will not be yourselves: I said, to you. I said not, I will not give to the humble, but I will not give to the proud. But he who from having been proud hath become humble, is not the man he was.

10. The preachers of the word then are both cattle and servants. Let the earth, if it hath been watered, bring forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. For this is the fruit, that what was said in the Gospel may happen, That they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Beware what thou dost with the grass, beware what thou buyest for this poor stuff. That they may receive you, He saith, into everlasting habitations: where they will be themselves, there they will receive you. Wherefore this? Because, he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward; and he that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. What reward shall he not lose? "They shall receive you into everlasting habitations." Who would not hasten? who would not run more eagerly? If ye are earth, be watered with the fruit of God's works: say not, There are none with whom we may deal thus; our preachers, the cattle who tread out the corn, the men who serve, have no need of us. Make enquiry nevertheless, whether there be no man that wanteth: lastly, let him who wanteth not, find in thee what he may not wish to receive. For he receiveth good will, while thou receivest peace; for though he desireth not a gift, yet he requireth a return of fruit. Enquire, however, lest there be any that may want: and say not, if he ask, I will give. Dost thou then wait for him to ask? Dost thou feed God's cattle, as a passing beggar? Thou givest him when he asketh, because it is written, Give to every man that asketh of thee. What is written of this man? Blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy. Seek for some one unto whom to give: for, blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy, who doth anticipate the words of him who is about to beg. If the soldiers of Christ are so poor among you, that they even beg: beware lest they judge you, before they beg. How, thou sayest, am I to enquire? Be inquisitive, provident; look before thyself, mark whence each man liveth, whence his subsistence, whence his means; this inquisitiveness of thine will not be blamed; thou wilt be earth that bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. Be inquisitive, and consider the poor and needy. One man cometh to thee to beg; anticipate another, that he may not beg. For as it is said respecting him who seeketh thee, Give to every man that asketh of thee; so is it said of him

whom thou shouldest search for: let alms toil in thy hand, until thou find a righteous man to give them to. For since thou must give to these poor also when they beg; for God hath not withheld alms from them, since Christ saith of them, When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the lame, the maimed, the blind; who have no means to recompense thee; and thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just: invite these even, feed these even; feast, when they feast; be delighted when they are being satisfied; they with thy bread, thou with the righteousness of God. Let no man tell you: Christ commanded that it be given to the servant of God, not given to the beggar. God forbid; such are the words of a very wicked man. Give to the one, but much more to the other. For the one doth beg, and at the sound of his begging thou dost recognise one unto whom thou mayest give: but the less the other doth beg, the more must thou watch to anticipate his begging: or perhaps he will not beg now, and at a future time will condemn thee. Be therefore, my brethren, inquisitive respecting these things; ye will find want in many servants of God, only if ye have the will to find. But ye find not, because ye are pleased with the excuse, in which ye like to say, we knew not of any.

11. Our Lord Himself had money bags, in which what was needful was put, and money was possessed for the uses of those who were with Him and His: for the Evangelist when he said, He was an hungred, spake no untruth. He chose to be hungry on thy account, that thou mightest not be hungry in Him, Who became poor, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might be enriched. He had money-bags; and it is said of certain religious women, that they walked on the track of His evangelizing feet, and ministered unto Him of their own substance. These women are mentioned by name in the Gospel; among them was also one the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. Consider what was the reason of this. Paul was to come after, who never sought any such aid, and who granted all to the paymasters. But since many weak ones were doomed to seek this relief, Christ preferred to represent the weak. Paul was very exalted in his conduct; was he more so than Christ? Christ was the more exalted, for His act was more merciful. For since He saw that Paul would not seek this aid, He provided that he who should seek it should not be condemned, and gave an example to the weak; just as, when He saw many would eagerly and joyfully go to the Martyrdom of

suffering, would exult in the suffering itself, brave ones, men of a hundred-fold fruit ripe for the barn; yet He chose to represent those weak ones in His Passion, who He saw might be disturbed by their destined Martyrdom, that they might not faint, but rather join their human will to the will of the Creator; saying, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death; and again, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! He hath taught us what the weak one would say, but in the following verse He hath shewn what the weak man should do: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt, Father. As therefore in His Passion He sustained the person of the weak, which was prefigured in His body, since these too are His limbs; for it was not said without meaning, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect: and in Thy book shall they all be written: thus in keeping money-bags, and exacting in a certain manner provision, not to be sought, but rather paid as due, He took on Him indigence. Zacchæus received Him, and with joyfulness. To whom was this a blessing? To Christ, or to Zacchæus? Verily, if Zacchæus received Him not, would there be no place where the Creator of the world might remain? or if Zacchæus fed Him not, would He be in want, who filled so many thousands of men with five loaves? When therefore any man receiveth a saint, it is not bestowed upon the person who is received, but upon him who receiveth. Was not Elias fed in that famine? did not the raven bring bread and meat, the creature serving the servant of God? Yet he was sent to the widow to be fed; not that aught might be bestowed upon the soldier, but upon the paymaster.

12. Since then, brethren, we were speaking of feeding the poor; although our Lord had money-bags, yet when He said to Judas who was about to betray Him, What thou dost, do quickly; the rest, who did not understand what He had said, imagined that He had ordered him to prepare somewhat to be given to the poor. For he had the money-bags; this is written in the Gospel. Could they have supposed thus, had it not been usual with our Lord? But of what then was given, and put into the bags, charity was bestowed on those poor, who God taught were not to be despised. But if thou despisest not the poor man, how much less wilt thou despise the ox by whom this floor is threshed? how much less wilt thou despise thine own servant? He is not in want of meat; perhaps he is of clothes. He wanteth not clothes, perhaps he wanteth a roof, perhaps he is building a church, perhaps

he is designing somewhat useful in the house of God; he expecteth that thou wilt heed, and consider the poor and needy. Thou, on the contrary, hard, stony earth, unwatered, or watered in vain, dost reserve this excuse to thyself. I was not aware of it, I knew it not: no man told me. No man told thee! Christ ceaseth not to tell thee: the Prophet ceaseth not to tell thee: Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy. Thou seest not the empty chest of thy spiritual master: yet thou surely seest the rising fabric, into which thou art to enter and to pray. Is not this brought before thine eyes? Unless, perhaps, ye imagine that your pastors are laying up treasures: yet we have known many who lay not up treasure, in want of daily necessities, of whom no one believes this; whom ye also might find, if ye were zealous, if ye would look round, if ye would watch for occasion of yielding fruit. I have said what I could, in what measure I could. But I suppose ye are well aware, that, as the Apostle saith, we are not speaking thus, that ye may deal thus towards us. May God grant that I may not have spoken this in vain! May God grant that ye may be a watered soil, not a stony one, like that of the Jews, whence they deserved to receive tables of stone; but a fruitful soil, a soil which when watered, may yield return to the farmer! Even they with that stony heart, an emblem of which were their tablets of stone, gave a tenth. Ye even groan, and yet there is no issue. If ye groan, travail: if ye travail, bring forth. Why are your groans in vain? why are they barren? Your bowels are wrung: is there nothing within to come forth? He watereth the hills from His higher places: the earth shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works. Blessed are they who do so; blessed are they who hear these words and bear fruit; blessed are they who cry not out in vain. The earth shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works: it bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. Why so? That it may bring forth bread out of the earth. What bread? Christ. Out of what earth? From Peter, from Paul, from the other stewards of the truth. Hear that it is from the earth: We have, saith St. Paul, this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. He is the bread Who descended from heaven, that He might be brought forth out of the earth, when He is preached through the flesh of His servants. The earth bringeth forth grass, that it may bring forth bread from the earth. What earth bringeth forth grass? Pious, holy nations. That bread may be brought forth out of what earth? The word of God out of the Apostles, out of the stewards of

God's Sacraments, who still walk upon the earth, who still carry an earthly body.

13. Ver. 15. And wine maketh glad the heart of man. Let no man prepare himself for intoxication; nay, let every man prepare him for intoxication. How excellent is Thy cup which maketh drunk! We choose not to say, Let no man be drunk. Be intoxicated; yet beware, from what source. If the excellent cup of the Lord doth intoxicate you, your intoxication shall be seen in your works, it shall be seen in the holy love of righteousness, it shall, lastly, be seen in the estrangement of your mind, but from things earthly to heavenly. To make him a cheerful countenance with oil. I see what land it is, and how much fruit it beareth, if it bear grass for the cattle. Those servants sell not what they give; for they are not sellers of the Gospel; freely they give, since freely they have received. They rejoice in your good works; for this is profitable for you; for they seek not a gift, but desire fruit. What is the making the countenance cheerful with oil? The grace of God; a sort of shining for manifestation; as the Apostle saith, The Spirit is given to every man for manifestation. A certain grace which men can clearly see in men, to conciliate holy love, is termed oil, for its divine splendour; and since it appeared most excellent in Christ, the whole world loveth Him; Who though while here He was scorned, is now worshipped by every nation: For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall be Governor among the people. For such is His grace, that many, who do not believe on Him, praise Him, and declare that they are unwilling to believe on Him, because no man can fulfil what He doth command. They who with reproaches once raged against Him, are hindered by His very praises. Yet by all is He loved, by all is He preached; because He is excellently anointed, therefore He is Christ: for He is called Christ from the Chrism or anointing which He had. Messiah in the Hebrew, Christ in the Greek, Unctus in the Latin: but He anointeth over His whole Body. All therefore who come, receive grace, that their countenances may be made glad with oil.

14. And bread strengtheneth man's heart. What is this, brethren? As it were, he hath forced us to understand what bread he was speaking of. For while that visible bread strengtheneth the stomach, feedeth the belly, there is

another bread which strengtheneth the heart, in that it is the bread of the heart. For he had said of the bread above, to bring forth bread out of the earth, but he had not said what sort of bread that was. And wine maketh glad the heart of man. Seemingly he here speaketh of spiritual wine; for that maketh glad the heart of man. But let it as yet be thought to mean this wine, because the drunken seem as it were to appear glad in heart. Would that they would rejoice, and not quarrel! Thou sayest to me, What is more joyful than an intoxicated man? yea, what is more insane than a drunken man? what usually is more irritable? There is therefore a wine that truly maketh glad the heart, and knoweth not to do aught else than to gladden the heart. But that thou mayest not imagine that this indeed should be taken of the spiritual wine, but not of that spiritual bread; He hath shewn this very point, that it is also spiritual: and bread, he saith, strengtheneth man's heart. So understand it therefore of the bread as thou dost understand it of the wine; hunger inwardly, thirst inwardly: Blessed are they, saith our Lord, who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled. That bread is righteousness, that wine is righteousness: it is truth, Christ is truth. I am, He said, the living bread, Who came down from heaven; and, I am the Vine, and ye are the branches. And bread strengtheneth man's heart.

15. Ver. 16. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied: but with this grace, brought forth out of the earth. The trees of the plain, are the lower orders of the nations. And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted. The cedars of Libanus, the powerful in the world, shall themselves be filled. The bread, and wine, and oil of Christ hath reached senators, nobles, kings; the trees of the plain are filled. First the humble are filled; next also the cedars of Libanus, yet those which He hath planted; pious cedars, religious faithful; for such hath He planted. For the ungodly also are cedars of Libanus; for, The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus. For Libanus is a mountain: there are those trees, even according to the letter most long-lived and most excellent. But Libanus is interpreted, as we read in those who have written of these things, a brightness; and this brightness seemeth to belong to this world, which at present shineth and is refulgent with its pomps. There are the cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted; those which the Lord hath planted shall be filled. For, saith our Lord, Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted.

16. Ver. 17. There shall the sparrows build their nests: their leader is the house of the coot. Where shall the sparrows build? In the cedars of Libanus. We have already heard what the cedars of Libanus are, nobles of the world, exalted in race, in power, in honours: and the cedars themselves are filled, those which He Himself hath planted. In these cedars the sparrows build their nests. Who are the sparrows? Sparrows are birds indeed, and fowls of the air, but small fowls are wont to be called sparrows. There are therefore some spiritual ones that build in the cedars of Libanus: that is, there are certain servants of God who hear in the Gospel, Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me. And not only have the great heard this, but the humble have also heard, and the humble have chosen to do this also, and to be spiritual; not to be connected with wives, and tormented with the care of sons; not to have habitations of their own to bind them down, but to betake themselves to a sort of common life. But what have these sparrows resigned? For the little ones of this world are like sparrows. What have they resigned? what great thing have they resigned? One man hath turned himself, hath left the poor hut of his father, hardly one bed and one chest, yet he hath turned himself, he hath become a sparrow, he hath sought spiritual things. Well, very well; let us not mock him, let us not say, thou hast resigned nothing. Let him who hath resigned many things, not be proud. We know that Peter was a fisherman: what then could he give up, to follow our Lord? Or his brother Andrew, or John and James the sons of Zebedee, themselves also fishermen; and yet what did they say? Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee. Our Lord said not to him, Thou hast forgotten thy poverty; what hast thou resigned, that thou shouldest receive the whole world? He, my brethren, who resigned not only what he had, but also what he longed to have, resigned much. For what poor man doth not swell with hope of this life? Who doth not daily desire to increase what he hath? That desire was cut off: it was exceeding all bounds, it received a limit, and yet was nothing resigned? Peter did indeed resign the whole world: and Peter did indeed receive the whole world. They were like men who had nothing, and yet possessed all things. Many do this: men who have little act thus, and come and become useful sparrows. They seem small: because they have not the

loftiness of secular dignity: they build their nests in the cedars of Libanus. For the cedars of Libanus also, the noble, and rich, and exalted of this world, since they hear with awe the words, Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy; take thought on their own possessions, their villas, and all their superfluous wealth, by which they seem exalted, and they give them to the servants of God; they give lands, they give gardens, they build churches, monasteries, collect sparrows, that the sparrows may build in the cedars of Libanus. Therefore the cedars of Libanus which the Lord hath planted are filled, and therein shall the sparrows build their nests. Observe the whole earth, and see whether it be not thus. That I might speak these things, I have not only believed, but I have also seen; I have learned by my experience to understand. Ye who know, ask over the broadest lands, and see in how many cedars of Libanus those sparrows, of whom I have spoken, build.

17. But nevertheless, my brethren, if these sparrows are spiritual, although they may build their nests in the cedars of Libanus, they ought not to esteem at too high a rate the cedars of Libanus, and to think those above them by whom their necessities are supplied. For they are sparrows; but those are cedars of Libanus. Therefore the coots' house is the leader of the sparrows. Although the sparrows may build in the cedars of Libanus, yet the cedars of Libanus are not the chiefs of the sparrows. Behold the trees of the plain, all nations shall be filled; and the cedars of Libanus, planted by the Lord, all the noble and exalted ones who are faithful, shall be filled. There, that is, in the cedars of Libanus, shall the sparrows build. They shall devote the branches of their wealth to gathering together the little spiritual ones. They bestow these things, the cedars of Libanus which the Lord hath planted do these things; they do so, and they do so willingly; they know what they are doing, and they know what they receive. But although the sparrows will build in the cedars of Libanus, the house of the coot is their leader. What is the house of the coot? The coot, as we all know, is a water bird, dwelling either among the marshes, or on the sea. It hath rarely or never a home on the shore; but in places in the midst of the waters, and thus usually in rocky islets, surrounded by the waves. We therefore understand that the rock is the fit home of the coot, it never dwelleth more securely than on the rock. On what sort of rock? One placed in the sea. And if it is beaten by the waves,

yet it breaketh the waves, is not broken by them: this is the excellency of the rock in the sea. How great waves beat on our Lord Jesus Christ? The Jews dashed against Him; they were broken, He remained whole. And let every one who doth imitate Christ, so dwell in this world, that is, in this sea, where he cannot but feel storms and tempests, that he may yield to no wind, to no wave, but remain whole, while he meets them all. The home of the coot, therefore, is both strong and weak. The coot hath not a home on lofty spots; nothing is more firm and nothing more humble than that home. Sparrows build indeed in cedars, on account of actual need: but they hold that rock as their leader, which is beaten by the waves, and yet not broken; for they imitate the sufferings of Christ. And if perchance the cedars of Libanus shall be angry, and have caused any trouble or scandal to God's servants in their boughs, the sparrows indeed will fly from thence; but woe to the cedar that abideth without the nests of the sparrows. For the sparrows shall not suffer shipwreck, they shall not perish; because the house of the coot is their leader.

18. Ver. 18. What then followeth? The loftiest hills are for the stags. The stags are mighty, spiritual, passing in their course over all the thorny places of the thickets and woods. He maketh my feet like harts' feet, and setteth me up on high. Let them hold to the lofty hills, the lofty commandments of God; let them think on sublime subjects, let them hold those which stand forth most in the Scriptures, let them be justified in the highest: for those loftiest hills are for the stags. What of the humble beasts? what of the hare? what of the hedgehog? The hare is a small and weak animal: the hedgehog is also prickly: the one is a timid animal, the other is covered with prickles. What do the prickles signify, except sinners? He who sinneth daily, although not great sins, is covered over with the smallest prickles. In his timidity he is a hare: in his being covered with the minutest sins, he is a hedgehog: and he cannot hold those lofty and perfect commandments. For the loftiest hills are for the stags. What then? do these perish; No. For as the highest hills are for the stags, so is the rock the refuge for the hedgehogs and the hares. For the Lord is a refuge for the poor. Place that rock upon the land, it is a refuge for hedgehogs, and for hares: place it on the sea, it is the home of the coot. Every where the rock is useful. Even in the hills it is useful: for the hills without the rock's foundation would fall into the deep.

Was it not above said of the hills, There shall the fowls of Heaven have their habitation; from the midst of the rocks shall they give forth their voices? Every where therefore the rock is our refuge: whether it be raised aloft on the hills, or whether it be beaten with the waves upon the sea, it is not broken, or whether it be fixed firm upon the ground; to it the stags, to it the coot, to it the hare and the hedgehog fly. Let the hares beat their breasts, and let the hedgehogs confess their sins; although they be covered over with certain minute and daily sins, yet the Rock, which taught them to say, Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us, is not wanting to them. The rock is the refuge for hedgehogs and hares.

29. Ver. 19. He appointed the Moon for certain seasons. We understand spiritually the Church increasing from the smallest size, and growing old as it were from the mortality of this life; yet so, that it draweth nearer unto the Sun. I speak not of this moon visible to the eye, but of that which is signified by this name. While the Church was in the dark, while she as yet appeared not, shone not forth as yet, men were led astray, and it was said, This is the Church, here is Christ; so that while the Moon was dark, they shot their arrows at the righteous in heart. How blind is he who now, when the Moon is full, wandereth astray? He appointed the Moon for certain seasons. For here the Church temporarily is passing away: for this subjection to death will not remain for ever: there will some time be an end of waxing and waning; it is appointed for certain seasons. And the sun knoweth his going down. And what sun is this, but that Sun of righteousness, whom the ungodly will lament on the day of judgment never having risen for them; they who will say on that day, Therefore we wandered from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness shone not on us, and the sun did not arise upon us. That sun riseth for him, who understandeth Christ. But Christ doth recede from the comprehension of him, who shall have been so angry with his brother, as to retain his ill will. Be angry, therefore, and sin not. Although charity is sometimes angry that she may chasten, she is not held guilty; since anger hath not grown so old, as to be changed into hatred. But if anger hath been changed into hatred, the sun hath gone down upon your anger. Let not the sun, therefore, go down upon your wrath.

20. Nor think, brethren, that the sun ought to be worshipped by some men, because the sun doth sometimes in the Scriptures signify Christ. For such is the madness of men; as if we said that a creature should be worshipped, when it is said, the sun is an emblem of Christ. Then worship the rock also, for it also is a type of Christ. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter: worship the lamb also, since it is a type of Christ. The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed; worship the lion also, since it signifieth Christ. Observe how numerous are the types of Christ: all these are Christ in similitude, not in essence. Dost thou seek the essence of Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. Behold the essence of Christ, by which thou wast made. Wouldest thou have also that essence of His through which thou wast new made? And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. The rest are similitudes. Understand, know how to hold Scripture, so that thou mayest see one thing put before thine eyes, another hinted to thy heart.

21. That Sun, therefore, we now say it without apprehension, that Sun of Righteousness, doth not without cause refuse to rise to the ungodly, even though they wish: for Wisdom herself saith, The wicked shall seek me, but they shall not find me; they shall seek, and shall not find. And wherefore? For they hate wisdom. Wisdom herself speaketh, and saith, The wicked shall seek me, but they shall not find me; for that they hated wisdom. If they hate it, then, why do they seek it? They seek it, not that they may use it, but that they may be puffed up; they seek it in their discourses, but they hate it in their conduct: for the Holy Spirit of discipline will free from the hypocrite, and will withdraw Itself from the thoughts that are without understanding. That sun then riseth not for the ungodly, riseth not for the wicked. But what is said of the (visible) sun? He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Concerning therefore the Sun of righteousness doth this Psalm signify somewhat mystically, for we see that these things happen in the creation even according to the appearance of things visible. The sun knoweth his going down. What meaneth this? Christ knew His Passion: the going down of Christ is the Passion of Christ. But hath the Sun gone down, so that it will not rise again? Shall not He who sleepeth rise also? Hath He not said, I slept undisturbed? and is it not said of Him, Set thyself up, O God, above

the heavens? Therefore, the sun knoweth his going down: what means, Knoweth? He hath approved, it hath pleased Him. And whence do we shew that He knew it, that is, that it pleased Him? For what doth not God know? what doth not Christ know? and yet He will say unto some in the end, I know you not. As there, 'I know you not,' means not, ye are unknown to Me, but, ye please Me not; so here also, He knoweth His going down, meaneth His going down pleaseth Him. For if not, how would He suffer? For although a man be not pleased with his suffering, yet, since he is not that Sun, he suffers what he wishes not. But He would not suffer, unless it pleased Him; that is, unless He knew His going down, He would not go down; forasmuch as He Himself saith: I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again; no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. Therefore, He knoweth His going down.

22. Ver. 20, 21. What then, when the sun went down, when our Lord suffered? There was a sort of darkness with the Apostles, hope failed, in those to whom He at first seemed great, and the Redeemer of all men. How so? Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move. The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God. What shall I spiritually understand by lion's whelps, save spiritual powers of wickedness? What am I to understand, save the evil demons, which demons feed upon the errors of men? For there are princes of the evil spirits, and there are some evil spirits that are contemptible. These demons seek to seduce souls, but when the Sun hath not risen; for they are darkness. And while the darkness is, the lion's whelps seek whom they may devour. What is said of the greater lion himself, the prince of all such lions? Know ye not that your adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? Therefore, seeking their meat from God; since no man can even be tempted by the devil, unless by God's permission. Holy Job was before the devil, and yet he was far from him: in aspect before him, in power removed from him. When would he have dared even to assail his flesh, or the wealth which he possessed, had he not received power? But why is power given? Either to condemn the ungodly, or to prove the pious. The Lord doth all this justly; and the devil hath not power over any man, or over aught of his, unless by His permission, whose Power is chief and above all things. Thus neither the devil nor man hath any

power over man, unless it be given from above. The Judge of the quick and the dead stood before a human judge, and that human judge prided himself when he saw Christ before him, saying, Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and that I have power to release Thee? To which He, Who had come to teach even His judge, replied, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above. Both man and the devil only injure when they have received power, and all devils also whatsoever; but they hurt not those who live well. To the wicked they are as fire to the hay; to the good, as fire to gold. Judas was devoured as hay; Job was tried as gold. Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move. Here the beasts of the forest are used in different ways: for these things are always understood in varying senses; as our Lord Himself is at one time termed a lion, at another a lamb. What is so different as a lion and a lamb? But what sort of lamb? One that could overcome the wolf, overcome the lion. He is the Rock, He the Shepherd, He the Gate. The Shepherd entereth by the gate: and He saith, I am the good Shepherd: and, I am the Door of the Sheep. The term lion signifieth the Lord: as, the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed; and also the devil; The young lion and the adder shalt Thou tread under Thy feet. Learn thus to understand, when these things are spoken figuratively; lest perchance when ye have read that the Rock signifieth Christ, ye may understand it to mean Him in every passage. In one place it meaneth one thing, another in another, just as we can only understand the meaning of a letter by seeing its position. If thou hast heard the first letter in the word Deus, and thinkest it must always belong to it alone, thou wilt blot it out in the word Diabolus. For the word Deus beginneth with the same letter as the word Diabolus; and nothing is so far apart, as God from the devil. Consider how utterly ignorant of things both human and divine he must be, who shall say of the letter D, it ought not to be used in the beginning of the word devil; and when thou hast asked the reason, replieth, I read that letter in the name of God. Such a man is laughed at: for he is not worthy of an argument. Do not then so childishly interpret these divine things, as if any of you were to think, from my having said above that the beasts of the forest signify the Gentiles, while I now say that they signify devils and the angels of disobedience, that I am contradicting what I said before. For they are only figures, and wherever they occur, are explained by the context they have. Wherein shall all the

beasts of the forest move. Where? In the night which the Lord hath made, for the sun knoweth his going down. The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God. Justly then our Lord, when nigh unto His going down, the very Sun of Righteousness recognising His going down, said to His disciples, as if darkness being about to come, the lion would roam about to seek whom he might devour, that that lion could devour no man, unless with leave: Simon, said He, this night Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. When Peter thrice denied, was he not already between the lion's teeth? The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God.

23. Ver. 22. The Sun hath arisen. He Who said, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again; knew His going down, and laid down His life: the Sun arose, and He took it again. The Sun arose, because the Sun went down, but the Sun was not extinguished. Still unto those who understand not Christ it is night. Still to them the Sun hath not risen: let them press on, that they may understand, lest they fall a prey to the roaring lion. For behold, the lion's whelps dare not assail those unto whom He hath risen. For it goeth on; The Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens. More and more as the Sun riseth, so that Christ is recognised by the round world, and glorified therein, do the lion's whelps get them away together; those devils recede from the persecution of the Church, who instigated men to persecute the house of God, by working in the sons of unbelief. For it is said, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Now that none of them dareth persecute the Church, the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together. And where are they? And they lay them down in their dens. Their dens are the hearts of the unbelieving. How many carry lions crouching in their hearts? They burst not forth thence, they make no assault upon the pilgrim Jerusalem. Wherefore do they not so? Because the Sun is already risen, and is shining over the whole world.

24. Ver. 23. See therefore what followeth, for the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens. What art thou

doing, O man of God? thou, O Church of God? what art thou, O body of Christ, whose Head is in Heaven? what art thou doing, O man, His unity? Man, he saith, shall go forth to his work. Let therefore this man work good works in the security of the peace of the Church, let him work unto the end. For sometime there will be a sort of general darkening, and a sort of assault will be made, but in the evening, that is, in the end of the world: but now the Church doth work in peace and tranquillity; for man shall go forth to his work, and to his labour, unto the evening.

25. Ver. 24. O Lord, how great are made Thy works! Justly great, justly sublime! where were those works made, that are so great? what was that station where God stood, or that seat whereupon He sat, when He did those works? what was the place where He worked thus? whence did those so beautiful works proceed at the first? To take it word for word, every ordained creation, running by ordinance, beautiful by ordinance, rising by ordinance, setting by ordinance, going through all seasons by ordinance, whence hath it proceeded? whence hath the Church herself received her rise, her growth, her perfection? In what manner is she destined to a consummation in immortality? with what heralding is she preached? by what mysteries is she recommended? by what types is she concealed? by what preaching is she revealed? where hath God done these things? I see great works. How great are made Thy works, O Lord! I ask where He hath made them: I find not the place: but I see what followeth: In Wisdom hast Thou made them all. All therefore Thou hast made in Christ. He Who was despised, Who was buffeted, He Who was spit upon, He Who was crowned with thorns, He Who was crucified, all things Thou hast made in Him. I hear, I hear, what Thou dost announce to men by this Thy Soldier; what Thou dost preach unto the Gentiles by that holy Preacher, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Let the Jews laugh at Christ crucified, because unto them He is a stumbling-block: let the heathen laugh at Christ crucified, for to them He is foolishness. But we, he saith, preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. In wisdom Thou hast made them all.

26. The earth is full of Thy creation. The earth is full of the creation of Christ. And how so? We discern how: for what was not made by the Father through the Son? Whatever walketh and doth crawl on earth, whatever doth swim in the waters, whatever flieth in the air, whatever doth revolve in heaven, how much more then the earth, the whole universe, is the work of God. But he seems to me to speak here of some new creation, of which the Apostle saith, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. All who believe in Christ, who put off the old man, and put on the new, are a new creature. The earth is full of Thy works. On one spot of the earth He was crucified, in one small spot that seed fell into the earth, and died; but brought forth great fruit. Alone Thou wast, Lord Jesus, until Thou hadst passed away: in another Psalm I recognise Thy voice, saying, I am alone, until I pass away. Alone then Thou wast, until Thou hadst passed away: alone, when Thou didst know Thy going down; but from Thy going down Thou didst pass to a rising. Thou didst arise, shiuedst, wast glorified, when Thou didst ascend into heaven, and the whole earth was filled with Thy creation. We have not yet finished the Psalm, my brethren: but some of it let us defer in Christ's name unto the Lord's day.

Discourse IV

Ye remember, beloved, that although there be one language of God spread abroad in all the Scriptures, and though one Word doth sound through many mouths of the saints, Which, since It is God with God in the beginning, hath not in that respect syllables, because It hath not times; and though we ought not to wonder, that on account of our infirmity It hath descended to the particles of our sounds, since It hath descended to assume the infirmity of our body: nevertheless, this Psalm hath already occasioned us many discourses, and the opening, unto those who knock, the mysteries which are herein concealed hath caused no slight delays for some days, while they were being declared, praised, shewn to be concealed, opened, drawn forth, displayed; you remember, beloved, as I said, that we could not on this account on the former day either arrive at the end of this Psalm, and that we put it off unto this day. The Lord hath willed both to shew us a day of payment of our promise, and that I the debtor should discharge my debt,

and thus make my creditors more secure: may He, therefore, give us good to return, Who hath not returned unto us whatever evil we have done.

2. Ver. 24, 25. Our inmost hearts, as ye know, as ye remember with piety and joy, cried out with the Psalm, cried out and said, O Lord, how great are made Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy creation. Whatever hath been made by God, hath been made in Wisdom, and hath been made by Wisdom. Whatever knoweth Wisdom, and whatever knoweth not Wisdom, and yet is in the creation of God, is made in Wisdom, and is made by Wisdom. They who know wisdom, have Wisdom for their light; they who know It not, have yet Wisdom for their Creator, although they be themselves held down by folly: and they who have It for their light, have It also for their Creator; I do not say all who have Wisdom for their Creator, have It also for their light. And indeed there are many among men who are made sharers of it, and are called wise; many void of it, are called fools. They are therefore called fools, a term implying fault, because if they study wisdom, if they seek it, if they look for it, if they knock at the door, they may reach to the sharing of it: for it is not denied to their nature, but to their negligence. But there are other creatures, which cannot become partakers in wisdom; as all beasts, all cattle, all trees, which have not even any understanding. Because they cannot share in Wisdom, is that any reason that they were not made in Wisdom, and by Wisdom? God doth not then exact understanding in the horse and the mule; but unto men He saith, Be not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding. What is nature to the horse, is a reproach unto man. God then saith this: I do not exact a share of My wisdom from those whom I have not made in My image; but where I have made, there I exact, and demand the using of that thing which I have given. Men, therefore, who render unto God the things that are God's, if unto Cæsar they render the things that are Cæsar's; that is, rendering unto Cæsar his image, unto God His Image, raise their mind, not unto themselves, but to their Creator, and to the light whence they are, and to that spiritual fervour whence they glow, removed from whence they grow cold, receding whence they are darkened, returning whither they are enlightened: and, as they said piously, Thou, O Lord, shall light my candle: Thou, my God, shall make my darkness to be light. Having flung aside the darkness of earthly folly, opening their mouth, and drawing in breath, they

raise up, as I said, the faithful eye of the heart; and in their mind see the whole universe, the earth, the sea, and the heavens, and seeing all things beautifully disposed, travelling in a course ordained, distributed in species, maintained by seeds, changed in successions, running in seasons, the Creator doth so please them in this way, that they themselves become pleasing unto their Creator in His creation: and exclaim in their great joy, because truly nothing can be compared with this pleasure, O Lord, how great and many are Thy works: in wisdom hast Thou made them all! Where is that Wisdom in which Thou hast made all things? by what understanding is It reached? by what eye is It discerned? by what exertion is It sought? by what merit is It gained? How, do you imagine, but by His grace? He Who granted us to be, granteth us to be good. He granteth it to the converted: and did not He seek them before they were converted, and when turned aside from Him, they were going after ways of their own? did He not come down? did not The Word become flesh, and dwell in us? did He not light the lamp of His flesh, while He was hanging on the Cross, and seek the lost piece of silver? He sought, and found it: His neighbours rejoicing with Him, that is, every spiritual creature which doth approach nearly unto God. To the joy of the neighbours the piece of silver was found; to the joy of the angels the human soul was found. It was found, let it therefore rejoice, and say, O Lord, how great are made Thy works: in Wisdom hast Thou made them all!

3. The earth is full of Thy creation. Of what creation of Thine is the earth full? Of all trees and shrubs, of all animals and flocks, and of the whole of the human race; the earth is full of the creation of God. We see, know, read, recognise, praise, and in these we preach of Him; yet we are not able to praise respecting these things, as fully as our heart doth abound with praise after the beautiful contemplation of them. But we ought rather to heed that creation, of which the Apostle saith, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. What old things have passed away? In the Gentiles, all idolatry; in the Jews themselves, all that servitude unto the Law, all those sacrifices that were harbingers of the present Sacrifice. The oldness of man was then abundant; One came to renovate His own work, to melt His silver, to form His coin, and we now see the earth full of Christians believing in God, turning themselves away from their former uncleanness and idolatry, from a past

hope to the hope of a new age: and behold it is not yet realised, but is already possessed in hope, and through that very hope we now sing, and say, The earth is full of Thy creation. We do not as yet sing this in our country, nor yet in that rest which is promised, the bars of the gates of Jerusalem not being as yet made fast; but still in our pilgrimage gazing upon the whole of this world, upon men who on every side are running unto the faith, fearing hell, despising death, loving eternal life, scorning the present, and filled with joy at such a spectacle, we say, The earth is full of Thy creation.

4. But this world is as yet tossed by the waves of temptation, is as yet disturbed by the tempests and storms of tribulations and heavings: yet this is our road. Let the sea threaten, and swell with waves, and be pregnant with storms; this is our road, the Wood is granted us to sail in: The earth is full of Thy creation. But we are not yet in the land of the living, this is as yet the land of the dying; but we cry out, and say, Thou art my hope, and my portion in the land of the living. My hope in the land of the dying, my portion in the land of the living. Behold this earth which is full of the creation of God. He who is as yet in this land of the dying, not as yet in the living, how doth he pass over? Hear the following: So is the great and wide sea also; wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. He speaketh of the sea as terrible; therein are things creeping innumerable. Snares creep in this world, and surprise the careless suddenly; for who numbereth the temptations that creep? They creep, but beware, lest they snatch us away. Let us keep watch on the Wood; even in the water, even on the waves, we are safe: let not Christ sleep, let not faith sleep; if He hath slept, let Him be awakened; He will command the winds; He will calm the sea; the voyage will be ended, and we shall rejoice in our country. Wherein are creeping things innumerable, both small beasts and great. For I see in this terrible sea unbelievers still; for they dwell in barren and bitter waters: but they are both small and great. We know this: many little men of this world are still unbelievers, many great men of this world are so: there are living creatures, both small and great, in this sea. They hate the Church: the name of Christ is a burden to them: they rage not, because they are not permitted; the cruelty which cannot burst forth in deeds, is shut up within the heart. For all, whether small or great, creeping things, both small and

great, who at present grieve at the temples being shut, the altars overthrown, the images broken, the laws which make it a capital crime to sacrifice to idols; all who mourn on this account, are still in the sea. What then of us? And by what road then are we to journey unto our country? Through this very sea, but on the Wood. Fear not the danger; that wood which holdeth together the world doth bear thee up. Listen therefore: the great and wide sea: wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. Fear not, be not terrified; long for thy country, understand this as thy pilgrimage.

5. Ver. 26. There shall go the ships. Lo, ships float upon that which alarmed you, and sink not. By ships we understand churches; they go among the storms, among the tempests of temptations, among the waves of the world, among the beasts, both small and great. Christ on the wood of His cross is the Pilot. There shall go the ships. Let not the ships fear, let them not much mind where they float, but by Whom they are steered. There shall go the ships. What voyage do they find tedious, when they feel that Christ is their Pilot? They will sail safely, let them sail diligently, they will reach their promised haven, they will be led to the land of rest.

6. There is also in that sea somewhat which transcends all creatures, great and small. What is this? Let us hear the Psalm: There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of him. There are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts; there shall the ships go, and shall not fear, not only the creeping things innumerable, and beasts both small and great, but not even the serpent which is there; whom Thou, he speaketh unto God, hast made to make sport of him. This is a great mystery; and yet I am about to utter what ye already know. Ye know that a certain serpent is the enemy of the Church: ye have not seen him with the eyes of the flesh, but ye see him with the eyes of faith. It is he who is also styled a lion: of him the Scripture saith, The lion and the dragon shalt Thou tread under Thy feet. He is made subject to thy Head, he shall be made subject also to His body: only let the members still cling to their Head, so that they be His members. It is said of the first woman, whom this serpent led astray; viz. that Eve unto whom he gave counsel of death, and by his cunning persuasion crept like a serpent into her female heart. That was done which

we well know, which even we ourselves did there; which we deplore. For the whole human race is in those two persons: thence sprang the offspring of death, thence even in children, debts, trespasses. For who is clean, saith the Scripture, in Thy sight? Not even the child, who hath but the life of one day upon the earth. The transmission of sin is a transmission of death from the first sin. For ye know what was said to the woman, or rather to the serpent, when God heard the sin of the first man: She shall watch for thy head, and thou shalt watch for her heel. These words are a great mystery, spoken in figure of the future Church, which was made from the side of Her Husband, and that while He slept. But Adam was the figure of Him that was to come; as the Apostle saith, who is the figure of Him that was to come. That was prefigured which should come to pass afterwards, the Church was made out of the side of the Lord sleeping on the Cross. For from the stricken side of Him Who was crucified, the Sacraments of the Church flowed forth. What then is said unto the Church? Now hear at once, understand, and beware: She shall watch for thy head, and thou for her heel. O Church, watch for the head of the serpent. What is the serpent's head? The first suggestion of sin. Something unlawful hath come into thy mind; keep not thy mind there, consent not. What hath come into thy mind is the serpent's head; trample upon his head, and thou shalt escape the rest of his efforts. What is, Tread upon his head? Spurn the very suggestion. But he suggested gain: there is great gain there, much gold; commit this fraud, and thou shalt be rich. It is the serpent's head, trample upon it. What is, trample upon it? Spurn what he hath suggested. But he suggested much gold. And what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Let the world's gain perish, that it become not the loss of the soul. In speaking thus, thou hast watched the serpent's head, and trampled on him. But the devil watcheth for thy heel. What meaneth this? He watcheth when thou mayest slip from the path of God. Thou dost watch the first suggestion, he watcheth thy slip; for if thou hast slipped, thou shalt fall; if thou hast fallen, he will gain thee. But that thou mayest not fall, go not out of the way. God hath made for thee a narrow path; whatever is beyond it, is slippery. On this account Christ is the light, and Christ is the way: That was the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Through Me thou comest, unto Me thou comest. If therefore He is the light, and He is the way: if thou depart from

Him, thou wilt neither be in the light nor in the way. And what followeth thee? That which one of the Psalms saith of the wicked; Let their way be dark and slippery.

7. This serpent then, our ancient enemy, glowing with rage, cunning in his wiles, is in the mighty sea. Here is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of him. Do thou now make sport of the serpent: for for this end was this serpent made. He falling by his own sin from the sublime realms of the heavens, and made devil instead of angel, received a certain region of his own in this mighty and spacious sea. What thou thinkest his kingdom, is his prison. For many say: wherefore hath the devil received so great power, that he may rule in this world, and prevaieth so much, can do so much? How much prevaieth he? How much can he do? Unless by permission, he can do nothing. Do thou so act, that he may not be allowed to attack thee; or if he be allowed to tempt thee, he may depart vanquished, and may not gain thee. For he hath been allowed to tempt some holy men, servants of God: they overcame him, because they departed not from the way, they whose heel he watched, fell not. That holy Job sat upon a heap of dung, and was running on his way: consider how he watched the devil's head, and how the devil watched his heel. The one repelled the tempter, the other hoped he would fall: he attacked his wife also; he carried away all he had, he left only as his own assistant one who was not the consoler, but rather the tempter, of her husband; he took her as his prey while she watched not his head. For she was still Eve; though he was no longer Adam. When all had been taken away, Job remained with his wife, through whom he was tempted; and with God, by Whom he was governed. If thou lookest to his home, what ever became suddenly more destitute? what richer than he, if thou regardest his heart? Consider the poverty of his house, with every thing swept away. Consider the riches of his heart: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:" he knew his ruler and his tempter; he knew Him Who allowed the tempter to assail him. Let the devil, he saith, take nothing to himself; he hath the will to hurt, but unless he received the power, he would not have it; I suffer just in proportion as he hath received power: I suffer not from him then, but from Him Who gave the power; let the pride of my tempter be despised, the rod of my Father be

endured. The tempter was repelled, his head was watched, he could not penetrate into the heart. He besieged from without a walled city, but reduced it not. Another temptation was added: the devil was allowed to assault his body, and smote him with a severe wound from head to foot: he wasted away with sore boils, he was full of worms, leaving his home he sat on a dung-heap. There Eve taken captive, set on by the devil not to help her husband, but to cause him to fall, suggests to him to blaspheme God. She first suggested in Paradise to despise God: now to blaspheme God. She then prevailed over one in full strength, she is now beaten by one covered with boils; the devil was the conqueror in Paradise, and conquered on the dung-heap. But that serpent watched whether Job would slip with his tongue; for every man setteth foot in that which he doeth: wherein he moveth, there as it were he walketh. He said many things; how many were Job's words, they who read, know: in these so numerous words the serpent watched the heel for the fall of the man. But he, who kept watch on the serpent's head, repelled every suggestion. He also answered the woman, as she deserved answering: Thou speakest, he saith, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil? And in all this that he said, Job did not slip, which many persons do not understand in these words, and take some of them in such a sense, as if Job had said something hard against God.

8. For among many things he said this also, as if indignant against God, as it seemed to those who understood it not: but Job was bearing the high character of an exalted prophecy: Would that, he saith, speaking unto God, there were some days-man between us! What meaneth this; Would that there were some days-man between us? One who might judge between us, and under whose judgment my cause might conquer. Thus it is understood at the first sound: but examine thyself, that thou slip not; for that serpent is ever on the watch for thy heel. What did Job seem to have said? Would that there were some days-man between us! Would that there were some umpire to judge between me and Thee! This the speech of a man unto God, of a man sitting on a dung-heap! This the speech even of an angel in heaven unto God! Would that we had a days-man between us! But what did he foresee? what did he wish? Many, saith the Lord, prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them.

He desired an umpire. What is an umpire? One who goeth between to settle a cause. Were we not enemies of God, and had we not a bad cause against God? Who could settle this bad cause, except that intervening Mediator, without Whose advent the path of mercy had been lost? Of Whom the Apostle speaketh: For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. If He be not a Man, He is not a Mediator, for He is God coequal with the Father. He saith in another passage: Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. A mediator is between two: Christ therefore is Mediator between man and God. Not because He is God, but because He is Man: for in that He is God, He is coequal with the Father; but one coequal with the Father is not a mediator. To become a mediator, let Him descend from the higher to the lower, from equality with the Father; let Him do what the Apostle saith: He made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man. Let Him pour forth His blood, let Him blot out the handwriting that was against us, let Him mediate between God and us; correcting our will unto righteousness, bending His sentence unto mercy. Since therefore we have explained this one point, as far as the Lord hath allowed, which seemed to have been hardly spoken by Job; so also the other words which there seem hard and blasphemous, have a sense of their own; which we should imagine to be otherwise, unless God gave His testimony, both before Job spoke, and after he had spoken the whole. God in the first place gave His testimony, in these words: A perfect and upright man, one that truly serveth God. God spoke thus, and that before his temptation. But lest any one from misrepresentation by chance might stumble in these words, and might think that Job was indeed a righteous man before his temptation, but that he sank under heavy temptation, and fell into sacrilegious blasphemy; after all the discourses were concluded, both of Job himself, and of his friends by whom consolation was offered to him, the Lord giveth His testimony, that they spoke not the truth, like His servant Job. Ye have not spoken, He saith, of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath. He then ordereth that Job offer up sacrifices for them, by which their sins may be atoned for.

9. He then, my brethren, who doth wish to watch the serpent's head, and safely to pass this sea; for it must be that this serpent dwelleth here, and, as

I had commenced saying, the devil when he fell from heaven received this region; let him watch his head, on the part of the fear of the world, and of the lusts of the world. For it is hence that he suggesteth some object of fear or of desire; he trieth thy love, or thy fear. If thou fearest hell, and lovest the kingdom of God, thou wilt watch his head. The head avoided, thou wilt be safe; nor will he gain thy fall, or rejoice in thy ruin. But let no man say, as I said; he hath great power. For men see how much power he hath received; what he lost, they see not. That holy Job in his mystical and deeply hidden words, speaking of that power which the devil is said to have, and describing it in many ways in the forms of similitudes, while he explaineth what he is, and what power he hath, addeth this also: Upon earth there is not his like created, for the mocking of him by My angels. (God there speaketh in the Book of Job.) Upon earth there is not his like created, for the mocking of him by My angels. He seeth all the deep: and is himself king over all that are in the waters. With which testimony this passage in the Psalm agreeth. For while he was speaking of the mighty and spacious sea, where are beasts great and small, where are creeping things without number, where the ships sail safe in their wood; he saith, there is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him. If to make sport of him, how doth God make sport of him? Did He give him up to be mocked? We might imagine that God made sport of him, had not the Scripture of Job solved the question; for it is there said, for the making sport of him by My angels. Dost thou wish to mock the serpent? become an angel of God. But thou art not as yet an angel of God. Until thou art, if thou holdest on that course that thou mayest be so, there are angels to mock the serpent, that he may not injure thee. For there are angels of heaven set over the powers of the air; and this is the source of the expression in the text. For they look upon a law fixed, a law eternal, that commandeth without writing, without syllables, without sound, ever fixed and permanent; the angels look upon it with a pure heart, and according to it do all that is done here, and powers from the highest to the lowest are ordered by it. And if the powers of the highest heavens are ruled by the Word of God, how much more the lower and earthly powers? In the wicked, therefore, nothing but the wish to do harm remaineth. This wish to injure, this will to work ruin, a man hath in his power. But if he hath succeeded in injuring any one, let him not boast; he did not injure of his own power: the power was given him. It hath once

been said, and it remaineth sure: There is no power but of God. What then fearest thou? Let the dragon be in the waters, let the dragon be in the sea: thou art to pass through it. He is made so as to be made sport of, he is ordained to inhabit this place, this region is given him. Thou thinkest that this habitation is a great thing for him, because thou knowest not the dwellings of the angels whence he fell: what seemeth to thee his glory, is his damnation.

10. Hear a similitude in a few words: for indeed it is a great thing to know and understand this. Imagine the whole of this government of creation to be a large house: this large house hath a master, hath slaves, and among those slaves those nearest the master provided with ampler stores of garments, treasures, barns, great possessions; it hath also slaves engaged in the lowest offices, powers being so subject to one another, that it hath some even for cleaning the sewers: how many gradations are there from the highest officers to these the lowest of employments. Suppose then some high officer offend, and, by the punishment of his lord, for example's sake, become a doorkeeper in some very low station; if, in the exercise of the power entrusted him, he harass those who wish to enter or depart, according to the measure of authority which he hath received from his master, while they know not that he once was a high officer; they imagine that his power is great, because they know not what he hath lost. And yet, my brethren, this doorkeeper of whom I spoke, according to the image of this great earthly house, may do something without the knowledge of his lord, and harass some one without his command: but that other one is not placed at that door, by which we enter unto God. For Christ is that Door, and through Christ we enter into life eternal. But there is a certain door, through which we enter into this life, a sort of gate of mortality: among the things in which this infirm flesh hath its waste and refuse, at this gate there is, as it were, a doorkeeper; he hath power in this sea, where the ships come and go, but not such power as that he can do any thing without the knowledge or without the will of his Lord. So that no man may say, He has indeed lost the great power of the higher services; but I am among these lowest officers, he may hold me in his power, I must needs serve him. Be not deceived: thy Lord knoweth thee, and so knoweth thee, that He hath the hairs of thy head numbered. What then fearest thou? Perhaps he is about to try thy flesh: it is

the scourge of thy Lord, not the power of thy tempter. His wish is to injure that salvation which is promised: but he is not allowed: but that he may not be allowed, have Christ for thy Head; repel the serpent's head: consent not unto his suggestion, slip not from thy path. There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him.

11. Ver. 27–29. Dost thou wish to see how incapable he is of hurting thee, unless permitted? These, he saith, wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season. And this serpent wisheth to devour, but he devoureth not whom he wisheth. All wait upon Thee, O Lord, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season; both the creeping things innumerable, and small and great beasts, and the serpent himself, and all Thy creation with which Thou hast filled the earth; These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season, to each his own meat. Thou hast thine own meat: the serpent also hath his own meat. If thou live well, thou wilt have Christ for thy food; if thou depart from Christ, thou wilt be food for the serpent. These all wait upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season. What is said unto the serpent himself? Dust thou shalt eat. It is said to the serpent; Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. Thou hast heard what the serpent's meat is. Thou dost not wish that God give thee to be devoured by the serpent; become not the serpent's food: i.e. forsake not the Word of God. For where it is said to the serpent, Dust thou shalt eat, it is said to the transgressor, Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. Thou dost not wish to be the serpent's food? be not dust. How, thou repliest, shall I not be dust? If thou hast not a taste for earthly things. Hear the Apostle, that thou mayest not be dust. For the body which thou wearest is earth: but do thou refuse to be earth. What meaneth this? If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. If thou dost not set thy affections on earthly things, thou art not earth: if thou art not earth, thou art not devoured by the serpent, whose appointed food is earth. The Lord giveth the serpent his food when He will, what He will: but He judgeth rightly, He cannot be deceived, He giveth him not gold for earth. These wait all upon Thee, O Lord, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season. When Thou hast given it them, they gather it. It is before them: but they will not gather, unless when Thou hast

given leave. Job was before the devil; and indeed he devoured not Job, but dared not even tempt him, unless when the Lord had given leave. They wait all upon Thee: when Thou hast given it them, they shall gather it; if Thou hast not given it them, they shall not gather.

12. And what of us? What meat have we, brethren? What followeth is concerning our meat. When thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good. What is it, O Lord, that Thou openest Thy hand? Christ is Thy hand. To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? To whom it is revealed, unto him it is opened: for revelation is opening. When Thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good. When Thou revealest Thy Christ, they shall all be filled with good. But they have not good from themselves; this is oftentimes proved unto them. When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled. Many filled with good have attributed to themselves what they had, and have wished to boast as in their own righteousnesses, and have said to themselves, I am righteous; I am great: and have become self-complacent. Unto these the Apostle speaketh: What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? But God, wishing to prove unto man that whatever he hath he hath from Him, so that with good he may gain humility also, sometimes troubleth him; He turneth away His face from him, and he falleth into temptation; and He sheweth him that his righteousness, and his walking aright, was only under His government. When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled. Consider what he saith in another Psalm also: In my prosperity I said, I shall never be removed. He presumed upon himself; he was filled with blessings; all of which he thought came from himself, and said, I shall never be removed. But since he was now aware that he had received the grace of God, for that which he had experienced, he returned thanks: O Lord, in Thy good pleasure Thou hast granted strength to my glory. Thou didst turn Thy face from me: and I was troubled. And here also, When Thou openest Thy hand; Thou shalt open Thy hand, and they shall all be filled with good; not by their own hand, but by Thy hand opened. But when Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled.

13. But wherefore dost Thou do this? wherefore dost Thou hide Thy face, that they may be troubled? Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail. Their breath was their pride; they boast, they attribute things to

themselves, they justify themselves. Hide, therefore, Thy face, that they may be troubled: take away their breath, and let them fail; let them cry unto Thee, Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint: hide not Thy face from me. Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail, and shall be turned to their dust. The man who repenteth of his sin discovereth himself, that he had not strength of himself; and doth confess unto God, saying, that he is earth and ashes. O proud one, thou art turned to thine own dust, thy breath hath been taken away; no longer dost thou boast thyself, no longer extol thyself, no longer justify thyself; thou seest that thou art made of dust, and when the Lord turneth away His face, thou hast fallen back into thine own dust. Pray, therefore, confess thy dust and thy weakness.

14. Ver. 30. And see what followeth: Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made. Thou shalt take away their spirit, and send forth Thine own: Thou shalt take away their spirit: they shall have no spirit of their own. Are they then forsaken? Blessed are the poor in spirit: but they are not forsaken: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. They refused to have a spirit of their own: they shall have the Spirit of God. Such were our Lord's words to the future martyrs: When they take you and deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Attribute not your courage to yourselves. If it is yours, He saith, and not Mine, it is obstinacy, not courage. Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made. For we are His workmanship, saith the Apostle, created unto good works. From His Spirit we have received grace, that we may live unto righteousness: for it is He that justifieth the ungodly. Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth: that is, with new men, confessing themselves to have been justified, not righteous of their own power, so that the grace of God is in them. Consider what manner of men they are, by whom the face of the earth hath been renewed. Paul saith, I laboured more abundantly than they all. What is this, Paul? Give heed, whether it be thyself, whether thy spirit. Yet not I, he saith, but the grace of God which was with me.

15. Ver. 31. What then? When He hath taken away our spirit, we shall be turned again to our dust, beholding to our edification our weakness, that when we receive His Spirit we may be refreshed. See what followeth: Be the glory of the Lord for ever. Not thine, not mine, not his, or his; Be the glory of the Lord, not for a season, but for ever. The Lord shall rejoice in His works. Not in thine, as if they were thine: because if thy works are evil, it is through thy iniquity; if good, it is through the grace of God. The Lord shall rejoice in His works.

16. Ver. 32. Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; Who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke. O earth, thou wast exulting in thy good, to thyself thou didst ascribe thy fulness and opulence; behold, the Lord looketh on thee, and causeth thee to tremble. May He look on thee, and make thee tremble: for the trembling of humility is better than the confidence of pride. Consider how the Lord beholdeth the earth, and causeth it to tremble. The Apostle speaketh to the earth as if it trusted and exulted in itself: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. "With fear and trembling;" for it is God Which worketh in you. Thou sayest, O Paul, Work: thou commandest us to work: wherefore with trembling? For it is God, he saith, Which worketh in you. For this reason then with trembling, because God worketh in you. Because He gave, because what thou hast cometh not from thee, thou shalt work with fear and trembling, for if thou fearest not Him, He will take away what He gave. Work, therefore, with trembling. Hear another Psalm: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. If we must rejoice with trembling, God beholdeth us, there cometh an earthquake; when God looketh upon us, let our hearts tremble; then will God rest there. Hear Him in another passage: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even on him that is lowly and quiet, and who trembleth at My Word.

Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; Who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke. The hills were proud, and boastful of themselves, God had not touched them: He toucheth them, and they shall smoke. What meaneth the smoking of the hills? That they pray unto the Lord. Behold great hills, proud hills, vast hills, prayed not to God: they wished themselves to be entreated, and entreated not Him Who was above them.

For what powerful, arrogant, proud man is there upon earth, who deigneth humbly to entreat God? I speak of the ungodly, not of the cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted. Every ungodly man, unhappy soul, knoweth not how to entreat God, while he wisheth himself to be entreated by men. He is a hill; it is needful that God touch him, that he may smoke: when he hath begun to smoke, he will offer prayers unto God, as it were the sacrifice of his heart. He smoketh unto God, he then beateth his breast: he beginneth to weep, for smoke doth elicit tears. He toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke.

17. Ver. 33. I will sing unto the Lord in my life. What will sing? Every thing that is willing. Let us sing unto the Lord in our life. Our life at present is only hope; our life will be eternity hereafter: the life of mortal life, is the hope of an everlasting life. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will praise my God while I have my being. Since I am in Him for ever and ever, while I have my being, I will praise my God. Let us not imagine that, when we have commenced praising God in that state, we shall have any other work: our whole life will be for the praises of God. If we become weary of Him Whom we praise, we may also become weary of praising. If He is ever loved, He is ever praised by us: I will praise my God while I have my being.

18. Ver. 34. Let my discourse be pleasing to Him: my joy shall be in the Lord. Let my discourse be pleasing to Him: what is the discourse of man unto God, save the confession of sins? Confess unto God what thou art, and thou hast discoursed with Him. Discourse unto Him, do good works, and discourse. Wash you, make you clean, saith Isaiah; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. And come, and let us discourse together. What is it to discourse unto God? Unfold thyself to Him Who knoweth thee, that He may unfold Himself to thee who knowest not Him? Let my discourse be pleasing to Him. Behold, it is thy discourse that pleaseth the Lord; the offering of thy humility, the tribulation of thy heart, the holocaust of thy life, this pleaseth God. But what is pleasing to thyself? My joy shall be in the Lord. This is that discoursing which I meant between God and thyself: shew thyself to Him

Who knoweth thee, and He sheweth Himself unto thee who knowest not Him. Pleasing unto Him is thy confession: sweet unto thee is His grace. He hath spoken Himself unto thee. How? By the Word. What Word? Christ. It was unto thee that He spake, and Himself that He spake. In that He sent Christ, He spake Himself. So, clearly, let us hear the Word Himself: He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.

But my joy shall be in the Lord.

19. Ver. 35. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth. He seemeth angry! O holy soul, which here doth sing and groan! Would that our soul were with that very soul! Would that it were coupled with it, associated, conjoined with it! It shall behold also his lovingkindness when he is angry. For who, but he who is filled with charity, understandeth this? Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth. Thou tremblest, because he curseth. And who doth curse? A saint. Without doubt he is listened to. But it is said unto the saints, Bless, and curse not. What is then the sense of the words, Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth? Let them utterly be consumed; let their spirit be taken away, that He may send forth His own Spirit, and they may be restored. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and the ungodly, so that they be no more. In what that they be no more, save as wicked men? Let them therefore be justified, that they may no longer be ungodly. The Psalmist saw this, and was filled with joy, and repeateth the first verse of the Psalm: Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Let our soul bless the Lord, brethren, since He hath deigned to give unto us both understanding and the power of language, and unto you attention and earnestness in hearing. Let each, as he can recall to mind what he hath heard, by mutual conversation stir up the food ye have received, ruminate on what ye have heard, let it not descend in you into the bowels of forgetfulness. Let the treasure to be desired rest upon your lips. These matters have been sought out and discovered with great labour, with great labour have they been announced and discoursed of; may our toil be fruitful unto you, and may our soul bless the Lord.

PSALM 105

Exposition

1. Ver. 1. The 104th Psalm is the first of those to which is prefixed the word Allelujah; the meaning of which word, or rather two words, is, Praise the Lord. For this reason he beginneth with praises: O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name; for this confession is to be understood as praise, just as these words of our Lord, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. For after commencing with praise, calling upon God is wont to follow, whereunto he that prayeth doth next add his longings: whence the Lord's Prayer itself hath at the commencement a very brief praise, in these words, Our Father, Which art in Heaven. The things prayed for, then follow. Thus it is said elsewhere in a Psalm: Unto Thee, O God, will we confess, and will call upon Thy Name. And this is elsewhere more clearly said: I will call upon the Lord with praises: so shall I be safe from my enemies; so in the text, O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name; which is the same as if he were to say, Praise the Lord, and call upon His Name. For He heareth him when he calleth, whom He seeth praising Him: He seeth him praise Him, whom He hath proved to love Him. And in what way did the Lord will the love of a good servant towards Himself to be shewn chiefly, save in this command which He giveth him, Feed My sheep: whence this also followeth, Tell the people what things He hath done; or rather, to translate literally from the Greek, as other Latin copies too have it, Preach the Gospel of His works among the Gentiles. Unto whom is this addressed, save unto the Evangelists in prophecy?

2. Ver. 2, 3. O sing unto Him, and play on instruments unto Him. Praise Him both by word and deed; for we sing with the voice, while we play with an instrument, that is, with our hands. Let your talking be of all His wondrous works; be ye praised in His holy Name. These two verses may without any absurdity seem paraphrases of the two words above; so that,

Let your talking be of all His wondrous works, may express the words, O sing unto Him; and what followeth, be ye praised in His holy Name, may be referred to the words, and play on instruments unto Him; the former relating to the 'good word' wherewith we sing unto Him, in which His wondrous works are told; the latter to the good work, in which sweet music is played unto Him, so that no man may wish to be praised for a good work on the score of his own power to do it. For this reason, after saying, be ye praised, which assuredly they who work well deservedly may, he added, in His holy Name, since he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Let them, therefore, who wish to play not unto themselves, but unto Him, beware of doing their righteousness before men, that they may be seen by them; otherwise they will receive no reward with the Father Which is in Heaven; but let their works shine before men, not with the view that they themselves be seen by men, but that others may see their good works, and glorify their Father Which is in Heaven. This is to be praised in His holy Name. Whence we read also in another Psalm: My soul shall be praised in the Lord: let the meek hear thereof, and be glad; which here in a sense followeth, Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord: for thus the meek are glad, who do not rival with a bitter jealousy those whom they imitate as already workers of good.

3. Ver. 4. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened (confortamini). This is very literally construed from the Greek, though it may seem not a Latin word: whence other copies have, 'be ye confirmed;' others, 'be ye corroborated.' So it is said to Him elsewhere: My strength; and, My strength will I ascribe unto Thee: that by seeking Him and approaching Him, we may be both enlightened and strengthened; that we may not from blindness be unable to see what ought to be done, or from weakness accomplish not even what we see. While these words, then, Come unto Him, and be enlightened, apply to seeing; those in the text relate to doing: Seek the Lord, and be strengthened. Seek, he saith, His face evermore. What is the face of the Lord, save the presence of God? Like the face of the wind, or the face of fire; for it is said, Like as the stubble before the face of the wind; and, like as wax melteth before the face of the fire. Many other instances occur in Scripture, where nothing else is intended to be understood by the face of the things named, than their presence. But what meaneth, Seek His face evermore? I know

indeed that to cling unto God is good for me; but if He is always being sought, when is He found? Did he mean by evermore, the whole of the life we live here, whence we become conscious that we ought thus to seek, since even when found He is still to be sought? To wit, faith hath already found Him, but hope still seeketh Him. But love hath both found Him through faith, and seeketh to have Him by sight, where He will then be found so as to satisfy us, and no longer to need our search. For unless faith discovered Him in this life, it would not be said, Seek the Lord; and when ye have found Him, Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Also, if when discovered by faith, He were not still to be diligently sought, it would not be said, For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it; and that which John saith, We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Or when we shall have seen Him face to face as He is, will He still have to be sought, and to be sought without end, because to be loved without end? For we say to any one present, 'I am not looking for you;' meaning, I do not like you. And thus he who is loved, is sought even when present, while there is constant love, which busies itself that he never become absent. Besides, he who loveth any one, even when he seeth him, without ever being tired of him, wisheth him ever to be present, that is, he always seeketh his presence. And truly this is the sense of the words, Seek His face evermore; meaning that discovery should not terminate that seeking, by which love is testified, but with the increase of love the seeking of the discovered One should increase.

4. Ver. 5. This fervid praiser of God doth now moderate himself, while he cometh down to wider expressions, nourishing his weak and infant love with the temporal wonders of God. Remember, he saith, His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. This passage seemeth like that, when He had replied to the question of Moses as to who He was, 'I am that I am,' and, Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you: (an expression which in ever so small part scarce a mind taketh in:) then mentioning His own Name, He mercifully mingled in His grace towards men, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; this is My Name for ever. By which He would have it to be understood, that they whose God He

declared Himself, lived with Him for ever, and He said this, which might be understood even by children, that they who by the great powers of love knew how to seek His face for evermore, might according to their capacity comprehend, I am that I am. If therefore it be of great concern to you either to see or to seek what He is, Remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.

5. Ver. 6, 7. Unto whom is it said, O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen? Ye, the seed of Abraham, ye, the seed of Jacob, remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. But that no man might attribute this to the single race of the Israelites in the flesh, and not understand that the sons of promise are the seed of Abraham rather than the seed of the flesh, to the former, of whom the Apostle speaketh, in addressing the Gentiles, Then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; he next addeth, He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world. This is said through Isaiah unto the free Jerusalem, our mother, Thy Redeemer, even thy God; of the whole earth shall He be called. Is He the God of the Jews only? God forbid! He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world: because the Church, where His judgments are preached, is in all the world. What then doth he say in another Psalm: He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, neither hath He made known unto them His judgments. This is said, because he wished one nation to be understood as belonging to the seed of Abraham: which has been called indeed from all nations, and all nations are so expressed in it, that there is one nation called into adoption. Beyond that nation He made known His judgments unto none; for although declared, they were not made known to those who believed not; because unless they believe, they will not understand.

6. Ver. 8–11. He hath been alway mindful of His covenant. Other copies read, for evermore; and this arises from the ambiguity of the Greek. But if we are to understand alway of this world and not of eternity, why, when he explaineth what covenant He was mindful of, doth he add, The word that He made to a thousand generations? Now this may be understood with a certain limitation; but he afterwards saith, Even the covenant that He made

with Abraham: and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament. Where there is no room for doubt: for the Greek has αἰώνιον, which our interpreters have never rendered by any other word than eternal; though scarce any authors in any passage have used αἰώνιος in the sense of everlasting. Unless perhaps, because they render αἶων as meaning time, in a more familiar way, they may choose to interpret αἰώνιον, not eternal, but ‘for an age;’ which I do not remember any one having ventured to do. But if in this passage the Old Testament is to be understood, on account of the land of Canaan; for thus the language of the Psalm runneth, And appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament; saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan: the lot of your inheritance: how is it to be understood as everlasting, since that earthly inheritance could not be everlasting? And for this reason it is called the Old Testament, because it is abolished by the New. But a thousand generations do not seem to signify any thing eternal, since they involve an end; and yet are also too numerous for this very temporal state. For by howsoever few years a generation is limited, such as in Greek is called γενέα, whereof the shortest period some have fixed is at fifteen years, after which period man hath the power of generation; what then are those thousand generations, not only from the time of Abraham, when that promise was made him, unto the New Testament, but from Adam himself down to the end of the world? For who would dare to say that this world should last for 15000 years?

7. Hence it seemeth to me that we ought not to understand here the Old Testament, which it said through the prophet was to be cancelled by the New: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Jacob, not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I led them out of the land of Egypt; but the covenant of faith, which the Apostle praiseth, when he setteth before us Abraham to imitate, and doth convict those who boasted in the works of the Law, in that Abraham believed in God even before his circumcision, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Lastly, after saying, He hath been mindful of His covenant unto an age; which we ought to understand as lasting for evermore, the covenant, namely, of justification and an eternal inheritance, which God hath promised to faith; he addeth,

and the Word that He commanded unto a thousand generations. What meaneth commanded? For the words, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, is not a command, but a promise: now a command is that which we ought to execute, a promise that which we should receive. The command then was faith, that the righteous should live by faith; and an eternal inheritance is set before this faith. A thousand generations, then, are, on account of the perfect number, to be understood for all; that is, as long as generation succeedeth generation, so long is it commanded to us to live by faith. This the people of God doth observe, the sons of promise who succeed by birth, and depart by death, until every generation be finished; and this is signified by the number thousand; because the solid square of the number ten, ten times ten, and this taken ten times amounts to a thousand. Even the covenant, he saith, which He made with Abraham: and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob, that is, Jacob himself, for a law. These are the very three patriarchs, whose God He calleth Himself in a special sense, whom the Lord also doth name in the New Testament, where He saith, Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. This is everlasting inheritance. For here also, where he saith, He appointed the same unto Jacob for a law; he sheweth that it is the law of faith, for he would not call a promise a law. For if there be work in the law, there is a reward in the promise. This is the work of God, saith our Lord, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent. This word therefore which He hath commanded, alway mindful of His covenant, that is, “the word of faith which we preach,” He appointed it unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, that is, because in the fulfilment of this very promise and law He was to give something eternal. Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance. How then is this eternal, unless it signifieth something eternal? For the land of promise is described as one flowing with milk and honey. All this signifieth that grace, by which we taste how sweet is the Lord, which belongeth not to all men; for all men have not faith. For this reason he added, the lot of your inheritance. Whence in another Psalm, the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, is understood to speak, where he saith, The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage. Why the land is called Canaan, the interpretation of the word doth disclose; for Canaan meaneth humble.

Now if it be referred to that declaration of holy Noah, when he announced that this same Canaan should be his brother's servant, to this belongs also servile fear. But the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever. Therefore the Canaanite is excluded, and the land of promise given to the seed of Abraham. For perfect love casteth out fear, so that the Son abideth in the house for ever. Whence it is said, And to Israel for an everlasting testament.

8. Ver. 12. He next followeth out the history well known in the truth of the holy Scriptures. When they were in small numbers, very few, and they strangers in the land; that is, in the land of Canaan. While the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelt there, before they received this inheritance, in their own families they were very few, and they strangers in the land. But some copies have the words very few, and they strangers, in the accusative case, the translator having turned the Greek phrase too literally into Latin. If we were to render the whole clause in this way, we must say, that they were very few, and they strangers; but the phrase, while they were, is the meaning of the Greek; and the verb, to be, takes not an accusative, but a nominative after it. For we cannot say, 'cum essent paucissimos,' but 'cum essent paucissimi.'

9. Ver. 13–15. When therefore they were in small number, (or small in number,) very few, and they strangers in the land, what time as they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. This is a repetition of what he had said, 'from one nation to another.' He suffered no man to do them harm: but reproveth even kings for their sakes. Touch not, He said, Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm. He declareth the words of God chiding or reproving kings, that they might not harm the holy fathers, while they were small in number, very few, and they strangers in the land of Canaan. Although these words be not read in the books of that history, yet they are to be understood as either secretly spoken, as God speaketh in the hearts of men by unseen and true visions, or even as announced through an Angel. For both the king of Gerar and the king of the Egyptians were warned from Heaven not to harm Abraham, and another king not to harm Isaac, and others not to harm Jacob; while they were very few, and strangers, before he went over into Egypt to sojourn with his sons:

which is understood to be herein mentioned; they went from one nation to another: from one kingdom to another people. But since it occurred to ask, before they passed over and multiplied in Egypt, how so few in number, and those strangers in a foreign land, could maintain themselves: he next addeth, He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reproveth even kings for their sakes. Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.

10. But it may well excite a question, in what sense they were styled (Christs, or) anointed, before there was any unction, from which this title was given to the kings; which began with Saul, to whom David succeeded in the kingdom; and from thence the rest of the kings, both of Judah and Israel, were anointed in the continuation of the sacred custom: in which unction was figured the one true Anointed (Christ), unto Whom it is said, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. Whence then were those patriarchs at that time called anointed? For that they were prophets, we read concerning Abraham; and certainly, what is manifestly said of him, should be understood of them also. Are they styled Christs, because, even though secretly, yet they were already Christians? For although the flesh of Christ came from them, nevertheless Christ came before them; for He thus answered the Jews, Before Abraham was, I am. But how could they not know Him, or not believe in Him; since they are called prophets for this very reason, because, though somewhat darkly, they announced the Lord beforehand? Whence He saith Himself openly, Your father Abraham desired to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad. For no man was ever reconciled unto God outside of that faith which is in Christ Jesus, either before His Incarnation, or after: as it is most truly defined by the Apostle; For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

11. Ver. 16. He then beginneth to relate how it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. He called, he saith, for a famine upon the land: and brake all the staff of bread. But He had sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold to be a bondservant. Thus it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. But the expressions of the holy Scriptures are not to be negligently passed by. He called, he saith, for a

famine upon the land; as if famine were some person, or some animated body, or some spirit that would obey Him Who called; whereas famine is a wasting that cometh for want of food, and is such in those who suffer from it, as any disease. For as the cessation of a disease usually is effected by medicine, thus also famine is healed in a manner by nourishment. What then meaneth, He called for a famine? Have then the evils which men suffer, certain evil angels set over them? (for in another Psalm also he saith, that God afflicted men by sending evil angels among them, His judgment being far from erring;) and perhaps these words, He called for a famine, mean the angel set over famine, and styled from the name of the office over which he was set. Under this impression the old Romans consecrated some such deities, as the goddess Fever, and the god Paleness. Or meaneth it, as is more credible, He said there should be famine; so that calling be the same thing as mentioning by name; mentioning by name, as speaking; speaking, as commanding? For He called for a famine, Who calleth those things which are not as though they were. Nor doth the Apostle say here, He calleth those things which be not, that they may be; but, as though they were. For with God that hath already happened which, according to His disposition, is fixed for the future; for of Him it is elsewhere said, He Who made things to come. And here when famine happened, then it is said to have been called, that is, that that which had been determined in His secret government, might be realized. Lastly, he at once expounds, how He called for the famine, saying, He brake all the staff of bread.

12. Ver. 17. But He had sent a man before them. What man? Even Joseph. How did He send him? Joseph was sold to be a bond-servant. When this happened, it was the sin of his brethren, and, nevertheless, God sent Joseph into Egypt. We should therefore meditate on this important and necessary subject, how God useth well the evil works of men, as they on the other hand use ill the good works of God.

13. Ver. 18, 19. Next he doth relate the story, mentioning what Joseph suffered in his low estate, and how he was raised on high. His feet they hurt in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul, until his word came. That Joseph was put in irons, we do not indeed read; but we ought no ways to doubt that it was so. For some things might be passed over in that history,

which nevertheless would not escape the Holy Spirit, Who speaketh in these Psalms. We understand by the iron which entered into his soul, the tribulation of stern necessity; for he did not say body, but soul. There is a somewhat similar expression in the Gospel, where Simeon saith unto Mary, Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against: yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. That is, the Passion of the Lord, which was a fall unto many, and in which the secrets of many hearts were revealed, since their sentiments respecting the Lord were extorted from them, without doubt made His own Mother exceeding sorrowful, heavily struck with human bereavement. Now Joseph was in this tribulation, until his word came, with which he truly interpreted dreams: whence he was introduced to the king, that unto him also he might foretell what would happen in respect to his dreams. But since he said, Until his words were heard, that we might not altogether so understand his, that any one might think so great an event was to be ascribed unto man; he at once added, The word of the Lord inflamed him; or, as other copies have it more closely from the Greek, The word of the Lord fired him, that he also might be reputed amongst those, to whom it is said, "Receive ye praise in His holy Name." The word of the Lord inflamed him. With reason when the Holy Ghost was sent by our Lord, there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire; and the Apostle saith, fervent in spirit. From that fire those depart, of whom it is said, The love of many shall wax cold.

14. Ver. 20, 22. The king sent and loosed him, the prince of the peoples, and let him go free. The king is the same as the prince of the peoples: he loosed him from his bonds, and let him go free from his prison. He made him lord also of his house: and ruler of all his substance. That he might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his old men wisdom. The Greek hath, and teach his elders wisdom. Which might altogether be rendered to the letter thus; Might inform his princes like unto himself, and make his elders wise. The word translated old men being presbyters or elders, not gerontas, old men: and to teach wisdom being from the Greek to sophize, which cannot be rendered by a single word in Latin, and is from the word sophia, wisdom, different from prudence, which is in Greek phronesis. Yet we do not read this in the high elevation of Joseph, as we read not of fetters in his

low estate. But how could it happen that so great a man, the worshipper of the One True God, whilst in Egypt, should have been intent upon the nourishing of bodies, and the government of carnal matters only, and have felt no anxiety for souls, and how he could render them better? But those things are written in that history, which, according to the intention of the writer, in whom was the Holy Spirit, were judged sufficient for signifying future events in that narration.

15. Ver. 23. Joseph also came into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham. Israel is the same with Jacob, as is Egypt with the land of Ham. Here it is very plainly shewn, that the Egyptian race sprang from the seed of Cham, the son of Noah, whose first-born was Canaan. So that in those copies wherein in this passage Canaan is read, we must alter the reading. It is better construed, was a stranger, than dwelt, as other copies have it: which would be the same as ‘was an inhabitant,’ for it meaneth nothing different; the very same word is used in the Greek passage above, where it is said, Very few, and they strangers in the land. Moreover, the state of an ‘incola’ or ‘accola’ doth not signify a native, but a stranger. Behold how they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. What had been briefly proposed, hath been briefly explained in the narration. But from what kingdom they passed over to another people may well be asked. For they were not yet reigning in the land of Canaan, because the kingdom of the people of Israel had not yet been established there. How then can it be understood, except by anticipation, because the kingdom of their seed was destined there to exist?

16. Ver. 24. Next is related what happened in Egypt. And He increased, he saith, His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies. Even the whole of this is briefly set forth, in order that the manner in which it took place may be afterwards related. For the people of God was not made stronger than their enemies the Egyptians, at the time when their male offspring were slain, or when they were worn out with making bricks; but when by His powerful hand, by the signs and portents of the Lord their God, they became objects of fear and of honour, until the opposition of the hardened king was overcome, and the Red Sea overwhelmed the persecutor with his army.

17. Ver. 25. As if we should ask, how that which he had briefly expressed in the words, He made His people stronger than their enemies, happened, he begins now to say, and determines this too in his narration: And He turned their heart so, that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. Is it to be in any wise understood or believed, that God turneth man's heart to do sin? is it not a sin, or is it a slight sin, to hate the people of God, and to deal untruly with His servants? who would say it is not? Is therefore God in any wise the author of these so heavy sins, Who is not to be believed to be the author of any even the very slightest sin? Who is wise, and he will understand these things? For this is that wonderful goodness of God, by which He useth for good even the wicked, either angels or men. For while they themselves are wicked by their own fault, He doeth good out of their wickedness. For they were not good before they hated His people; but being malignant and ungodly, they were such as would readily envy their prosperous sojourners. And so, in that He multiplied His own people, this bountiful act turned the wicked to envy. For envy is the hatred of another's prosperity. In this sense, therefore, He turned their heart, so that through envy they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. It was not then by making their hearts evil, but by doing good to His people, that He turned their hearts, that were evil of their own accord, to hatred. For He did not pervert a righteous heart, but turned one perverted of its own accord to the hatred of His people, while He was to make a good use of that evil; not by making them evil, but by lavishing blessings upon those, which the wicked might most readily envy. The following verses, which are sung in praise of Him when Allelujah is chanted, shew how He used this hatred of theirs, both for the trial of His own people, and for the glory of His Name, which is profitable for us.

18. Ver. 26. He sent Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen him. Whom He had chosen, would be sufficient; but there is no difficulty in the addition of him. It is a phrase of Scripture, as, The land in which they shall dwell in it: a phrase which the divine pages are full of.

19. Ver. 27. He set forth in them the words of His tokens, and of His wonders in the land of Ham. We ought not to understand by the words of His tokens, words literally, words with which the tokens and wonders were

worked, that is, which they uttered, that these tokens and wonders might take place. For many were performed without words, either with a rod, or with outstretched hand, or by ashes sent towards heaven. But since their deeds were not destitute of some signification, even as the words we speak; for this reason they also are called words, not relating to voices and sounds, but to tokens and wonders. He set forth in them, that is, He wrought through them.

20. Ver. 28. He sent darkness, and made it dark. This is also written among the plagues with which the Egyptians were smitten. But what followeth, is variously read in different copies. For some have, and they provoked His words; while others read, and they provoked not His words; but the reading first mentioned we have found in most; while, where the negative particle is added, we could hardly discover two copies. But perhaps the false reading has abounded owing to the easy sense; for what is easier understood than this, They provoked His words, that is, by their contumacious rebellions? We have endeavoured to explain the other reading also according to some true sense: and this for the present occurs; They provoked not His words, that is, in Moses and Aaron; because they most patiently bore with a very stiffnecked people, until all things which God had determined to work by them, were fulfilled in order.

21. Ver. 29, 30. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. He made their land frogs, yea, even in the king's chambers: as if he were to say, He turned their land into frogs. For there was so great a multitude of frogs, that this might well be said by hyperbole.

22. Ver. 31. He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, and lice in all their quarters. If it be asked when He spake, it was in His Word before it took place; and there it was, without time, at what time it should take place: although even then He commanded it to be done, when it was to be done, through Angels, and through his servants Moses and Aaron.

23. Ver. 32. He made their rains hail. It is a similar expression to the former, He made their land frogs; except that the whole land was not actually turned into frogs, though the whole of the rain may have been turned into hail. A burning fire in their land: understand, He sent.

24. Ver. 33. He smote their vines also and fig-trees; and brake every tree of their coasts. This was done by the violence of the hail, and by lightnings; whence he spoke of the fire as burning.

25. Ver. 34. He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar, of which there was no number. The locusts and the caterpillars are one plague: of which the one is the parent, the other the offspring.

26. Ver. 35. And did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured the fruit of the ground. Even grass is fruit, as Scripture is wont to speak, which calleth even the ripe corn grass; but it wished these two things to harmonise in number with the two which it had spoken of before, that is, the locust and the caterpillar. But the whole of this doth belong to the variety of speech, which is a remedy for weariness, not to any difference of senses.

27. Ver. 36. He smote every first-born in their land: even the first-fruits of all their strength. This is the last plague, excepting the death in the Red Sea. The first-fruits of all their strength, I imagine to be an expression derived from the first-born of cattle. These plagues are ten in number, but they are not all mentioned, nor in the same order in which they are there read to have happened. For praise-giving is free from the law which bindeth one who is relating or composing a history. And since the Holy Spirit is the Author and Dictator, through the Prophet, of this praise; by the very same authority with which He guided him who wrote that history, he doth both mention something to have taken place which is not there read, and passeth over what is there read.

28. Ver. 37. Now he addeth this also to the praises of God, that He led the Israelites out of Egypt enriched with silver and gold; because even they were then in such a condition, that they could not as yet despise the just and due, though temporal, reward of their toils; nor in the deceit which they practised upon the Egyptians, of whom they sought a loan of gold and silver, is God to be imagined either to command such tricks, or to approve of them, if committed, by those whose hearts are on high. They were rather permitted than commanded to do these things, through those words of God, Who saw so well their heart, and weighed their lusts; not however without some improvement of their carnal mind, because they did this unto those

who suffered such things justly, and took what ought to have been paid to them as their due from wicked men, although deceitfully. But God divinely used their weakness, as He used the iniquity of the Egyptians, to figure and announce beforehand all that was needful through these acts. He brought them forth also in silver and gold: this too is a Scripture idiom; for in silver and gold is said for the same as if it had been said with silver and gold: there was not one feeble person among their tribes: in body, not in mind. This also was a great blessing of God, that in this necessity of removal there was no infirm person.

29. Ver. 38. Egypt was glad at their departing: for their fear fell upon them; that is, the fear of the Hebrews upon the Egyptians. For their fear is not that with which the Hebrews feared, but that with which they were feared. Some one will say, how then were the Egyptians unwilling to dismiss them? why did they let them go as if they expected them to return? why did they lend them gold and silver, as to men who were to return, and to repay them, if Egypt was glad at their departing? But we must understand, after that final destruction of the Egyptians, and the terrible overthrow of the mighty pursuing army in the Red Sea, that the rest of the Egyptians feared lest the Hebrews should return, and with great ease crush the relics of them. Then was fulfilled the former passage, where after these words, He increased them exceedingly, he added, He made them stronger than their enemies. To explain the sentiment expressed in this verse, he added the rest of the narration in this praise of their overthrow, as far as where he said, Egypt was glad at their departing, for they were afraid of them; as if illustrating what he had stated, that He made His people stronger than their enemies.

30. Ver. 39. He now proceedeth to the divine blessings which were conferred upon them as they wandered in the desert. He spread out a cloud to be their covering: and fire to give them light in the night season. This is as clear as it is well known.

31. Ver. 40. They asked, and the quail came. They did not desire quails, but flesh. But since the quail is flesh, and in this Psalm he speaketh not of the provocation of those who did not please God, but of the faith of the elect, the true seed of Abraham; they are to be understood to have desired that that might come which might crush the murmurs of those who provoked.

Then in the next line, And He filled them with the bread of heaven, he has not indeed named manna, but it is obscure to none who hath read those records.

32. Ver. 41. He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out: so that rivers ran in the dry places. This fact too is understood as soon as read.

33. Ver. 42–44. But in all these blessings of His, God doth commend in Abraham the merit of faith. For the Psalmist goeth on to say, For why? He remembered His holy promise, which He made to Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness. What he said, His people, he has repeated in, His chosen. So also what he said, with joy, he has repeated in, with gladness. And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they took the labours of the people in possession. The lands of the heathen, and the labours of the people, are the same; and the words, He gave, are repeated in these, they took in possession.

34. Ver. 45. And as if we asked for what good these blessings were vouchsafed? that the happiness given in their temporal affairs to the people of God might not be thought the highest good, he hath at once referred it to another end, where the highest good ought to be sought. That, he saith, they might keep His statutes, and seek out His law. Where it is to be understood, that the servants of God and the chosen sons of promise, the true and genuine seed of Abraham, imitating the faith of Abraham, receive these earthly blessings from God, not that they may be dissolved in luxury through them, or become torpid in a perverse security; but that they may by Divine mercy have all these things prepared, in the search of which they might have been occupied in the most busy toils, in order that they may have leisure whence everlasting good may be acquired; i.e. That they may keep His statutes, and seek out His law. Lastly, since by the seed of Abraham he wished those to be understood here, who were truly the seed of Abraham, such as were not wanting even in that people; as the Apostle Paul clearly sheweth, when he saith, But not in all of them was God well pleased; for if He was not pleased with all, surely there were some in whom He was well pleased: since then this Psalm praiseth such men as this, he hath said nothing here of the iniquities and provocations and bitterness of those with whom God was not well pleased. But since not only the justice

but also the mercy of Almighty God, the merciful, was shewn even unto the wicked; concerning these attributes the rest of the Psalm pursueth the praises of God. And yet both sorts were in one people: nor did the latter pollute the good with the contagion of their iniquities. For, the Lord knoweth who are His; and if he cannot separate in this world from wicked men, yet, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

35. To endeavour, then, so to speak, to discover the hidden soul in the body of this Psalm, that is, the inner meaning in what may be called the outward words: it seemeth to me that the seed of Abraham, who are all the sons of promise, who belong to the eternal inheritance of an everlasting covenant, are admonished to choose unto themselves God, as it were, as that very inheritance, and to worship Him with no further object, that is, on His own account, not on account of any reward beyond Himself; and to do this, praising, calling upon Him, preaching, doing good works by faith, not for their own, but for His glory, rejoicing in hope, fervent in love. All this soundeth in these verses: (ver. 1–4.) Confess ye unto the Lord, and call upon His Name: tell the people what things He hath done. O let your songs be of Him, and play unto Him: and let your talking be of all His wondrous works. Receive ye praise in His holy Name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened: seek His face evermore.

36. Next, in order to feed the hearts of the young, that they may be strengthened in the faith, examples of the Patriarchs are brought forward, both of their faith, and of the promise of God, that by imitating and hoping we may be their seed, not of the race of the Hebrews only, but those as many as receive that grace in all the earth. All of which is contained in these verses: (ver. 5–11.) Remember His marvellous works that He hath done: His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. O ye seed of Abraham His servant: ye children of Jacob His chosen. He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the earth. He hath been alway mindful of His covenant, the word that He commanded to a thousand generations; even the covenant that He made with Abraham, and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and unto Israel for an everlasting testament: saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the line of your

inheritance. All which things, in proportion to my small measure of ability, I have expounded, in what sense they were to be taken.

37. Here it would occur to the mind of slight faith: if then God is to be worshipped for nought, and He Himself to be sought from Himself as the inheritance of the everlasting covenant; doth not that inheritance even in the fulness of His mercy leave unprovided for the mortal life of those who seek Him, and their temporal necessities? Hear attentively what He gave unto our fathers, either those whom He made examples of faith, or those who, while they sprang from their flesh, imitated also their faith. (Ver. 12–15.) When they were yet but in small number, and they strangers in the land; that is, in the land of Canaan; what time as they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reprov'd even kings for their sake. Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.

38. But if ye ask, how they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; hear, (ver. 16–23.) He called for a famine upon the land, and brake all the staff of bread. But He had sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold to be a bond-servant; whose feet they humbled in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul; until his word came: the utterance of the Lord inflamed him. The king sent, and loosed him, the prince of the people let him go free. He made him lord also of his house, and ruler of all his substance; that he might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his elders wisdom. Israel also came into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham. Behold, how they went from one nation to the other; from one kingdom to another people.

39. Ver. 24–38. And He increased His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies. But if ye wish to know how He made them stronger than their enemies, listen: He turned their heart, so that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. Then sent He Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen. He shewed forth in them the words of His tokens, and wonders in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they provoked His words. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. He made their land frogs, yea, even in their king's chambers. He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies,

and lice in all their quarters. He gave them hailstones for rain, and a burning fire in their land. He smote their vines also, and fig-trees, and destroyed every tree of their coasts. He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar that was without number: and did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured all the fruit of their ground. And He smote all the first-born in the land, even the first-fruits of all their strength. He brought them forth also with silver and gold; there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad at their departing, for their fear was fallen upon them. Behold in what manner He made His people stronger than their enemies.

40. Since then His justice inflicted these evils upon their enemies; hear now even the temporal blessings which His lovingkindness lavished upon themselves. (Ver. 39–45.) He spread out a cloud to be their protection, and fire to give light in the night season. They asked, and the quail came, and He filled them with the bread of Heaven. He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out, so that rivers ran in the dry places. For why? He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness; and gave them the lands of the heathen, and they took the labours of the people in possession. Not that they should worship Him on account of these blessings, but that they should refer and apply these also to everlasting good; that is, that they might keep His statutes, and seek out His law. Whatever other blessings therefore God giveth, are to be used with a view to His worship for nought: but that worship in itself is to have no reference to those other goods, which God giveth; for then only will it be for nought. The enemy, challenging unto this contest, dared to say unto God, Doth Job fear God for nought? Moreover, if Joseph, sold as a bond-servant, and humbled, and exalted, made way for the temporal good of the people of God, that it might be made stronger than its enemies; how much more doth Jesus, Who was sold and humbled by His brethren in the flesh, and exalted in the heavens, make way for the everlasting good of God's people, triumphing over the Devil and his angels? Hear therefore, ye seed of Abraham, boasting not in his flesh, but imitating his faith; hear, ye servants of God, and ye elect of God, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. If there are hard temptations in this world, think upon Joseph in the prison, Jesus on

the Cross. If prosperity in temporal concerns attend you, use not God on account of it, but use it on account of God: nor think that He is worshipped by His worshippers for the sake of the necessities of this life, which He giveth even unto His blasphemers; but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

PSALM 106

Exposition

1. The 105th Psalm also hath the title Allelujah prefixed to it: and this twice. But some say, that one Allelujah belongeth to the end of the former Psalm, the other to the beginning of this. And they assert, that all the Psalms bearing this title have Allelujah at the end, but not all at the beginning; so that they will not allow any Psalm which hath not Allelujah at the end, to have it at the beginning; supposing that what seemeth to belong to the commencement, really belongeth to the end of the former Psalm. But until they persuade us by some sure proofs that this is true, we will follow the general custom, which, whenever it findeth Allelujah, attributes it to the same Psalm, at the head of which it is found. For there are very few copies (and I have found this in none of the Greek copies, which I have been able to inspect) which have Allelujah at the end of the 150th Psalm; after which there is no other which belongeth to the same canon. But not even this could outweigh custom, although all the copies had it so. For it might be that, with some reference to the praise of God, the whole book of Psalms, which is said to consist of five books, (for they say that the books severally end where it is written Amen, Amen,) might be closed with this last Allelujah, after all that hath been sung; nor, on account of the end of the 150th Psalm, do I see that it is necessary that all the Psalms entitled Allelujah, should have Allelujah at the end. But when there is a double Allelujah at the head of a Psalm, why as our Lord sometimes once, sometimes twice over, saith Amen, in the same way Allelujah may not sometimes be used once, sometimes twice, I know not: especially, since as in this 105th, both the Allelujahs are placed after the mark by which the number of the Psalm is described, whereas the one, if it belonged to the end of the former Psalm, ought to have been placed before the number; and the Allelujah which belonged to the Psalm of this number, should have been

written after the number. But perhaps even in this an ignorant habit hath prevailed, and some reason may be assigned of which we are as yet uninformed, so that the judgment of truth ought rather to be our guide than the prejudice of custom. In the mean time, before we are fully instructed in this matter, whenever we find Allelujah written, whether once or twice, after the number of the Psalm, according to the most usual custom of the Church, we will ascribe it to that Psalm to which the same number is prefixed; confessing that we both believe the mysteries of all the titles in the Psalms, and of the order of the same Psalms, to be important, and that we have not yet been able, as we wish, to penetrate them.

2. Ver. 1. But I find these two Psalms, the 104th and 105th, so connected, that in one of them, the first, the people of God is praised in the person of the elect, of whom there is no complaint, whom I imagine to have been there in those with whom God was well pleased; but in the following Psalm those are mentioned among the same people who have provoked God; though the mercy of God was not wanting even to these. But these things are said in the person of those who turn and pray for pardon; and examples are given of those towards whom, even though sinners, the mercy of God hath been richly shewn. This Psalm therefore beginneth like the former; Confess ye unto the Lord. But in that Psalm these words follow: And call upon His Name: whereas here, it is as follows, For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever. Wherefore in this passage a confession of sins may be understood; for after a few verses we read, We have sinned with our fathers, we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly; but in the words, For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever, there is chiefly the praise of God, and in His praise confession. Although when any one confesses his sins, he ought to do so with praise of God; nor is a confession of sins a pious one, unless it be without despair, and with calling upon the mercy of God. It therefore doth contain His praise, whether in words, when it calleth Him gracious and merciful, or in the feeling only, when he believeth this. For that publican, of whom these words alone are mentioned, God be merciful to me a sinner, although he said not, for Thou art gracious and merciful, or any thing of this sort: nevertheless would not say that, unless he believed this; since he prayed with hope, which could not exist without that faith. The praise of God therefore may be sincere and pious, where there is

no confession of sins; and this praise is much more frequently styled confession in the Scriptures: but there is no pious and profitable confession of sins where God is not praised, either in the heart, or in the mouth and language. Some copies read, for He is gracious, others, for He is sweet: one Greek word, χρηστός, having been differently translated. Also in the words, for His mercy endureth to the end of the world; the Greek hath εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, which may be interpreted for ever. If that mercy be here understood, in respect of which no man can be happy without God; we may render it better, for ever: but if it be that mercy which is shewn to the wretched, that they may either be consoled in misery, or even freed from it; it is better construed, to the end of the world, in which there will never be wanting wretched persons to whom that mercy may be shewn. Unless indeed any man ventured to say, that some mercy of God will not be wanting even to those who shall be condemned with the devil and his angels; not a mercy by which they may be freed from that condemnation, but that it may be in some degree softened for them: and that thus the mercy of God may be styled eternal, as exercised over their eternal misery. Now we read, that some will receive a more tolerable condemnation than others; yet who would dare to say, that that punishment to which any one hath been delivered will be mitigated, or have any pause for certain intervals, since the rich man was not counted worthy of one drop of water? But on so important a point we must discourse when at leisure; we shall already have said enough respecting it, as concerneth this Psalm.

3. Ver. 2. Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord? Full of the consideration of the Divine works, while he entreateth His mercy, Who, he saith, can express the mighty acts of the Lord, or make all His praises heard? We must supply what was said above, to make the sense complete here, thus, Who shall make all His praises heard? that is, who is sufficient to make all His praises heard? Shall make them heard, he saith; that is, cause that they be heard; shewing, that the mighty acts of the Lord and His praises are so to be spoken of, that they may be preached to those who hear them. But who can make all heard? Is it that as the next words are, Blessed are they that alway keep judgment, and do righteousness in every time; he perhaps meant those praises of His, which are understood as His works in His commandments? For it is God, saith the Apostle, Who worketh in you.

And it is said to the seed of Abraham, Sing unto Him, and play unto Him: which we understand to be so spoken, as if it had been said, Both speak and do good things in His praise: and the two following verses we have seen agree with the two words, singing and playing: so that, Let your talking be of all His wondrous works, agreeth with, Sing unto Him, and, Receive ye praise in His holy Name, with, Play unto Him. Thus unto this seed our Lord Himself saith, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Here therefore, considering the commandments of God themselves, the works of which commandments are the praises of Him Who doth work in His chosen, he saith, Who shall express the mighty acts of the Lord? Since He worketh in these things in a manner that cannot be spoken. Who will do all His praises heard? that is, who, when he hath heard them, doth all His praises? which are the works of His commandments. As far as they are done, although all which are heard are not performed, He is to be praised, Who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. For this reason, while he might have said, all His commandments, or, all the works of His commandments; he preferred saying, His praises, because, as hath been said, in so far as they are performed, He is to be praised. Who, nevertheless, is able to do these praises when heard? that is, when they have been heard, who is capable of performing them all?

4. Ver. 3. Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do righteousness alway: that is, from when they begin their life of time. For he that endureth to the end, shall be saved. But it may appear a repetition: it may be thought, that to keep judgment and to do righteousness are the same: that in the former verse alway should be understood, as in the latter, Blessed; so that, expressing fully what is understood, we should say, Blessed are they that alway keep judgment: and blessed are they that alway do righteousness. But unless there were some difference between judgment and righteousness, we should not read in another Psalm, Until righteousness turn again unto judgment. The Scripture, indeed, loveth to place these two words together; as, Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat; and this, He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day; where there is apparently a repetition of the same sentiment. And perhaps on account of the resemblance of signification one may be put for

the other, either judgment for righteousness, or righteousness for judgment: yet, if they be spoken of in their proper sense, I doubt not that there is some difference; viz. that he is said to keep judgment who judgeth rightly, but he to do righteousness who acts righteously. And I think that the verse, Until righteousness turn again unto judgment, may not absurdly be understood in this sense: that here also those are called blessed, who keep judgment in faith, and do righteousness in deed. For a time will come when judgment, which is now kept in faith, may be exercised in deed, when righteousness shall turn again unto judgment, that is, when the righteous shall have received the power of judging those righteously, by whom they are at present unrighteously judged. Whence elsewhere the very Body of Christ is understood to say, When I receive the time, I shall judge righteousnesses. This, if literally translated, would rather stand thus, I will judge equities. He said not, When I receive the time, I will do righteousness; because it must be done at all times, even as he here saith, who do righteousness alway.

5. Ver. 4, 5. Next, since God justifieth, that is, maketh men righteous, by healing them from their iniquities, a prayer followeth: Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: that is, that we may be among those with whom Thou art well pleased; since God is not well pleased with them all. O visit me with Thy salvation. This is the Saviour Himself, in Whom sins are forgiven, and souls healed, that they may be able to keep judgment, and do righteousness; and since they who here speak know such men to be blessed, they pray for this themselves. Of that salvation it is elsewhere said, That we may know Thy way upon earth: and as if we asked, ‘where upon earth?’ he added, among all nations. Again, as if we asked, what way? he added, Thy saving health. Of Him spoke the aged Simeon, For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation Who said of Himself, I am the way. Visit us, then, with Thy salvation, that is, with Thy Christ. To see the felicity of Thy chosen, and to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: that is, visit us for this reason with Thy salvation, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people. For felicity some copies read sweetness; as in the former passage, For He is gracious; where others read, for He is sweet. And it is the same word in the Greek, as is elsewhere read, The Lord shall shew sweetness: which some have translated felicity, others bounty. But what meaneth, Visit us to see the

felicity of Thy chosen: that is, that happiness which Thou givest to Thine elect: except that we may not remain blind, as those unto whom it is said, But now ye say we see: therefore your sin remaineth. For the Lord giveth sight to the blind, not by their own merits, but in the felicity He giveth to His chosen, which is the meaning of the felicity of Thy chosen: as, the help of my countenance, is not of myself, but is my God. And we speak of our daily bread, as ours, but we add, Give unto us. Visit us, then, with Thy salvation, to see (that is, that we may see) the felicity of Thy chosen, and to rejoice (that is, that we may rejoice) in the gladness of Thy people. By the one people of God we ought to understand the whole seed of Abraham; but the sons of the promise, not of the flesh. They therefore, who here speak, desire to have the gladness of the same people. And what is the gladness of this people, save their God? To Whom is said, Thou art my hope, deliver me: and, O Lord, the light of Thy countenance is signed upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart: viz. the highest, the unchangeable good, which worketh good, which is God Himself. That Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance. I wonder this verse hath been so interpreted in many copies, since the Greek phrase is one and the same in these three verses, so that if this verse be rightly read, That Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance; it may rightly be said, That Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: the whole sense being thus arranged: Visit us with Thy salvation, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, and be praised with Thine inheritance. Whereas according to our own reading, Visit us, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: we ought next to read, and that we may be praised with Thine inheritance: to which inheritance it was said, Receive ye praise in His holy Name. But since this seemeth a doubtful expression, if that sense be true according to which interpreters have preferred, That Thou mayest be praised, the two preceding verses also must be so understood, because, as I have said, there is one Greek expression in these three verses; so that the whole should be thus understood, Visit us with Thy salvation, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen; that is, visit us for this purpose, that Thou mayest cause us to be there, and mayest see us there; that Thou mayest rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, that is, that Thou mayest be said to rejoice, since they rejoice in Thee; that Thou mayest be praised with

Thine inheritance, that is, mayest be praised with it, since it may not be praised save for Thy sake. Whether then the words, ‘to see,’ ‘to rejoice,’ ‘to praise,’ are to be understood in this way or in the other, the meaning is, they wish to be visited in God’s salvation, that is, in Christ, that they may not be separated from His people, and from those in whom God is well pleased.

6. Ver. 6, 7. But let us hear what they next confess: we have sinned with our fathers: we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly. What meaneth, with our fathers? Is it in the sense in which the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, that Levi gave tithes with Abraham, since he was in his loins, when he gave tithes to Melchisedec the priest; so these also sinned with their fathers, in whose loins they were when they were in Egypt? For those who lived in the time when this Psalm was written, and much more their descendants, (since it might either be said of those then alive, or prophesied of those to come,) were far distant from the age of those who sinned in Egypt, not understanding the wondrous works of God. For this followeth, in explaining how they sinned: Our fathers, he saith, regarded not Thy wonders in Egypt; and the many other things which he doth relate of their sins. Or is, we have sinned with our fathers, to be understood as meaning, we have sinned like our fathers, that is, by imitating their sins? If it be so, it should be supported by some example of this mode of expression: which did not occur to me when I sought on this occasion an instance of any one saying that he had sinned, or done any thing, with another, whom he had imitated by a similar act after a long interval of time.

7. What meaneth then, Our fathers understood not Thy wonders; save this, they did not know what Thou didst wish to convince them of by these miracles? What indeed, save life eternal, and a good, not temporal, but immutable, which is waited for only through endurance? For this reason they impatiently murmured, and provoked, and they asked to be blessed with present and fugitive blessings; Neither were they mindful of the greatness of Thy mercy. He reproveth both their understanding and memory. Understanding there was need of, that they might meditate unto what eternal blessings God was calling them through these temporal ones; and of memory, that at least they might not forget the temporal wonders which had been wrought, and might faithfully believe, that by the same

power which they had already experienced, God would free them from the persecution of their enemies; whereas they forgot the aid which He had given them in Egypt, by means of such wonders, to crush their enemies. And they provoked, as they went up to the sea, even to the Red Sea. The copy which I was reading from, had the passage thus; and a star had been prefixed to these two last words, even the Red Sea: which doth mark those readings which occur in the Hebrew, and not in the Septuagint translation. But most of the copies, whether Greek or Latin, which I have been able to inspect, read thus: and they provoked, or, and this is more literally from the Greek, and they wrought bitterness, as they went up in the Red Sea. He who readeth that history, when they went out from Egypt, and passed through the Red Sea, grieveth for their unbelief, that they were in so great alarm and despair, presently after so many and so great miracles in Egypt; which great goodness of God, he saith, that they remembered not. The word, went up, is used, from the position of the land being such, that we speak of going down from the land of Canaan into Egypt, and of going up from Egypt into it. We ought especially to notice how the Scripture doth censure the not understanding that which ought to have been understood, and the not remembering that which ought to have been remembered; which men are unwilling to have ascribed to their own fault, for no other reason than that they may pray less, and be less humble unto God, in Whose sight they should confess what they are, and might by praying for His aid, become what they are not. For it is better to accuse even the sins of ignorance and negligence, that they may be done away with, than to excuse them, so that they remain; and it is better to clear them off by calling upon God, than to clench them by provoking Him.

8. Ver. 8. He addeth, that God acted not according to their unbelief. Nevertheless, he saith, He saved them for His Name's sake: that He might make His power to be known: not on account of any deservings of their own.

9. Ver. 9. He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up. We do not read that any voice was sent forth from Heaven to rebuke the sea; but he hath called the Divine Power by which this was effected, a rebuke: unless indeed any one may choose to say, that the sea was secretly rebuked, so that the

waters might hear, and yet men could not. The power by which God acteth is very abstruse and mysterious, a power which He causeth that even things devoid of sense instantly obey at His will. So He led them through the deeps, as through a wilderness. He calleth a multitude of waters the deeps. For some wishing to give the sense of this whole verse, have translated, So He led them forth amid many waters. What then doth through the deeps, as through a wilderness, mean, except that that had become as a wilderness from its dryness, where before had been the watery deeps?

10. Ver. 10. And He saved them from the hating ones. Some translators, in order to avoid an expression unusual in Latin, have rendered the word, by a circumlocution, And He saved them from the hand of those that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. What price was given in this redemption? Is it a prophecy, since this deed was a figure of Baptism, wherein we are redeemed from the hand of the devil at a great price, which price is the Blood of Christ? whence this is more consistently figured forth, not by any sea indiscriminately, but by the Red sea; since blood hath a red colour.

11. Ver. 11. As for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them: there was not one of them left; not of all the Egyptians, but of those who pursued the departing Israelites, desirous either of taking or of killing them.

12. Ver. 12. Then believed they in His words. The expression seemeth barely Latin, for he saith not believed His word, or on His words, but in His words; yet it is very frequent in Scripture. And praised praise unto Him; such an expression as when we say, 'This servitude he served,' 'such a life he lived.' He is here alluding to that well-known hymn, commencing, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea.

13. Ver. 13. They acted hastily: they forgot His works: other copies read more intelligibly, They hastened, they forgot His works, and would not abide His counsel. For they ought to have thought, that so great works of God towards themselves were not without a purpose, but that they invited them to some endless happiness, which was to be waited for with patience; but they hastened to make themselves happy with temporal things, which

give no man true happiness, because they do not quench insatiable longing: for whosoever, saith our Lord, shall drink of this water, shall thirst again.

14. Ver. 14. Lastly, And they lusted a lust in the wilderness, and they tempted God in the dry land. The dry land, or land without water, and desert, are the same: so also are, they lusted a lust, and, they tempted God. The form of speech is the same as above, They praised a praise.

15. Ver. 15. And He gave them their desire, and sent fulness withal into their souls. But He did not thus render them happy: for it was not that fulness of which it is said, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. In this passage he doth not speak of the rational soul, but of the soul as giving animal life to the body; to the substance of which belong meat and drink, according to what is said in the Gospel, Is not the soul more than meat, and the body than raiment? as if it belonged to the soul to eat, to the body to be clothed. In the same sense saith Isaiah; Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou sawest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?

16. Ver. 16. And they angered Moses in the tents, and Aaron the saint of the Lord. What angering, or, as some have more literally rendered it, what provocation, he speaketh of, the following words sufficiently shew.

17. Ver. 17. The earth opened, he saith, and swallowed up Dathan, and covered over the congregation of Abiram: swallowed up answereth to covered over. Both Dathan and Abiram were equally concerned in a most sacrilegious schism.

18. Ver. 18. And the fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the sinners. This word is not in Scripture usually applied to those, who, although they live righteously, and in a praiseworthy manner, are not without sin. Rather, as there is a difference between those who scorn and scorers, between men who murmur and murmurers, between men who are writing and writers, and so forth; so Scripture is wont to signify by sinners such as are very wicked, and laden with heavy loads of sins.

19. Ver. 19, 20. And they made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the graven image. Thus they changed their glory, in the similitude of a calf that eateth

hay. He saith not 'into' the likeness, but in the likeness. It is such a form of speech as where he said, and they believed in His words. With great effect in truth he saith not, they changed the glory of God when they did this; as the Apostle also saith, They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man: but their glory. For God was their glory, if they would abide His counsel, and hasten not; unto Whom is said, Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of my head. That their glory, that is, God, they changed in the similitude of a calf that eateth hay, that they might be devoured by him, by whom those who are wise according to the flesh are devoured: for all flesh is grass.

20. Ver. 21, 22. They forgot God Who saved them. How did He save them? Who did so great things in Egypt; wondrous works in the land of Ham, and fearful things in the Red sea. The things that are wondrous, are also fearful; for there is no wonder without a certain fear: although these might be called fearful, because they beat down their adversaries, and shewed them what they ought to fear.

21. Ver. 23. So He said, He would have destroyed them. Since they forgot Him who saved them, the Worker of wondrous works, and made and worshipped a graven image, by this atrocious and incredible impiety they deserved death. So He said, He would have destroyed them, had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breaking. He doth not say, that he stood in the breaking, as if to break the wrath of God, but in the way of the breaking, meaning the stroke which was to strike them: that is, had he not put himself in the way for them, saving, Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book. Where it is proved how greatly the intercession of the saints in behalf of others prevaieth with God. For Moses, fearless in the justice of God, which could not blot him out, implored mercy, that He would not blot out those whom He justly might. Thus he stood before Him in the breaking, to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them.

22. Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land. But had they seen it? How then could they scorn that which they had not seen, except as the following words explain, and believed not in His words. Indeed, unless that land which was styled the land that flowed with milk and honey, signified

something great, through which, as by a visible token, He was leading those who understood His wondrous works to invisible grace and the kingdom of heaven, they could not be blamed for scorning that land, whose temporal kingdom we also ought to esteem as nothing, that we may love that Jerusalem which is free, the mother of us all, which is in heaven, and truly to be desired. But rather unbelief is here reproved, since they gave no credence to the words of God, Who was leading them to great things through small things, and hastening to bless themselves with temporal things, which they carnally savoured of, they abided not His counsel, as is said above.

23. Ver. 25. But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord; Who strongly forbad them to murmur.

24. Ver. 26, 27. Then lift He up His hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness; to cast out their seed among the nations: and to scatter them in the lands.

25. Ver. 28, 29. Here before he said that any one interceded with the great indignation of God, and appeased Him by any means, he added, They were initiated also unto Baalpeor; that is, were consecrated to the Gentile idol; and ate the offerings of the dead. Thus they provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; and destruction was multiplied among them. As if He had deferred the lifting up of His hand which was to cast them down in the desert, and to cast out their seed among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands, in order that, being given up to a reprobate mind, they might commit such a thing as by the higher crime to draw down punishment with evident justice, as the Apostle saith: And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.

26. Ver. 30. Lastly, so great was their wickedness, in being consecrated to the idol, and eating the sacrifices of the dead, (that is, because the Gentiles sacrificed to dead men as to God,) that God would not be otherwise appeased than as Phineas the Priest appeased Him, when he slew a man and a woman together whom he found in adultery. If he had done this from hatred towards them, and not from love, while zeal for the house of God

devoured him, it would not have been counted unto him for righteousness. For by this deed he struck as it were with a rod, as one man, that people whose destruction would otherwise have been greater, in order that he might save their soul from death. Christ our Lord indeed, when the New Testament was revealed, chose a milder discipline; but the threat of hell is more severe, and this we do not read of in those threatenings held out by God in His temporal government. Destruction, therefore, was multiplied among them, when they were heavily punished for their heavy sins. Then stood up Phineas, and appeased Him, and the shaking ceased. He hath related the whole briefly, because he is not here teaching the ignorant, but reminding those who know the history. The word shaking here is the same as breaking before. For it is one word in the Greek.

27. Ver. 31. And that was counted unto him for righteousness among all posterities for evermore. God counted this unto His Priest for righteousness, not only as long as posterity shall exist, but for evermore; for He Who knoweth the heart, knoweth how to weigh with how much love for the people that deed was done.

28. Ver. 32, 33. And they angered Him at the waters of strife: so that Moses was vexed for their sakes; because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake doubtfully with his lips. What is spake doubtfully? As if God, Who had done so great wonders before, could not cause water to flow from a rock. For he touched the rock with his rod with doubt, and thus distinguished this miracle from the rest, in which he had not doubted. He thus offended, thus deserved to hear that he should die, without entering into the land of promise. For being disturbed by the murmurs of an unbelieving people, he held not fast that confidence which he ought to have held. Nevertheless, God giveth unto him, as unto His chosen, a good testimony even after his death, so that we may see that this wavering of faith was punished with this penalty only, that he was not allowed to enter that land, whither he was leading the people. But God forbid that we should believe him alienated from the kingdom of God, which that land of promise typified, whence milk and honey were said to flow. Rather this is an everlasting testament which he delivered unto Abraham, our father not according to the flesh, but according to faith.

29. Ver. 34–36. But they of whose iniquities this Psalm speaketh, when they had entered into that temporal land of promise, destroyed not the heathen, which the Lord commanded them; but were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. Insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which became to them an offence. Their not destroying them, but mingling with them, became to them an offence.

30. Ver. 37–40. Yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils; and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan. That history doth not relate that they offered their sons and daughters to devils and idols; but neither can that Psalm lie, nor the Prophets, who assert this in many passages of their rebukes. But the literature of the Gentiles is not silent respecting this custom of theirs.

31. But what is it that followeth? And the land was slain with bloods. We might suppose that this was a mistake of the writer, and that he had written *interfecta* for *infecta*, were it not for the goodness of God, Who hath willed His Scriptures to be written in many languages; were it not that we see it written as in the text in many Greek copies which we have inspected; the land was slain with bloods. What meaneth then, the land was slain, unless this be referred to the men who dwelt in the land, by a metaphorical expression, which doth substitute that which containeth for that which is contained, even as we speak of an evil house, meaning one in which evil men dwell; and a good house, as one in which good men dwell? For they themselves were slaying their own souls when they offered up their sons, and when they shed the blood of infants who were far from consent to this crime: whence it is said, They shed innocent blood. The land therefore was slain with bloods, and defiled by their works, since they themselves were slain in soul, and defiled by their works; and they went a whoring after their own inventions. By inventions are meant what the Greeks call ἐπιτηδεύματα: for this word doth occur in the Greek copies both in this and a former passage, where it is said, They provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; inventions in both instances signifying what they had initiated others in. Let no man therefore suppose inventions to mean what they had of themselves instituted, without any example before them to

imitate. Whence other translators in the Latin tongue have preferred pursuits, affections, imitations, pleasures, to inventions: and the very same who here write inventions, have elsewhere written pursuits. I chose to mention this, lest the word inventions, applied to what they had not invented, but imitated from others, might raise a difficulty.

32. Ver. 40–43. Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His own people. Our translators have been unwilling to use the word anger, for the Greek θυμὸς; though some have used it; while others translate by ‘indignation’ or ‘mind.’ Whichever of these terms be adopted, passion doth not affect God; but the power of punishing hath assumed this name metaphorically from custom.

33. Insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance; and He gave them over into the hand of the heathen: and they that hated them were lords over them: and their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought low under their hands. Since he hath called them the inheritance of God, it is clear that He abhorred them, and gave them over into their enemies’ hands, not in order to their perdition, but for their discipline. Lastly, he saith, Many a time did He deliver them.

34. But they provoked Him with their own counsels. This is what he said above, They did not abide His counsel. Now a man’s counsel is pernicious to himself, when he seeketh those things which are his own only, not those which are God’s. In Whose inheritance, which inheritance He Himself is to us, when He deigneth His presence for our enjoyment, being with the Saints, we shall suffer no straitening from the society, by our love of any thing as our own possession. For that most glorious city, when it hath gained the promised inheritance, in which none shall die, none shall be born, will not contain citizens who shall individually rejoice in their own, for God shall be all in all. And whoever in this pilgrimage faithfully and earnestly doth long for this society, doth accustom himself to prefer common to private interests, by seeking not his own things, but Jesus Christ’s: lest, by being wise and vigilant in his own affairs, he provoke God with his own counsel; but, hoping for what he seeth not, let him not hasten to be blessed with things visible; and, patiently waiting for that everlasting happiness which he seeth not, follow His counsel in His promises, Whose

aid he prayeth for in his prayers. Thus he will also become humble in his confessions; so as not to be like those, of whom it is said, They were brought down in their wickedness.

35. Ver. 44, 45. Nevertheless, God, full of mercy, forsook them not. And He saw when they were in adversity, when He heard their complaint. And He thought upon His covenant, and repented, according to the multitude of His mercies. He saith, He repented, because He changed that wherewith He seemed about to destroy them. With God indeed all things are arranged and fixed; and when He seemeth to act upon sudden motive, He doth nothing but what He foreknew that He should do from eternity; but in the temporal changes of creation, which He ruleth wonderfully, He, without any temporal change in Himself, is said to do by a sudden act of will what in the ordained causes of events He hath arranged in the unchangeableness of His most secret counsel, according to which He doth every thing according to defined seasons, doing the present, and having already done the future. And who is capable of comprehending these things? Let us therefore hear the Scripture, speaking high things humbly, giving food for the nourishment of children, and proposing subjects for the research of the older. And He saw when they were in adversity: when He heard their complaint, He thought upon His covenant: that everlasting covenant which He made with Abraham, not the old which is abolished, but the new which is hidden even in the old. And pitied them according to the multitude of His mercies. He did that which He had covenanted, but He had foreknown that He would yield this to them when they prayed in their adversity; since even their very prayer, when it was not uttered, but was still to be uttered, undoubtedly was known unto God.

36. Ver. 46. Yea, He gave them unto compassions. That they might not be vessels of wrath, but vessels of mercy. The compassions unto which He gave them are named in the plural for this reason, I imagine, because each one hath a gift of his own from God, one in one way, another in another. So He gave them unto compassions, in the sight of all that had taken them captive. Come then, whosoever readest this, and dost recognise the grace of God, by which we are redeemed unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, by reading in the apostolical writings, and by searching in the

Prophets, and seest the Old Testament revealed in the New, the New veiled in the Old; remember him whom the Apostle Paul called, the prince of the powers of the air, who worketh in the children of disobedience: and what he saith of some, that they may recover themselves out of the snares of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will: and the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, where, when He driveth him out of the hearts of the faithful, He saith, Now is the prince of this world cast out: and again of the same Apostle, when he saith, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Meditate on these and such like things, examine also the Old Testament, and see what is sung in that Psalm, the title of which is, When the temple was being built after the captivity: for there it is said, Sing unto the Lord a new song. And, that thou mayest not think it doth refer to the Jewish people only, he saith, Sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth: sing unto the Lord, and praise His Name: declare, or rather, give the good news of, or, to transfer the very word used in the Greek, evangelize day from day, His salvation. Here the Gospel (Evangelium) is mentioned, in which is announced the Day that came from Day, our Lord Christ, the Light from Light, the Son from the Father. This also is the meaning of His salvation: for Christ is the Salvation of God, as we have shewn above. Declare His honour unto the heathen, and His wonders unto all people. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised: He is more to be feared than all gods; as for all the gods of the heathen, they are but devils. These enemies, then, with the devil their king, held captive the people of God. Since we are redeemed from this captivity, and the prince of this world is cast out, the temple is being built up after the captivity; whose corner-stone is Christ; Who hath made in Himself of twain one new man, making peace, the good tidings of which He, Day from Day, preached unto those who were nigh, and those who were far off, having made both one; and bringing other sheep who are not of this fold, that there may be one flock and one shepherd. And thus God gave His predestined unto compassions: (for 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy:') in the sight of all who had taken them captive. These enemies, then, the devil and his angels, had taken captive those predestined to the kingdom and glory of God: now, they who used within to rule over the unbelieving, when cast out by our Redeemer, assail the faithful from without. But they assail, they do not conquer those who

cling unto the strong tower against the enemy. Their inducement to assail us is, that they see in us the relics of weakness, on account of which we say, Forgive us our trespasses: and, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. By casting out therefore these enemies, our Lord Christ made the health of the body perfect, the head of which He is Himself, the Saviour of the body, that in that same body he might on the third day be perfected. For thus He spoke: Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected: that is, I am perfected, when we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

37. Ver. 47, 48. Therefore, by casting out devils, by whom we were held captive, he perfecteth health. Thus here also when He had said, He gave them unto compassions in the sight of all those that had taken them captive; as if the devils who had taken them captive had been cast out, there followeth a prayer that He may perfect their health. Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations; (other copies read, from the heathen;) that we may give thanks unto Thy holy Name, and make our boast of Thy praise. Then he hath briefly added this very praise, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and world without end: by which we understand from everlasting to everlasting; because He shall be praised without end by those of whom it is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee. This is the perfection of the Body of Christ on the third day, when the devils had been cast out, and cures perfected, even unto the immortality of the body itself, the everlasting reign of those who perfectly praise Him, because they perfectly love Him; and perfectly love Him, because they behold Him face to face. For then shall be completed the prayer at the commencement of this Psalm: Remember us, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit us with Thy salvation; that we may see in the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, that Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance. For from the Gentiles He doth not gather only the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but also those which do not belong to that fold; so that there is one flock, as is said, and one Shepherd. But when the Jews suppose that that prophecy belongeth to their visible kingdom, because they know not how to rejoice in the hope of good things unseen, they are about

to rush into the snares of him, of whom the Lord saith, I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. Of whom the Apostle Paul saith: that Man of Sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God. And a little after he saith, Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them a working of delusion, that they should believe a lie: and that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Through that Apostate, through him who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, it seemeth to me, that the carnal people of Israel will suppose that prophecy to be fulfilled, where it is said, Deliver us, O Lord, and gather us from among the heathen; that under His guidance, before the eyes of their visible enemies, who had visibly taken them captive, they are to have visible glory. Thus they will believe a lie, because they have not received the love of truth, that they might love not carnal, but spiritual blessings. For they were thus deceived by the devil, so that they slew Christ, when they said, If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on Him; and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation. When Caiaphas, one of them, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this, as the Evangelist judged, spake he not of himself; but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, that is, for the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. For He had other sheep that were not of this fold: but the devil and his angels had taken captive all those sheep, both among the Israelites and the Gentiles. The power, therefore, of the devil having been cast out of them, in the sight of the evil spirits who had taken them captive, their cry in this prophecy is, that they may be saved and perfected for evermore: Deliver us, O Lord our

God, and gather us from among the heathen. Not, as the Jews imagine it, fulfilled through Antichrist, but through our Lord Christ coming in the name of His Father, Day from day, His salvation; of Whom it is here said, O visit us in Thy salvation! And let all the people say, the predestined people of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, a holy race, an adopted people, So be it! So be it!

PSALM 107

Exposition

1. This Psalm commendeth unto us the mercies of God, proved in ourselves, and is therefore the sweeter to the experienced. And it is a wonder if it can be pleasing to any one, except to him who has learned in his own case, what he hears in this Psalm. Yet was it written not for any one or two, but for the people of God, and set forth that it might know itself therein as in a mirror. Its title needeth not now to be treated, for it is Halleluia, and again Halleluia. Which we have a custom of singing at a certain time in our solemnities, after an old tradition of the Church: nor is it without a sacred meaning that we sing it on particular days. Halleluia we sing indeed on certain days, but every day we think it. For if in this word is signified the praise of God, though not in the mouth of the flesh, yet surely in the mouth of the heart. His praise shall ever be in my mouth. But that the title hath Halleluia not once only but twice, is not peculiar to this Psalm, but the former also hath it so. And as far as appears from its text, that was sung of the people of Israel, but this is sung of the universal Church of God, spread through the whole world. Perchance, it not unfitly hath Halleluia twice, because we cry, Abba, Father. Since Abba, is nothing else but Father, yet not without meaning the Apostle said, in whom we cry, Abba, Father; but because one wall indeed coming to the Corner-stone crieth Abba, but the other, from the other side crieth Father; viz. in that Corner-stone, Who is our Peace, Who hath made both one. Let us see therefore here what we are admonished of, and for what called to rejoice, and for what we ask help, for what we are forsaken, for what we are relieved, what we are by ourselves, what by the mercy of God, how our pride is crushed that His grace may be glorified. To every man may what I am about to say, if possible, occur in his own case, but I speak to men who walk the way of God, and stand in some sort of spiritual advancement; whence, if any perchance for this reason

scarce understand me, let them find out where they are, and by advancement hasten to understanding. But I do not think that God will be wanting to our endeavour, that what we speak may reach unto all, whether experienced or inexperienced, that the experienced may approve, the inexperienced may feel a longing; and that my discourse may be pleasing to all, which will first be pleasing to the Lord, if it shall be truthful. But it will be truthful if it shall come to me, not from myself, but from Him. Thus the Psalm begins.

2. Ver. 1. Confess unto the Lord that He is sweet, because for aye is His mercy. This confess ye that He is sweet: if ye have tasted, confess. But he cannot confess, who hath not chosen to taste, for whence shall he say that that is sweet, which he knoweth not. But ye if ye have tasted how sweet the Lord is, Confess ye to the Lord that He is sweet. If ye have tasted with eagerness, break forth with confession. For aye is His mercy, that is, for ever. For here for aye, is so put, since also in some other places of Scripture, for aye, that is, what in Greek is called εἰς αἰῶνα, is understood for ever. For His mercy is not for a time, so as not to be for ever, since for this purpose His present mercy is over men, that they may live with the Angels for ever.

3. Ver. 2. Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord. Redeemed indeed it seems was also the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, from the hand of slavery, from fruitless labours, from miry works; yet let us see whether those who say these things, are they who were freed by the Lord from Egypt. It is not so. But who are they? Those whom He redeemed from the hand of their enemies. Still one might take it also of them, as redeemed from the hand of their enemies, that is, of the Egyptians. Let them be expressed exactly who they are, for whom this Psalm would be sung. He gathered them from the lands; these might still be the lands of Egypt, for there are many lands even in one province. Let him speak openly. (Ver. 3.) From the east and the west, from the north and the sea. Now then we understand these redeemed, in the whole circle of the earth. This people of God, freed from a great and broad Egypt, is led, as through the Red Sea, that in Baptism it may make an end of its enemies. For by the sacrament as it were of the Red sea, that is, by Baptism consecrated with the Blood of Christ, the pursuing Egyptians, the sins, are washed away. And as thou

comest out, not one of the enemy that pressed on thee is left. Let these, therefore, say these words, and let us now hear, brethren, (since this is the people of God that is leading on,) what is here doing in the congregation of all nations, that is redeemed through Christ. Not as though all these things which are sung take place in all at once, but severally in each that believe, but otherwise in that people. For the whole people, that whole nation of the seed of Abraham after the flesh, the whole multitude of the house of Israel, was led once out of Egypt, brought once through the Red sea, brought home once to the promised land, for they were all together, with whom these things took place. But all these things happened to them in a figure, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. But we not altogether, but by degrees, and one by one, coming to believe, are gathered into one certain city, and into one people of God. But in each one of us, even as an individual, these things befall. Those which are written befall a people, for a people is composed of individuals, and individuals of a people. For is one man of peoples? nay, but a people consisteth of individual men. Whatsoever, therefore, when I speak of it, thou mayest recognise in thyself, whoever thou art who hast experience, do not in thy thought, as it were, stay at thyself, and think that it taketh place in thee alone, but believe that these things take place, either in all, or almost in all, who come to this people, and are redeemed from the hand of their enemies with the precious Blood.

4. For he is about to repeat constantly what we have now sung. (Ver. 8, 15, 21, 31.) Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the sons of men. These verses as far as I could observe, which you may also do, he repeats four times. In which number, as far as we have been able by God's help to make out, he signifies to us certain four temptations, from which He frees us, unto Whom we confess His mercies. For suppose a man first seeking nothing, living after the old life, in a seductive security; not thinking there is any thing else after this life, when it shall sometime end; one negligent and listless, with his heart buried in the allurements of the world, and lulled to sleep with deadly delights: that such an one may be roused to seek the grace of God, that he may become anxious, and as it were awake out of sleep; doth not the Hand of God arouse him? But yet, by whom he was aroused he knoweth not; however he begins now to belong to

God, when he has come to know the belief of the Truth. But before he knoweth, he grieveth for his error. For he findeth himself in error, wisheth to know the Truth; knocketh where he can, trieth what he can, wandereth which way he can, feeleth even a hunger after the Truth itself. So then the first temptation is of wandering and hunger. When he hath grown weary in this temptation and cried unto God, he is led to the way of faith, whereby he may begin to proceed toward the city of rest. He is led therefore to Christ, Who said, I am the Way.

5. When therefore he is come there, now knowing what he ought to observe, sometimes through taking too much upon himself, and as it were presuming on his own strength, he beginneth to think of striving against sins, and through his pride to get the worst. So then he findeth himself bound with difficulties from his desires, and for his fetters unable to walk on his way. He feeleth himself shut up with difficulty from his vices, and with a wall, as it were, of impossibility built up, and gates shut upon him, how to get forth and live aright he findeth not. Now he knoweth how he ought to live, for before he was in wandering and suffered hunger for the truth, but he hath now received the food of truth, and is placed in the way. He heareth, Live well, according to that thou knowest, for before thou knewest not how thou shouldest live. Now thou hast received and knowest. He tries; he cannot. He feels himself bound; he cries unto the Lord. The second temptation then is that of difficulty in working well, as that first was of wandering and hunger. In this also he crieth unto the Lord, and the Lord delivereth him from his necessities, breaketh the chains of difficulty, establisheth him in the working of righteousness. That now begins to be easy to him, which had been difficult. To keep from evil things, not to commit adultery, not to steal, to do no murder, no sacrilege, not to covet what is another's. That has become easy which before was hard. The Lord could grant this without the difficulty, but if we had it without the difficulty, we should not acknowledge the Giver of this good gift. For if man at first, when he wished, were able, and felt not his desires striving against him, and if his soul did not bruise itself through the weight of its chains, he would attribute to his own strength what he felt himself able to do, and would not confess to the Lord His mercies.

6. After these two temptations, the first of wandering and wanting the truth, the second of difficulty in doing well, a third temptation meets a man. One, I mean, who has already gone through these two; for these two, I confess, are known to many. For who knows not that he came out of ignorance unto truth, out of wandering unto the way, out of a lack of wisdom to the word of faith. Then there are many that struggle with difficulties from their own bad dispositions, and still bound by habit, groan as in prison and fetters. They acknowledge also that temptation, although they may now be saying, if perchance they say it, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For behold the straitest chains: the flesh, he saith, lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, that ye may not do the things that ye would. Now then, let him, who has already been helped by the Spirit, that, as he would not be an adulterer, so he is not; as he would not be a thief, so he is not; and all these other things which men desire to conquer, and often are bowed down and overcome, so as to cry out unto God, that He may deliver them from their necessities, and thence, being freed, confess unto the Lord His mercies: whoever, I say, is such an one, and hath conquered those difficulties, and now liveth respectably amongst men, without any complaint of evil living, is met by a third temptation, of a kind of weariness in the length of this life, so that sometimes it is no pleasure to him either to read or to pray. The third temptation is contrary to the former, for first he was in danger through hunger, afterward through fulness. Whence this too, but from a certain sickness of soul? Now adultery allures thee no more, yet doth not the Word of God delight thee. Now after the danger of ignorance and of lust, from which too thou art glad to have escaped, see that weariness and satiety slay thee not. This too is no slight temptation; know thyself in that, and cry out unto the Lord, that here also He may free thee from thy necessities; and, when thou art free from this temptation, let His mercies confess unto Him.

7. But when freed from wandering, freed from the difficulty of doing well, freed from weariness and satiety of the Word of God, perchance thou mayest be worthy to have a people committed to thee. Thou mayest be placed at the helm of the ship to rule the Church. Then is a fourth temptation, tempests of the sea, tossing the Church, alarm her steersman. Finally, these three temptations any pious believer of the people of God

may experience, that fourth is ours. For the more we are honoured, the more we are in peril. It is to be feared, lest the danger of error turn any one of you from the truth. It is to be feared, lest each one's desire overcome him, and he choose to follow it, rather than from the difficulties of it to cry out unto God. It is to be feared, lest to each one of you the Word of God lose its relish, and he die of satiety, but the temptation of governing, the temptation of danger in ruling the Church, touches us especially. But how shall ye, too, have no share in it, if the whole ship shall be in danger? which I said for this reason, that ye might not be less anxious in this fourth temptation, as a special one of ours, when there is need that ye cease not from prayers, for ye are the first who suffer shipwreck. For what, brethren, because ye sit not at the same helm, do ye not sail in the same ship?

8. After these four temptations, four cryings out, four deliverances, four confessions of the mercies of the Lord, the Church herself is next generally set forth in this Psalm, that ye may most evidently know concerning whom the Psalm spake from the beginning. But she is so set forth, that in all things is proclaimed to us the grace of God, Who resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble; because, to this end He came, that they who see not may see, and they who see may be made blind; because every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. Which thing being set forth, a thing is said which may also be understood of heretics, by whom, as by civil war, the Church is shaken. And the Psalm is concluded, which I have now expounded, more briefly perhaps than ye thought, for I suppose that I have so far explained the whole of this somewhat long Psalm, that now ye expect of me not the work of a disputant, but scarce more than that of a reader, if ye retain what I have said. For I think things are placed before your eyes, but that it may be the better set forth, let them be briefly repeated. The first temptation is that of wandering and hunger for the Word; the second, that of difficulty in conquering desires; the third, that of weariness and satiety; the fourth, that of storms and perils in governing Churches. And in all these there are cryings out, and deliverances, and confessions of the mercies of God. At the end there is a setting forth of the Church herself, which is both saved through the grace of our God, not through her own merit, and the overthrow of her enemies is commemorated, on whose destruction the Church was built up; for their pride, and because

of certain plots to her detriment, on the part of heretics, and because of evils, in a manner, domestic, and from these the acts of divine goodness toward the Church; then the conclusion of the Psalm. Let us now rather read than discuss.

9. Ver. 2. Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemies; (Ver. 3.) and gathered them from the lands, from the east, and the west, and the north, and the sea; let these Christians say, called together from the whole world. (Ver. 4.) They wandered in the wilderness, in a dry place, they found not the way of a city to dwell in. We have heard a wretched wandering; what of want? (Ver. 5.) Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. But wherefore did it faint? for what good? For God is not cruel, but He maketh Himself known, in that it is expedient for us, that He be entreated by us fainting, and that aiding us He be loved. And therefore after this wandering, and hunger, and thirst, (Ver. 6.) And they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distress. And what did He for them, as they were wandering? (Ver. 7.) And He led them in the right way. They found not the way of a city to dwell in, with hunger and thirst they were vexed and faint, and He led them into the right way, that they might go into a city to dwell in. How He helped their hunger and thirst, He saith not, but even this expect ye; (Ver. 8.) Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the children of men. Tell them, ye that are experienced, to the inexperienced; ye that are already in the way, already directed towards finding the city, already at last free from hunger and thirst. (Ver. 9.) Because He hath satisfied the empty soul, and filled the hungry soul with good things.

10. Live therefore well. Thou art now put in the way. Thou hast now heard what thou oughtest to do, what to hope. What further meeteth thee, since thou strivest and art overcome? (Ver. 10.) Them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, fast bound in beggary and iron. Whence this, but that thou wast attributing things to thyself? that thou wast not owning the grace of God? that thou wast rejecting the counsel of God concerning thee? For see what He addeth; (Ver. 11.) Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord through pride, not knowing the righteousness of God, and wishing

to establish their own, and they were bitter against the counsel of the Most High. (Ver. 12.) And their heart was brought low in labour. And now fight against lust; if God cease to aid thou mayest strive, thou canst not conquer. And when thou shalt be pressed by thine evil, thy heart will be brought low in labour, so that now with humbled heart thou mayest learn to cry out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? —Their heart therefore was brought low in labour, they were made weak, and there was none to help them. What then remaineth, save wherefore it was done? For if a law had been given that could have given life, doubtless righteousness had been of the Law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But the Law came in by the way, that the offence might abound. Thou hast received the word, hast received the commandment, and yet ceasest not to do the ill thou didst, and having received the commandment, dost aggravate thy sins by transgression. Proud one, if thou didst not know thyself, learn thyself at least as brought low. Thou wilt cry, thou wilt be freed from distress. Freed, thou wilt confess the mercies of the Lord. (Ver 13.) And they cried unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them out of their distresses. They were freed from the second temptation. There remains that of weariness and loathing. But first see what He did for them when freed. (Ver. 14.) And He led them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bonds asunder. (Ver. 15.) Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders to the children of men. Wherefore? what difficulties hath He overcome? (Ver. 16.) Because He brake the gates of brass, and snapped the bars of iron. (Ver. 17.) He took them up from the way of their iniquity, for because of their unrighteousnesses they were brought low. Because they gave honour to themselves, not to God, because they were establishing their own righteousness, not knowing the righteousness of God, they were brought low. They found that they were helpless without His aid, who were presuming on their own strength alone.

11. But what other sort remaineth? (Ver. 18.) Their soul abhorred all manner of meat. Now they suffer satiety. They are sick of satiety. They are in danger from satiety. Unless perchance thou thinkest they could be killed with famine, but cannot with satiety. See what followeth. When he had said,

Their soul abhorred all manner of meat, lest thou shouldest think them, as it were, safe of their fulness, and not rather see that they would die of satiety: And they came near, he saith, even unto the gates of death. What then remaineth? That even when the word of God delighteth thee, thou account it not to thyself; nor for this be puffed up with any sort of arrogance, and having an appetite for food, proudly spurn at those who are in danger from satiety. Understand that to thyself also this is a gift, and is not in thee of thyself; for, what hast thou which thou hast not received? This then understanding, and being in danger from this fault and sickness, do what followeth. (Ver. 19.) And they cried out unto the Lord when they were in trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. And because it was a sickness not to be pleased, (Ver. 20.) He sent His Word, and healed them. See what evil there is in satiety; see whence He delivers, to whom he crieth that loathes his food. He sent His Word, and healed them, and snatched them, from whence? not from wandering, not from hunger, not from the difficulty of overcoming sins, but from their corruption. It is a sort of corruption of the mind to loathe what is sweet. Therefore also of this benefit, as of the others before, (Ver. 21.) Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders unto the sons of men. (Ver. 22.) And sacrifice the sacrifice of praise. For now that He may be praised, the Lord is sweet, and let them tell out His works with gladness. Not with weariness, not with sadness, not with anxiety, not with loathing, but with gladness.

12. That fourth remains, in which we are all in danger. For we are all in the ship, some work, others are conveyed, yet all together are both in peril in the storm, and find safety in the haven. For after all this, it follows; (ver. 23.) They who go down on the sea in ships, doing their business on the mighty waters; that is, amongst many peoples. For that waters are often put for peoples, the Apocalypse of John is witness, when on John's asking, what those waters were, it was answered him, they are peoples. They then who do their business on mighty waters, (Ver. 24.) they have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For what is deeper than human hearts? hence often break forth winds; storms of sedition, and dissensions, disturb the ship. And what is done in them? God, willing that both they who steer, and they who are conveyed, should cry unto Him, (Ver. 25.) He spake, and the breath of the storm stood. What is, stood? Abode, continued, still

disturbeth, long tosseth; rageth, and passeth not away. For He spake, and the breath of the storm stood. And what did that breath of the storm? (Ver. 26.) They go up even to the heavens, in daring; they go down even into the deeps, in fearing. They go up even to the heavens, they go down even to the deeps. "Without are fightings, within are fears." Their soul wasted in miseries. (Ver. 27.) They were disturbed, and moved like a drunken man. They who sit at the helm, and they who faithfully love the ship, feel what I say. They were disturbed, and moved like a drunken man. Certainly, when they speak, when they read, when they interpret, they appear wise. Woe for the storm! and all their wisdom, he saith, was swallowed up. Sometimes all human counsels fail; whichever way one turns himself, the waves roar, the storm rageth, the arms are powerless: where the prow may strike, to what wave the side may be exposed, whither the stricken ship may be allowed to drift, from what rocks she must be kept back lest she be lost, is impossible for her pilots to see. And what is left but that which follows? (Ver. 28.) And they cried out unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them from their distresses. (Ver. 29.) And He commanded the storm, and it stood unto clear air. It stood, not unto tempest, but unto clear air, and the waves of it were still. Hear on this point the voice of a steersman, one that was in peril, was brought low, was freed. I would not, he saith, have you ignorant, brethren, of our distress, which befel us in Asia, that we were pressed above strength, and above measure, (I see all his 'wisdom swallowed up,') so that we were weary, he saith, even of life. And why should He so leave men to faint? Or did they not faint for this very cause, that He might find glory with them? Finally, what followeth? But we ourselves had the answer of death in ourselves, that we may not be trusting in ourselves, but in God, Who raiseth the dead.

And He commanded the storm, and it stood into clear air. Already those men, all whose wisdom had been swallowed up, had had the answer of death in themselves. And its waves were still. (Ver. 30.) And they were glad, because they were still, and He brought them into the haven of their desire. (Ver. 31.) Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders towards the sons of men. Every where, without exception, let not our merits, not our strength, not our wisdom, confess unto the Lord, but, His mercies. Let Him be loved in every deliverance of ours, Who has been

invoked in every distress. Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders toward the children of men.

13. And observe whereof he speaketh, whereof he said all those things before, whereof he hath enumerated all these, where these things are done. (Ver. 32.) And let them exalt Him in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the seat of the elders. And let them exalt Him, that is, praise Him: and praise Him, that is, exalt Him. Let them exalt, let them praise, peoples and elders, merchants and pilots. For what hath He done in this assembly? What hath He established? Whence hath He rescued it? What hath He granted it? Even as He resisted the proud, and gave grace to the humble: the proud, that is, the first people of the Jews, arrogant, and extolling itself on its descent from Abraham, and because to that nation were entrusted the oracles of God. These things did not avail them unto soundness, but unto pride of heart, rather to swelling than to greatness. What then did God, resisting the proud, but giving grace to the humble; cutting off the natural branches for their pride; grafting in the wild olive for its humility? What did God? Hear these two things: first, how God resisteth the proud; then, how He giveth grace to the humble.

Ver. 33. He made the rivers a wilderness. Waters did run there, prophecies were in course. Seek now a prophet among the Jews; thou findest none. For, He made the rivers a wilderness, and the outgoings of waters to be thirst. He made the rivers to be a wilderness. Let them say, Now there is no prophet more, and He will not know us any more.—He made the rivers to be a wilderness, and the goings out of waters to be thirst. (Ver. 34.) A fruitful land to be salt-pools. Thou seekest there the faith of Christ, thou findest not: thou seekest a prophet, thou findest not: thou seekest a sacrifice, thou findest not: thou seekest a temple, thou findest none. Wherefore this? Because He made the rivers to be a wilderness, and the goings out of waters to be thirst. Whence? of what merit? From the wickedness of them that dwell therein. Behold how He resisteth the proud: hear how He giveth grace to the humble. (Ver. 35.) He made the wilderness to be a standing water, and the dry ground to be outgoings of waters. (Ver. 36.) And He caused the hungry to dwell there. Because to Him it was said, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec. For thou seekest a sacrifice among the

Jews; thou hast none after the order of Aaron, because He hath made the rivers to be a wilderness. Thou seekest it after the order of Melchizedec; thou findest it not among them, but through the whole world it is celebrated in the Church. From the rising of the sun to the setting thereof the name of the Lord is praised. And God saith to those whose rivers He hath made to be a wilderness, I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord, nor will I receive a sacrifice from your hands: because from the rising of the sun even to the setting, a pure sacrifice is offered to My Name. Where were all the unclean sacrifices, when it was a wilderness, when they were filthy, when all nations were salt-pits; there now are there fountains, there now rivers, there now pools of waters, and outgoings of waters. Therefore, He hath resisted the proud, and given grace to the humble. And, He caused the hungry to dwell there; because, The poor shall eat and be satisfied. And they set up a city of habitation. For the present of habitation in hope: since He that heareth Me, He saith, dwelleth in hope. And they set up a city of habitation. (Ver. 37.) And they sowed fields, and planted vineyards, and gat fruit of corn: at which that workman rejoiceth, who saith, Not because I desire a gift, but I seek fruit. (Ver. 38.) And He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished. This standeth. For, The foundation of God standeth sure; because the Lord knoweth them that are His. They are called beasts of burden, and cattle, that walk simply in the Church, yet are useful; not much learned, but full of faith. Therefore, whether spiritual or carnal, He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished.

14. Ver. 39. And they became few, and were vexed. Whence this? From athwart? Nay, from within. For that they should 'become few,' They went out from us, but they were not of us. But therefore he speaketh as of these, of whom he spake before, that they may be discerned with understanding; because he speaketh as if of the same, because of the sacraments they have in common. For they belong to the people of God, though not by the virtue, yet surely by the appearance of piety: for concerning them we have heard the Apostle, In the last times there shall come grievous times, for there shall be men lovers of themselves. The first evil is, lovers of themselves; that is, as being pleased with themselves. Would that they were not pleasing to themselves, and were pleasing to God: would that they would cry out in

their difficulties, and be freed from their distresses. But while they presumed greatly on themselves, they were made few. It is manifest, brethren: all who separate themselves from unity become few. For they are many; but in unity, while they are not parted from unity. For when the multitude of unity hath begun no more to belong to them, in heresy and schism, they are few. And they became few, and were vexed, from distress of miseries and grief. (Ver. 40.) Contempt was poured on princes. For they were rejected by the Church of God, and the more because they wished to be princes, therefore they were despised, and became salt that had lost its savour, cast out abroad, so that it is trodden under foot of men. Contempt was poured on princes, and He led them astray in the pathless place, and not in a way. Those above in the way, those directed to a city, and finally led thither, not led astray; but these, where there was no way, led astray. What is, Led them astray? God gave them up to their own hearts' lusts. For led astray means this, gave them up to themselves. For if thou enquire closely, it is they that lead themselves astray. For he that thinketh he is something, when he is nothing, leadeth himself astray. What then is, Led them astray? Let them alone. In a pathless place, and not in a way. For how are those men in the way, who hold a part, and let go the whole? How in the way? What then is the way? or where is the way known? The Lord, he saith, have mercy on us, and bless us, shew the light of His countenance upon us, that we may know Thy way in the earth. In what earth? Thy salvation among all nations. Certainly such men, that they may become few, that they may be diminished, go out from us. They have all gone out from the multitude of unity, as I mentioned a little before, that it was said of them; They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would surely have abode with us. But if perchance they are ours in the hidden foreknowledge of God, they must needs return. How many that are not ours, are yet, as it were, within; and how many that are ours are still, as it were, without. The Lord knoweth them that are His. And they that are not ours, who are within, when they have found their opportunities, go out; and they that are ours, who are without, when they have found opportunities, return. That then understand, which God knoweth; in that respect He led them astray in a pathless place, and not in a way. And what did He with them? What I had begun to say, what ye should hear with attention. He might have borne with them always within, but we should not profit by them: but when

they have been separated from us, and by malicious questions disquiet us, we have set before us in them both an incitement of enquiry, and an example for warning. Each one is alarmed, when he seeth that another hath gone out, as if from his going out it had been said to him, Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. They are of use then, because they go out; for if they continued within, and were so wicked, there would be no profit from them. What is said of them in a certain Psalm? The multitude of bulls, that is, of stiffnecked and proud people: The multitude of bulls among the cows of the peoples. By cows he meaneth souls easy to seduce, that easily yield to the seducing bulls. But wherefore thus? That those may be separated apart that have been tried by silver. What meaneth, That they may be separated. That those who have been tried in the words of the Lord may appear, may be clearly seen. For when heretics are answered of necessity, Catholics are built up by that which is profitable. This sentiment Paul hath clearly expressed: There must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. There must also be bulls who seduce, that those who have been tried by silver may be made manifest among you, that is, be set apart. What meaneth, tried by silver? The words of the Lord are pure words, silver, which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire. Whoever are tried in this silver, that is, in the words of the Lord, cannot fully purge this silver from the dross, unless they are harassed by the questionings of heretics. And observe here, that this is not omitted: behold contempt is poured out upon their princes, upon those bulls. Wherefore are they despised? Because they preach some other things. How are they despised? By being anathematized. For whosoever shall preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be anathema. What is so despised as salt without flavour, which is cast out of doors, and trampled under foot? And consider if they be not princes; hear Paul himself; though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that ye have received, let him be anathema. They are princes, they are learned, they are great, they are precious stones. What more wilt thou say: are they angels? And yet, though an angel from heaven preach unto you any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be anathema: for the devil himself was an angel fallen from heaven. Contempt then was poured out upon their princes. And He helped the poor out of beggary. What meaneth this, brethren? Princes are despised, and the

poor helped. The proud are cast aside, and the humble provided for. He hath done this, and by doing so hath helped the poor out of beggary. He is a beggar, who ascribeth nothing to himself, who hopeth all from God's mercy; he crieth every day before the Lord's gate, knocking, that it may be opened unto him, naked and trembling, that he may be clothed, casting down his eyes towards the earth, beating his breast. God hath greatly helped this beggar, this poor man, this humble man, even by this very setting apart of heretics; because they have been reduced to fear, and have been vexed, and led astray in the wilderness and not in the path. Lastly, what happeneth to the poor man who hath been helped, from the minishing, the misleading, the making few, the vexing of those heretics? And made him households like sheep. Thou understandest one poor man and one beggar of him concerning whom he said, He hath helped the poor out of misery: this poor man is now many households, this poor man is many nations; many Churches are one Church, one nation, one household, one sheep. And maketh him households like sheep. These are great mysteries, great types, how profound, how full of hidden meanings; how sweetly discovered, since long hidden. Therefore, (Ver. 42.) the righteous will consider this, and rejoyce: and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped. That wickedness that doth prate against unity, and compelleth truth to be made manifest, shall be convicted, and have its mouth stopped.

15. Ver. 43. Who is wise? and he will consider these things; and will understand the mercies of the Lord. See how he hath concluded; Who is wise? and he will consider these things. And what will the wise man consider? that is, if he be poor, he considereth them; if he be not rich, that is, be not proud, be not puffed up, he considereth these things. For why doth he consider them? Because he will understand the mercies of the Lord; not his own deservings, not his own strength, not his own power; but the mercies of the Lord; Who, when he was wandering and in want, led him back to the path, and fed him; Who, when he was struggling against the difficulties of his sins, and bound down with the fetters of habit, released and freed him; Who, when he loathed the Word of God, and was almost dying with a kind of weariness, restored him by sending him the medicine of His Word; Who, when he was endangered among the risks of shipwreck and storm, stilled the sea, and brought him into port; Who, finally, placed

him in that people, where He giveth grace to the humble; not in that where he resisteth the proud; and hath made him His own, that remaining within he may be multiplied, not that going out he may be minished. The righteous see this, and rejoice. The mouth, therefore, of all wickedness shall be stopped; and he who is wise shall consider these things. How shall he consider them? By humility, by understanding the mercies of the Lord; because it is every where said, O that men would praise the Lord for His mercies, and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men!

PSALM 108

Why no Exposition is here given.

1. I have not thought that the 108th Psalm required an exposition; since I have already expounded it in the 56th Psalm, and in the 59th, of the last divisions of which this Psalm consisteth. For the last part of the 56th is the first of this, as far as the verse, Thy glory is above all the earth. Henceforth to the end, is the last part of the 59th: as the last part of the 134th, is the same as that of the 113th, from the verse, The images of the heathen are but gold and silver: as the 13th and 54th, with a few alterations in the middle, have every thing the same from the beginning to the end. Whatever slight differences therefore occur in this 107th Psalm, compared with those two, of parts of which it is composed, are easy to understand; just as we find in the 56th, I will sing and give praise; awake, O my glory: here, I will sing and give praise, with my glory. Awake, is said there, that he may sing and give praise therewith. Also, there, Thy mercy is great (or, as some translate, is lifted up) unto the heavens; but here, Thy mercy is great above the heavens. For it is great unto the heavens, that it may be great in the heavens; and this is what he wished to express by above the heavens. Also in the 59th, I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem: here, I will be exalted, and will divide Shechem. Where is shewn what is signified in the division of Shechem, which it was prophesied should happen after the Lord's exaltation, and that this joy doth refer to that exaltation; so that He rejoiceth, because He is exalted. Whence he elsewhere saith, Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy; Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. Also there, Ephraim, the strength of my head: but here, Ephraim the taking up of my head. But strength cometh from taking up, that is, He maketh men strong by taking up, causing fruit in us; for the interpretation of Ephraim is, bearing fruit. But taking up, may be understood of us, when we take up Christ; or of Christ, when He, Who is

the Head of the Church, taketh us up. And the words, them that trouble us, in the former Psalm, are the same with our enemies, in this.

2. We are taught by this Psalm, that those titles which seem to refer to history are most rightly understood prophetically, according to the object of the composition of the Psalms. For what is so different, historically, as the title of the 56th, At the end, do not corrupt; David's own, the title, when he fled from the face of Saul in the cave; and that of the 59th, At the end, to those who shall be changed, David's own, for a lesson, when he burned Mesopotamia, Syria, and Syria Sobal, when Joab returned, and smote in the valley of salt twelve thousand. For besides the words, title, David's own, and, at the end; the rest are so different, that David in the former passage hath humility; in the latter, strength: in the former, flight; in the latter, victories. And yet this Psalm is composed of the latter portions of these two, whose titles are so different. Where it is signified that each concur in a common object, not in the surface of the history, but in the depth of prophecy, the objects of both being united in this one, the title of which is, A Song or Psalm of David: resembling neither of the former titles, otherwise than in the word David. Since, in many places, and in diverse manners, as the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, God spoke in former times to the fathers through the Prophets; yet He spoke of Him Whom He sent afterwards, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: for all the promises of God in Him are yea.

PSALM 109

Exposition

1. Every one who faithfully readeth the Acts of the Apostles, acknowledgeth that this Psalm containeth a prophecy of Christ; for it evidently appeareth that what is here written, let his days be few, and let another take his office, is prophesied of Judas, the betrayer of Christ, alluding to the time when Matthias, being ordained into the place of Judas, was added a twelfth to the number of the Apostles. But if we attempt to understand of this one man all that is here said of a wicked man, our exposition will hardly be consistent; whereas if we take it in reference to all wicked men of this kind, by which I mean enemies of Christ and ungrateful Jews, every thing seemeth to me to be capable of a clearer explanation. For as some things are said which seem peculiarly to apply to the Apostle Peter, and yet are not clear in their meaning, unless when referred to the Church, whom he is acknowledged to have figuratively represented, on account of the primacy which he bore among the Disciples; as it is written, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and other passages of the like purport: so Judas doth represent those Jews who were enemies of Christ, who both then hated Christ, and now, in their line of succession, this species of wickedness continuing, hate Him. Of these men, and of this people, not only may what we read more openly discovered in this Psalm be conveniently understood, but also those things which are more expressly stated concerning Judas himself; as the passage I have just mentioned, Let his days be few, and let another take his office: and this will appear, with the Lord's help, when, in the course of exposition, we reach those verses.

2. Ver. 1, 2. The Psalm, then, beginneth thus: O God, be not silent as to my praise; for the mouth of the ungodly, yea, the mouth of the deceitful is opened upon me. Whence it appeareth, both that the blame, which the ungodly and the deceitful is not silent of, is false, and that the praise, which

God is not silent of, is true. For God is true, but every man a liar; for no man is true, except him in whom God speaketh. But the highest praise is that of the only-begotten Son of God, in which He is proclaimed even That which He is, the only-begotten Son of God. But this did not appear, but, when His weakness appeared, lay hid, when the mouth of the ungodly and deceitful was opened upon Him; and for this reason his mouth was opened, because His virtue was concealed: and he saith, the mouth of the deceitful was opened, because the hatred which was covered by deceit burst out into language. This also is more plainly stated in the following verses.

3. Ver. 3. They have spoken against me with false tongues: then chiefly when they praised him as a good Master with insidious adulation. Whence it is elsewhere said; and they that praised me, are sworn together against me. Next, because they burst into cries, Crucify Him, crucify Him; he hath added, They compassed me about also with words of hatred. They who with a treacherous tongue spoke words seemingly of love, and not of hatred, against me, since they did this insidiously; afterwards compassed me about with words not of false and deceitful love, but of open hatred, and fought against me without a cause. For as the pious love Christ for nought, so do the wicked hate Him for nought; for as truth is earnestly sought by the best men on its own account, without any advantage, external to itself, in view, so is wickedness sought by the worst men. Whence among secular authors it is said of a very bad man, 'he was wicked and cruel for no object.'

4. Ver. 4. In place, saith he, of loving me, they detracted from me. There are six different acts of this class, which may, when mentioned, very easily be borne in mind; to return good for evil, not to return evil for evil; to return good for good, to return evil for evil; not to return good for good, to return evil for good. The two first of these belong to the good, and the first of these two is the better; the two last belong to the wicked, and the latter of the two is the worse; the two middle to a sort of middle class of persons, but the first of these borders upon the good, the latter on the bad. We should remark these things in the holy Scriptures. Our Lord Himself returneth good for evil, Who justifieth the ungodly; and Who, when hanging upon the Cross, said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Whose steps the holy Stephen followed, when with bended knees he prayed for

those who were stoning him, saying, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And unto this the commandment doth pertain, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you. The Apostle Paul saith, that evil is not to be returned for evil: Recompensing to no man evil for evil: and the Apostle Peter; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; whence also it is read in the Psalms; If I have rewarded evil unto them that dealt evil unto me. The less wicked of the two last pertaineth to the nine lepers, who, when they had been cleansed by the Lord, gave no thanks; but that last act, than which nothing is worse, belongeth to those of whom it is read in the Psalm, In place of loving me, they detracted from me.

4. For they owed love in return for such blessings of the Lord, but they not only did not pay it, but even returned evil for those blessings. But those two middle qualities, which we stated to belong to a sort of middle class of men, are such, that the first of them, I mean the returning good for good, is possessed by the good, and the moderately good and the moderately bad. For this reason the Lord doth not blame this, but yet doth not wish His disciples to abide in this alone, for He doth wish to elevate them to a higher state when He saith to them, For if ye love them which love you, that is, if you return good for good, what reward have ye? that is, what great deed will ye have done? Do not even the Publicans the same? But He wisheth them to do both this and much more, that is, to love not only their friends, but even their enemies. But the last quality, I mean the returning evil for evil, both the wicked, and the moderately wicked, and the moderately good, may possess. So much so, that the law hath given them a measure of retaliation, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; which, if I may so speak, is the justice of the unjust. Not that it is iniquitous that each man should receive what he hath done, (otherwise the law would never enact thus,) but because the lust of revenge is vicious, and it rather belongeth to the judge to fix this between others, than to the good man to demand it for himself. Into how great a depth of malignity, therefore, have the wicked plunged, falling from that high state of goodness in which good deeds are returned for evil, when they have returned evil for good! With how terrible a fall have they passed over so many steps between! Nor ought it to be thought a slight thing that he doth not say, in place of loving me, they slew

me; but, they detracted from me: since they slew Him in that they detracted from Him by denying Him to be the Son of God, and saying that He cast out devils by the chief of the devils; and that, He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him? and other sayings of the same sort. For by this detraction they turned away from Him those whose conversion He was seeking; and indeed, he preferred this expression in order to shew that those do more harm who detract from Christ, and by this means slay souls, than they who in their fury destroyed His mortal flesh, especially as it was so soon to rise.

5. But after he had said, in place of loving me, they detracted from me; what doth he add? But I gave myself unto prayer. He said not indeed what he prayed, but what can we better understand than for them themselves. For they were detracting greatly from Him Whom they crucified, when they ridiculed Him as if He were a man, whom in their opinion they had conquered; from which Cross He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do; so that while they in the depth of their malignity were rendering evil for good, He in the height of His goodness was rendering good for evil. Although He may also be well understood to have prayed for His disciples, as He said even before His Passion, lest their faith should fail, while He, hanging on the tree, that He might recommend endurance unto them, did not display His power amid the calumnies of those who were detracting from Him, whom He might have destroyed by His divine power. But for us it was more profitable that He shewed an example of endurance, than if by destroying His enemies without delay, He had trained us up to hasten impatiently to be revenged of those wicked men from whom we suffer; since it is written, He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty. The divine words then teach us by our Lord's example, when we hear, In place of loving me, they detracted from me; but I gave myself unto prayer; that when we feel others ungrateful to us, not only in that they do not repay us with good, but even return evil for good, we should pray; He indeed for others who were raging against Him, or in sorrow, or endangered in faith; but we for ourselves in the first place, that we may by the mercy and aid of God conquer our own mind, by which we are borne on to the desire of revenge, when any detraction is made from us, either in our presence or our absence. Next, when we call to mind the patience of Christ, as if He Himself were aroused from sleep, (as actually happened, when He was

sleeping in the ship,) Who doth tranquillize the perturbation and tempest of our heart, with a spirit serene and pacified, let us pray for our very calumniators, that we may without fear pray, Forgive us, as we also forgive. But He forgave them, Who indeed had no trespass that should be forgiven Him.

6. Ver. 5. He addeth, Thus have they rewarded me evil for good. And as if we asked, what evil? for what good? And hatred, he saith, for my good will. This is the sum total of their great guilt. For how could the persecutors injure Him, Who died of His own free-will, and not by compulsion? But this very hatred is the greatest crime of the persecutor, although it be the willing atonement of the sufferer. And he hath sufficiently explained the sense of the above words, In place of loving me, since they owed love not as a general duty only, but in return for His love: in that he hath here added, for my good will. This love He mentioneth in the Gospel, when He saith, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not!

7. He then beginneth to prophesy what they should receive for this very impiety; detailing their lot in such a manner, as if he wished its realization from a desire of revenge; while He declareth what was to happen with the most absolute certainty, and what of God's justice would come upon such worthily. Some not understanding this mode of predicting the future, under the appearance of wishing evil, suppose hatred to be returned for hatred, and an evil will for an evil will: since in truth it belongeth to few to distinguish, in what way the punishment of the wicked pleaseth the accuser, who longeth to satiate his enmity; and in how widely different a way it pleaseth the judge, who with a righteous mind punisheth sins. For the former returneth evil for evil: but the judge when he punisheth doth not return evil for evil, since he returneth justice to the unjust; and what is just, is surely good. He therefore punisheth not from delight in another's misery, which is evil for evil; but from love of justice, which is good for evil. Let not then the blind pervert the light of the Scriptures, imagining that God doth not punish sins: nor let the wicked flatter themselves, as if He rendered evil for evil. Let us therefore hear the sequel of this divine composition; and

in the words of one who seemeth to wish ill, let us recognise the predictions of a prophet; and let us see God making a just retribution, raising our mind up to His eternal laws.

8. Ver. 6. Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand. Though the complaint had been before concerning many, the Psalm is now speaking of one. For he had said before; they have spoken against me with false tongues; they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause; in place of loving me they detracted from me, but I gave myself unto prayer: thus have they rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my good will. All this is concerning many persons. But now, declaring what they deserved for their iniquities, and what was in store for them by the Divine judgment, he saith, Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, as if threatening singly that man who gave himself over to such enemies of his as he was before describing. Since therefore he is here speaking of the traitor Judas, who, according to the Scripture in the Acts of the Apostles, was to be punished with the penalty due to him, what meaneth, set thou an ungodly man over him, save him whom in the next verse he mentioneth by name, when he saith, and let Satan stand at his right hand? He therefore who refused to be subject unto Christ, deserved this, that he should have the devil set over him, that is, that he should be subject unto the devil. The expression, stand at his right hand, is used because he preferred the works of the devil to the works of God: for that which he doth prefer is justly said to be at the right of any man, even as the right hand is preferred to the left. For this reason also it is said of those, who preferring the pleasures of this world to God, styled the people blessed who have such and such things, their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. For because they called the people who had such and such things blessed, their mouth hath spoken vanity; as is said of them above. But he whose mouth speaketh truth, contrary to what they said of the people who have such things, ought himself to say, what followeth in the same Psalm: Blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God; for this man hath not the devil at his right hand, but the Lord; even as he elsewhere saith, I have set God always before me, for He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not be moved. The devil therefore stood at his right hand, when he preferred avarice to wisdom, and money to his salvation, so that he betrayed Him, by

Whom he ought to have been possessed, that he might not be possessed by him, whose works Christ Himself, by Whom he refused to be possessed, destroyed.

9. Ver. 7. When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned. For he refused to be one of those to whom it should be said, enter into the joy of thy Lord; and preferred to be such an one of whom it is said, cast him into outer darkness. And let his prayer be turned into sin. For prayer is not righteous except through Christ, Whom he sold in his atrocious sin: but the prayer which is not made through Christ, not only cannot blot out sin, but is itself turned into sin. But it may be inquired, on what occasion Judas could have so prayed, that his prayer was turned into sin. I suppose that before he betrayed the Lord, while he was thinking of betraying Him; for he could no longer pray through Christ. For after he betrayed Him, and repented of it, if he prayed through Christ, he would ask for pardon; if he asked for pardon, he would have hope; if he had hope, he would hope for mercy; if he hoped for mercy, he would not have hung himself in despair: therefore after he had said, when sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned; that he might not be supposed to have been able to liberate himself by prayer from the condemnation which hung over him; that prayer which he had learnt together with his fellow-disciples, where it is said, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; let his prayer, he saith, be turned into sin, because it is not made through Christ, Whom he chose not to follow, but to persecute.

10. Ver. 8. Let his days be few. By his days, he meant the days of his apostleship, which were few; since before the Passion of our Lord, they were ended by his crime and death. And as if it were asked, What then shall become of that most sacred number twelve, within which our Lord willed, not without a meaning, to limit His twelve first Apostles? he at once addeth, and let another take his office. As much as to say, let both himself be punished according to his desert, and let his number be filled up. And if any one desire to know how this was done, let him read the Acts of the Apostles.

11. Ver. 9. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. After his death, both his children were fatherless, and his wife a widow.

12. Ver. 10. Let his children be vagabonds, and be carried away, and beg their bread. By vagabonds he meaneth, uncertain whither to go, destitute of all help. Let them be driven from their habitations. He here explaineth what he had said above, Let them be carried away. How all this happened to his wife and children, the following verses explain.

13. Ver. 11, 12. Let the extortioner search out all his substance, and let the strangers spoil his labour. Let there be no man to help him: that is, to guard his posterity; wherefore followeth, nor to have compassion on his fatherless children.

14. Ver. 13. But as even orphans may, without one to help them, and without a guardian, nevertheless, increase amid trouble and want, and preserve their race by descent; he next saith, Let his posterity be destroyed; and in the next generation let his name be clean put out: that is, let what hath been generated by him, generate no more, and quickly pass away.

15. Ver. 14. But what is it that he next addeth? Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be done away. Is it to be understood, that even the sins of his fathers shall be visited upon him? For upon him they are not visited, who hath been changed in Christ, and hath ceased to be the child of the wicked, by not having imitated their conduct: for this is most truly written, I will visit the sins of their fathers upon the children; and this, which is declared through the Prophet, both the soul of the father is Mine, and the soul of the son is Mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Now this is said of those who turn unto God, and do not imitate the evil deeds of their parents; and this the Prophet evidently declareth, when he saith, that the iniquities of their fathers injure not the children, who, by working righteousness, are unlike them. And to these words, I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, is added, who hate Me; that is, hate Me as their fathers hated Me: so that as the effect of imitating the good is that even their own sins are blotted out, so the imitation of the wicked causeth men to suffer not their own deservings only, but those also of those whom they have imitated. If therefore Judas had held unto that to which he had been called, by no means would either his past wickedness, or that of his parents, have affected him; but since he held not his adoption in the household of God, but preferred the

iniquity of his ancient race; the iniquity of his fathers was had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, that it also might in him be punished; and the sin of his mother was not done away in him.

16. Ver. 15. Let them alway be against (contra) the Lord; that is, let his father and his mother be alway against the Lord; not that they may be opposed to the Lord, but that the Lord may not forget in this man their very ill deserts, when He shall avenge them upon him. Against the Lord, meaneth in the Lord's sight: for other translators have rendered this line, let them be always in the sight of the Lord; while others have rendered it, let them be before the Lord alway; as it is elsewhere said, Thou hast set our misdeeds in Thy sight. By alway, he meaneth that this great crime should be without pardon, both here, and in a future life. Let the memorial of them perish from off the earth: that is, of his father and of his mother. By memorial of them, he meaneth, that which is preserved by successive generations: this he prophesied should perish from the earth, because both Judas himself, and his sons, who were the memorial of his father and mother, without any succeeding offspring, as it is said above, were consumed in the short space of one generation.

17. Suppose some one saith; Is it to be believed, that even this belongeth to the punishment of Judas, that after his death his wife and children came to beggary, and were made vagabonds and outcasts from their homes, the extortioner searching out all his substance, and strangers spoiling his labour, no man aiding or pitying his orphans, and that they died speedily without posterity? Doth any pain reach the dead, resulting from what happeneth among a man's relations after his death? or are they, whose powers of perception are in different places, according to their deservings, whether good or evil, to be supposed to be conscious of these things? To this I answer, that it is indeed a great question, and not one to be discussed at present, because it belongeth to a labour of greater extent, whether, or to what degree, or in what manner, the spirits of the dead are aware of what is passing around us. Nevertheless, as may briefly be alleged, if they had no concern for us, our Lord would not represent that rich man who was suffering torment in hell to have said, I have five brethren, * * * * * lest they also come into this place of torment. But let those who attempt to

understand this otherwise, understand it in whatever sense they please; and since it must be confessed, that it doth not follow, that if the dead know that their relations are living, because they see them neither in the regions of punishment, where that rich man was, nor in the repose of the blessed, where he recognised Lazarus and Abraham, at however great a distance, that they must needs for that reason know all the joyful and sorrowful events that affect those dear unto them: this I assert, that there are few men of such a disposition as to neglect, or altogether scorn during their own life, what of good or evil may happen to their kindred after their death; but that many, as is shewn by their great care in expressing their last will and testament, such as it may be, exert themselves sufficiently to secure prosperity to their friends, when they die themselves. But the continuance of their posterity through successive generations is despised in a praiseworthy spirit by those alone, who cut off themselves on account of the kingdom of heaven, and desire their sons to do this, or long to be crowned with martyrdom, so that none of them remain on earth: but all, or nearly all, the rest, wish their kindred to be happy in this life after their own death, and are unwilling that their race should perish. Wherefore in that, after Judas had so miserably perished, his widowed wife and fatherless children survived in such a state, that, the extortioner searching out all his substance, and strangers spoiling all his labours, they became outcasts from their houses, and his orphans found none to pity them, and that they perished in one generation without posterity; if the dead feel these things, it is an aggravation of their evils: if they do not feel them, they are a fear for the living. But if the question occur, how he could have substance which the extortioner might search out, and strangers spoil, since he had before this been following the Lord with the other eleven: we may believe that he had given up all that he had to his wife and children in such a manner as not sincerely and perseveringly to have torn from him the chain of avarice: since although he seemed to be selling his property for distribution among the poor, he was in reality doing what Ananias did after the ascension of our Lord. For he would not fear lest the Lord by His Divinity should be aware of this, since he imagined that he had escaped His notice, when he was stealing from out of the bags what was dropped in.

18. Ver. 6–15. But let us now consider, if we can, as far as the Lord aideth us, how these words suit the Jewish people, whose enmities against the Lord continued with a persevering hatred: which people, we have said, Judas figuratively represented, as Peter did the Church. Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand. As in the case of Judas, so it must be understood of this people; who, when Christ was rejected by them, became subject to the devil, whose persuasions in all depraved and earthly lusts it preferred to everlasting salvation. When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned; because by persisting in wickedness and unbelief, they treasure up for themselves wrath on the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render unto every man according to his works. And let his prayer be turned into sin. Because it is not offered through the Mediator between God and men, the Man Jesus Christ, and Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec. Let his days be few. This must be understood of the kingdom: since the Jewish kingdom did not long continue afterwards. And let another take his office. I think that our Lord Christ Himself may without inconsistency be understood by the Episcopate of the Jewish people, since He was born of the tribe of Judah, according to the flesh: and the Apostle saith, Now I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. And He Himself saith, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; because He shewed unto them His presence in the flesh. And the Magi who came from the East said this, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? And this was written on the title above Him when crucified: whence Pilate replied, not without a meaning, to those who desired to alter it, What I have written, I have written. Another then, that is, the Gentiles, received this Episcopate of the Jewish people, that is, Christ. Let his sons be fatherless: they of whom it is said, The children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness. They became fatherless by the loss of this very kingdom, as if they had thereby lost their father, although they may be well understood to have lost God their Father; for, saith Truth, “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.” And his wife a widow. The people may be understood as the wife of a kingdom, over which kings rule; but she became widowed by the loss of this very kingdom. Let his sons be bowed down, and carried away, and beg their bread. They bowed down before their

dangers; the conquered sons of the kingdom of the Jews were carried away by overwhelming enemies. But what is the meaning of begging their bread, save living on the mercy of men, as they live beneath the kings of those nations into which they have been carried away? Let them be outcasts from their homes. Thus it hath happened. Let the extortioner search out all their substance, that is, all the substance of that people. This cannot be better understood, than that their trespasses are not pardoned, because they are pardoned in Christ alone, Whom they rejected, Who also taught them to say, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. By all substance, is meant all its life, so that no debts, that is no sins, be remitted to it. And let the stranger spoil his labours; the devil and his angels, because they who have not Christ do not lay up store in Heaven. Let there be no man to help him; Who can help him whom Christ helpeth not? Nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children. Who, having lost their father, that is, their kingdom, remained in this state, as having lost their God, Whose Son they persecuted and hated, cannot find any one to pity them, not to support their life in this world, but their true, that is their eternal, life. Let his posterity be destroyed, be destroyed indeed for evermore. And in the next generation let his name be clean put out. Because they were generated and not regenerated, therefore are they blotted out in one generation; for in the other, that is, in regeneration, if they understood and held it, they would not be blotted out. Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, that the Lord may visit upon the same people, when persisting in their wickedness, even their fathers' iniquity. For this He saith unto them, Ye are witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets: and a little after he saith, That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias.—And let not the sin of his mother be done away. The sin of Jerusalem, who is a slave together with her children, who slayeth the Prophets, and stoneth those that are sent unto her. Let them always be before the Lord; their sin and iniquity; that is, that they may not be blotted out from the sight of the Lord, God punishing them for evermore. And let the memorial of them perish from off the earth. The earth of the Lord is the Lord's field: the Lord's field is the Church: from which earth the memorial

of them hath been rooted out, for though they were the natural branches, through their unbelief were they broken off.

19. Ver. 16, 17. And that, because he remembered not to act mercifully; either Judas, or the people itself. But remembered not is better understood of the people: for if they slew Christ, they might well remember the deed in penitence, and act mercifully towards His members, whom they most perseveringly persecuted. For this reason he saith, but persecuted the poor man and the beggar. It may indeed be understood of Judas; for the Lord did not disdain to become poor, when He was rich, that we might be enriched by His poverty. But how shall I understand the word beggar, save perhaps because He said to the Samaritan woman, Give me to drink, and on the Cross He said, I thirst. But as to what followeth, I do not see how it can be understood of our Head Himself, that is, the Saviour of His own body, Whom Judas persecuted. For after saying, He persecuted the poor man and the beggar: he addeth, and to slay, that is, that he might slay Him, for some have so rendered it, Him that was pricked at the heart. This expression is not commonly used except of the stings of past sins in the sorrows of penitence; as it is said of those, who, when they had heard the Apostles after our Lord's ascension, were pricked in heart, even they who had slain the Lord. The most blessed Peter addressed them, using these words among others, Repent, and be baptized each man of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. But since those very same men became His members, Whose limbs they had nailed upon the Cross, the Jewish people remembered not to act mercifully; they persecuted the poor man and the beggar, but in His members; of whom He will speak what pertaineth to these very works of mercy, Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these, ye have not done it unto Me. And, that he might slay him that was pricked at the heart: certainly pricked at the heart, but in His members. Now among those who persecuted that they might slay him that was pricked at the heart, there was Saul also, consenting unto the death of Stephen, that was pricked at the heart; for Stephen himself also was one of those who were pricked at the heart. But Saul remembered to act mercifully; and he who in the morning devoured the prey, at night divided the spoil; he himself also pricked at the heart, so that this very people in him persecuted a poor man, wishing to slay him that was pricked at the

heart. For they hated the Apostle Paul for this reason, that when pricked at the heart, he began to preach Him Whom he had persecuted before. For when persecuting, that he might himself slay the poor and helpless man in his members, he heard from heaven the words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? and when pricked at the heart, he began to suffer such things as he had inflicted before upon those who were pricked at heart.

20. Ver. 18. The Psalm then continueth: His delight was in cursing, and it shall happen to him. Although Judas loved cursing, both in stealing from the money bag, and selling and betraying the Lord: nevertheless, that people more openly loved cursing, when they said, His blood be on us, and on our children. He loved not blessing, therefore it shall be far from him. Such was Judas indeed, since he loved not Christ, in Whom is everlasting blessing; but the Jewish people still more decidedly refused blessing, unto whom he who had been enlightened by the Lord said, Will ye also be His disciples? They refused this blessing, and held it as a curse; and replied, Thou art His disciple: and blessing was made far from them, for it passed over to the Gentiles. He clothed himself with cursing, like as with a raiment: either Judas, or that people. And it came into his bowels like water. Both without, then, and within; without, like a garment; within, like water: since he hath come before the judgment-seat of Him Who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell; the body without, the soul within. And like oil into his bones. He sheweth that he worketh evil with delight, and storeth up cursing for himself, that is, everlasting punishment; for blessing is eternal life. For at present evil deeds are his delight, flowing like water into his bowels, like oil into his bones; but it is styled cursing, because God hath appointed torments for such men. But cursing is like oil in their bones, when men think themselves strong, because they are allowed to commit evil deeds with impunity.

21. Ver. 19. Let it be unto him as the cloak which covereth him. Since he hath before spoken of the cloak, why doth he repeat it? When he said, He clothed himself with cursing as with a raiment; doth the raiment with which he is covered differ from that with which he is clothed? For every man is clothed with his tunic, covered with his cloak; and what is this, save boasting in iniquity, even in the sight of men? and as the girdle, he saith,

that he is alway girded withal. Men are girded chiefly that they may be better fit for toil, that they may not be hindered by the folds of their dress. He therefore girdeth himself with curses, who designeth an evil which he hath carefully contrived, not on a sudden impulse, and who learneth in such a manner to do evil, that he is always ready to commit it: whence he here saith, and as the girdle that he is alway girded withal.

22. Ver. 20. This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord. He said not, their reward, but, their work: for it is clear that by the clothing, covering, water, oil, and girdle, he was describing the very works by which eternal curses are procured. It is not then one Judas, but many, of whom it is said, This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord. Although indeed the plural number might have been put for the singular; even as, when Herod died, it was said by the Angel, They are dead which sought the young Child's life. But who slander Christ more before the Lord, than they who slander the very words of the Lord, by declaring that it is not He whom the Law of the Lord and His Prophets announced beforehand? And of those that speak evil against my soul: by denying that He, when He had willed, could have arisen: though He saith, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.

23. Ver. 21. But work Thou with me, O Lord God. Some have thought mercifully should be understood, some have actually added it; but the best copies have the words thus: But work Thou with me, O Lord God, for Thy Name's sake. Whence a higher sense should not be passed over, supposing the Son to have thus addressed the Father, Deal Thou with Me, since the works of the Father and of the Son are the same. Where although we understand mercy, (for these words follow, for sweet is Thy mercy,) because he said not, In me, or, over me; or any thing of this sort: but, work Thou with Me; we rightly understand that the Father and Son together work mercifully towards the vessels of mercy. Work with me, may also be understood to mean, help me. We use this expression in our daily language, when we are speaking of any thing which is in our favour; It works with us. For the Father aideth the Son, as far as the Deity aideth Man, on account of His having assumed the form of a servant, to which Man, God, and to which Form of a servant, the Lord too is Father. For in the Form of God, the

Son needeth not aid, for He is equally all-powerful with the Father, on which account He also is the helper of men; for, as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will; nor doth the Father quicken any other persons than the Son, nor the Father in one manner, the Son in another; because He doeth both the same things and in the same way. Whence, in so far as the Son of God is Man, God raised Him from the dead, that is, the Father to Whom He saith in the Psalms, Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall reward them: but in so far as He is God, He raised Himself, on which account He said, Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days. And this He signified even here, if any one carefully reflect, for He ordered us to search the Scriptures, which bear witness of Him, and not to pass them over superficially. For He doth not only say, Work Thou with me, Lord, Lord; but he saith, Thou also. What meaneth, Thou also, save I also? And that He saith not only once, O Lord, but repeateth it; O Lord, O Lord, implieth the feeling of one praying: as it is said, God, my God. And because when he had said, Work Thou with me, he added, for Thy Name's sake, he hath commended grace. For without previous deserving works, human nature was raised to such a height, that the whole in one, the Word and Flesh, that is, God and Man, was styled the Only-begotten Son of God. And this was done that that which had been lost might be sought by Him Who had created it, through that which had not been lost; whence the following words, For Thy mercy is sweet.

24. Ver. 22. O deliver me, for I am needy and poor. Need and poverty is that weakness, through which He was crucified. And my heart is disturbed within me. This alludeth to those words which He spoke when His Passion was drawing near, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

25. Ver. 23. I go hence like a shadow that declineth. By this he signified death itself. For as night comes of the shadow's declining, so death comes of mortal flesh. And am driven away as the locusts. This I think would be more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His faithful disciples. That he might make it much plainer, he preferred writing locusts in the plural number: although many may be understood where the singular number is used, as in that passage, He spake, and the locust came; but it would have been more obscure. His disciples, then, were driven away, that

is, were put to flight by persecutors, either the multitude of whom He wished to be signified by the word locusts, or their passing from one place to another.

26. Ver. 24. My knees are weak through fasting. We read, that our Lord Christ underwent a fast of forty days: but had fasting so great power over Him, that His knees were weakened? Or is this more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His saints? And my flesh is changed because of the oil: because of spiritual grace. Whence Christ was so called from the Greek word, chrisma, which signifies unction. But the flesh was changed through the oil, not for the worse, but for the better, that is, rising from the dishonour of death to the glory of immortality. After he had said, therefore, My knees are weak through fasting, whereby I suppose those to be meant among His members who seemed strong, yet as if the presence of that bread which supported them had been taken away, fell away even unto denial, at His Passion, as appeared in Peter; he added, as if to strengthen them, that when they drooped they might not utterly fall, And my flesh is changed for the oil, so that I should strengthen these by My resurrection, who were fainting because of My death, and anoint them with the Holy Ghost, Who could not have come unto them, had I not left them. For He had said this; If I go not away, He cannot come unto you: and the Evangelist saith, The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. His flesh was not yet changed. But whether the Holy Spirit be represented by water through the notion of ablution or irrigation, or by oil through that of exultation and the inflaming of charity; It doth not differ from Itself, because Its types are different. For there is a great difference between the lion and the lamb, and yet Christ is represented by both. He is termed a lion on account of one attribute, a lamb on account of another; yet He is not different Himself: for a lamb is not courageous, nor a lion innocent; yet Christ is both innocent like a lamb, and courageous as a lion. In Isaiah Jesus Christ Himself saith, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me.

27. Ver. 25. I became also a reproach unto them: through the death of the Cross. For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. They looked upon Me, and shaked their heads. Because they

beheld His crucifixion, without beholding His resurrection: they saw when His knees were weakened, they saw not when His flesh was changed.

28. Ver. 26. Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to Thy mercy. This may be referred to the whole, both to the Head and to the body: to the Head, owing to His having taken the form of a servant; to the body, on account of the servants themselves. For He might even in them have said unto God, Help Me: and, O save Me: as in them He said unto Paul, Why persecutest thou Me? The following words, according to Thy mercy, describe grace given gratuitously, not according to the merit of works.

29. Ver. 27. And let them know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it. He said, Let them know, of those for whom He even prayed while they were raging; for even those who afterwards believed in Him were among the crowd who shook their heads in mockery of Him. But let those who ascribe unto God the shape of the human body, learn in what sense God hath a hand. For if He doth what He doth with His Hand, doth He create this very Hand with itself? In what sense then is it said, They shall know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it? Let us therefore understand, that the Hand of God meaneth Christ: whence it is elsewhere said, Unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? This Hand both was, and He made it; for, In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was made flesh; and was without time, according to the Godhead; and was made for Him of the seed of David according to the flesh.

30. Ver. 28. Though they curse, yet bless Thou. Vain therefore and false is the cursing of the sons of men, that have pleasure in vanity, and seek a lie; but when God blesseth, He doth what He saith. Let them be confounded that rise up against me. For their imagining that they have some power against Me, is the reason that they rise up against Me; but when I shall have been exalted above the heavens, and My glory shall have commenced spreading over the whole earth, they shall be confounded. But Thy servant shall rejoice: either on the right hand of the Father, or in His members when they rejoice, both in hope among temptations, and after temptations for evermore.

31. Ver. 29. Let my slanderers be clothed with shame: that is, let it shame them to have slandered me. But this may also be understood as a blessing, in that they are amended. And let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a double cloak; for *diploïs* is a double cloak; that is, let them be confounded both within and without: both before God and before men.

32. Ver. 30. As for me, I will confess greatly unto the Lord with my mouth. The word *nimis* is used in Latin to express excess, the contrary to *parum*, which meaneth deficiency. The Greek word for *nimis* is *ἄγαν*: but this verse hath *σφόδρα*, not *ἄγαν*; which our translators have some times rendered by *nimis*, sometimes by *valdè*. Now if *nimis* be taken as equivalent to *valdè*, it may be understood of praise: for this confession signifieth praise. For the next words are, And I will praise Him among the multitude. He saith in another Psalm, In the midst of the congregation will I sing of Thee. But since the Church, which is the body of Christ, herself doth praise Him, how doth the Church praise Him in the midst of the Church? So here also, while many who are members of Christ praise Him, He praiseth also, for they are His members; how doth He praise among the multitude, when He is said to praise in the praises of the multitude? Is He said to praise among the multitude because He is with His Church here even unto the end of the world; so that we may understand by among the multitude, that He is honoured by this very multitude? For he is said to be in the midst, unto whom the chief honour is paid. But if the heart is, as it were, that which is midmost of a man, no better construction can be put on this passage than this, I will praise Him in the hearts of many. For Christ dwelleth through faith in our hearts; and therefore he saith, with my mouth, that is, with the mouth of my body, which is the Church. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

33. Ver. 31. For he stood at the right hand of the poor. It was said of Judas, Let Satan stand at his right hand; since he chose to increase his riches by selling Christ; but here the Lord stood at the right hand of the poor, that the Lord Himself might be the poor man's riches. He stood at the right hand of the poor, not to multiply the years of a life that one day must end, nor to increase his stores, nor to render him strong in the strength of the body, or

secure for a time; but, he saith, to save my soul from the persecutors. Now the soul is rendered safe from the persecutors, if we do not consent to them unto evil; but there is no such consent to them when the Lord standeth at the right hand of the poor, that he may not give way through his very poverty, that is, weakness. This aid was given to the Body of Christ in the case of all the holy Martyrs.

PSALM 110

Exposition

A Sermon to the People.

We have undertaken, as far as the Lord granteth, Who caused us, as ministers of His Word and Sacrament, to serve you in the richness of His lovingkindness, to consider as we are enabled, and expound this Psalm, which we have just chanted; brief in the number of its words, great in the depth of its meaning, with the aid of Him Who made you eager listeners, to render us also equal to the task. May your soul live, and watch for the Lord. For God fixed a time for His promises, and a time for fulfilling what things He promised. The period of His promises was from the time of the Prophets unto John the Baptist: but from him and thenceforth unto the end is the period for fulfilling what He promised. God is faithful, Who made Himself our Debtor: not by accepting any thing from us, but by promising us so great blessings. Promise was not enough, He even chose that He should be bound by writing, creating for us a kind of bond for His promises; so that when He began to fulfil His promises, we might contemplate in Scripture the order of their accomplishment. The period of prophecy, then, as we have before now frequently said, was the announcement of the promises. He promised everlasting salvation, and a life of bliss with the Angels without end, an heritage that should never wither, everlasting glory, the sweetness of His countenance, the home of His sanctification in the heavens, from the resurrection from the dead no further fear of death. This is, as it were, His final promise, whither all our endeavours tend, which after we have reached, we shall seek nothing more, expect nothing more. Nor hath He passed over in silence in what order that which shall happen at the end shall be reached, in His promises and prophecies. For He promised unto men the Divine Nature; to mortals, immortality; to sinners, justification; to cast-aways, a state of glory. Whatever He promised, He promised to the

unworthy, so that not a reward was promised to works, but that grace was given by His Name for nought. For even this very thing, that man liveth righteously, so far as he can live righteously, is not the fruit of human merit, but of divine blessing. For no man liveth righteously, save he who is justified, that is, made righteous; and it is by Him that a man is made righteous, Who can never be unrighteous. For as a lamp is not lit by itself, so also the human soul doth not give itself light; but crieth unto God, Thou shall light my candle.

2. Since, therefore, the kingdom of Heaven has been promised unto sinners not remaining in their sin, but liberated from their sin, and serving righteousness; and that they may do this, they are aided, as we have said, by grace, and justified by Him Who is always righteous; it appeared incredible, that God could have so great care for man. And at this day, those who despair of divine grace, and refuse to turn from the most depraved conduct unto God, that they may be justified by Him, and through His mercy, after all their sins are blotted out, begin to live righteously in Him Who never lived unrighteously, have entertained thoughts so destructive to themselves as to say, that God careth not for human affairs, and that the Creator and Ruler of this world cannot understand in what manner each mortal liveth on the earth. Thus man, who was made by God, doth not even think that he is held in account by God. If we could address such a man, if he would admit us first to his ears, and afterwards to his heart; if he would not repel by resistance Him who sought him, if he would in his lost state suffer himself to be found; we might say to him, ‘O man, how shall God, Who took care that thou shouldest be created, fail to take account of thee when created? Why dost thou imagine thou art not numbered in the rank of things created? Believe not the seducer; thy hairs are counted by thy Creator.’ This our Lord said to His disciples in the Gospel, that they might not fear death, that they might not think that any thing of them should be destroyed by death. They were fearful for their souls in death; He guaranteed to them security even for their hairs. Doth then the soul of him perish, whose hair doth not perish? Nevertheless, brethren, because what God promised seemed incredible to men, that men from this mortality, corruption, weak and abject state, this dust and ashes, shall become equal to the Angels of God; He not only made a written covenant with men that they might believe, but also

gave them a Mediator as a pledge of His promise; not any prince, or any Angel, or Archangel, but His only Son; so that the way through which He was to lead us to that end which He promised, He might both shew, and give unto us by the Same, His own Son. For it was not enough for God to give us in His Son one who should shew us the path, He made Him Himself the way, that thou mightest go through Him ruling thee, as thou walkest through Himself.

3. He therefore promised that we should come to Him, that is, to that ineffable immortality, and equality with His Angels. How far off were we? how much was He above us, how much we beneath Him? On what a height was He, in what a depth were we lying in despair? We were sick without any hope of cure; a physician was sent whom the sick man recognised not: For if they had known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. But even this proved a source of cure to the sick man, that the sick killed his physician; He came to visit him, He was killed to cure Him. He introduced Himself as God and Man among those who believed in Him; as God through Whom we were made, as Man through Whom we were new made. The one attribute appeared in Him, the other was concealed; and that which was concealed, was by far more excellent than that which appeared; but that which was more excellent could not be seen. The sick man was under treatment through means which he could not see, that he might become able to see that which was deferred by its concealment, not taken away by a denial of it. The only Son of God then, Who was to come unto man, was to assume the Manhood, to become Man through this assumption, to die, to rise again, to ascend into Heaven, to sit at the right hand of the Father, and to fulfil among the nations what He promised; and after the fulfilment of His promise among the nations, to fulfil His coming also; to demand what He gave, to separate the vessels of wrath from the vessels of mercy, to award to the ungodly what He threatened, to the righteous what He promised; the whole of this was to be prophesied, was to be announced beforehand, was to have its future coming declared, that it might not be dreaded by coming suddenly, but might be believed and expected. This Psalm is one of these promises, surely and openly prophesying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; so that we are utterly unable to doubt that Christ is announced in this Psalm, since we are now Christians, and believe the

Gospel. For when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ asked of the Jews, whose Son they alleged Christ to be, and they had replied, the Son of David; He at once replied to their answer, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If then, He asked, David in the spirit call Him Lord, how is He his son? With this verse this Psalm beginneth.

4. Ver. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. We ought, therefore, thoroughly to consider this question proposed to the Jews by the Lord, in the very commencement of the Psalm. For if what the Jews answered be asked of us, whether we confess or deny it; God forbid that we should deny it. If it be said to us, Is Christ the Son of David, or not? if we reply, No, we contradict the Gospel; for the Gospel of St. Matthew thus beginneth, The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. The Evangelist declareth, that he is writing the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. The Jews, then, when questioned by Christ, whose Son they believed Christ to be, rightly answered, the Son of David. The Gospel agreeth with their answer. Not only the suspicion of the Jews, but the faith of Christians, doth declare this. I see, besides, other proofs. The Apostle saith, Which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; he saith also unto Timothy: Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my Gospel. And, what saith he of the Gospel itself? Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. The Apostle suffered trouble even unto bonds, then, for his Gospel. That is, for the Gospel dispensation which he preached to the nations, which he bestowed on the nations. He who had ravined in the morning, in the evening divided the spoil. He laboured then even unto bonds for the Gospel. What Gospel? That which declared that Christ Jesus arose from the dead, of the seed of David. It was for this Gospel that the Apostle suffered trouble: and yet it was concerning this that Christ questioned the Jews: and when the Jews had replied what the Apostle preached, answered them seemingly in words of contradiction, saying, How then doth David in the spirit call Him Lord? and interposed the testimony from this Psalm, The Lord said unto my Lord. If then David in the spirit

called Him Lord, how is He his son? The Jews were silent at this question: they found no further reply: yet they did not seek Him as the Lord, for they did not acknowledge Him to be Himself that Son of David. But let us, brethren, both believe and declare: for, with the heart we believe unto righteousness: but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; let us believe, I say, and let us declare both the Son of David, and the Lord of David. Let us not be ashamed of the Son of David, lest we find the Lord of David angry with us.

5. For when the blind men very rightly hailed Him as He passed as the Son of David, they gained their enlightening. For Jesus was passing by, and they, hearing the sound of the crowd passing, already recognising with the ear what they could not as yet with the eye, cried out with a loud voice, and said, Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David. But the crowd rebuked them, bidding them be silent: yet they nevertheless, from their desire for light, overcoming the opposition of the crowd, persevered in their cries: they detained Him as He was passing, and deserved to gain their sight from His touch. For they said to Him as He passed, Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David! He stood still, and, when the clamour of those who interrupted them was overcome, said unto them, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They answered, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. He touched, and opened their eyes: they saw Him before them, Whom they had felt to be passing them. The Lord, therefore, did somewhat that was transitory; but there is somewhat also that abideth. There is, I say, one thing that is transitory in the Lord: another that is abiding. What is transitory is, the Virgin's delivery, the Incarnation of the Word, the gradation of ages, the exhibition of miracles, the endurance of Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, Ascent into heaven, all this was transitory. For Christ is no longer in birth, or dying, or rising again, or ascending into heaven. Do ye not see that these acts held their course through seasons, through certain periods exhibited to those on the way something transitory, so that they should not abide on the path, but reach their country? Lastly, these blind men also were sitting by the path; there they saw Him passing, and arrested Him by their cries. In the path, therefore, of this world, the Lord did this transitory work of His, and this transitory work belongeth to the Son of David. Thus they said unto Him, The Lord, as He was passing, Have mercy upon us, Thou Son of David. As

if they said, We recognise the Son of David in Him Who is passing: we learn that He became the Son of David in His passage. Let us also acknowledge Him, and confess that He is the Son of David, that we may deserve to be enlightened. For we perceive the Son of David passing, and are enlightened by the Lord of David.

6. Lo, then, since our Lord questioned the Jews, and they refused to answer, because they were resolved not to be His disciples; lo, what should we answer, if He asked us? The Jews failed in this question: let Christians profit: let them not be disturbed, but taught. For our Lord doth not ask them because He wishes to learn: He questioneth them as their teacher. The wretched Jews should say, Tell Thou us. But they preferred to swell to bursting in proud silence, rather than to come to learning by an humble confession. Suppose then our Master speaketh unto us; and let us consider what we should answer Him when He questioneth us: What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? Let us answer exactly as the Jews did: but let us not remain where the Jews did. Let us remember the Gospel which we believe: The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. Because we are being questioned, let it not on that account slip from our mind, that Christ is the Son of David, which the Apostle impresseth on our memory. Remember, Christian, that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised again from the dead. Suppose then we are asked, What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? Let the unanimous voice of Christians reply, The Son of David. Suppose our Teacher were to answer us, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? How should we reply, unless we learnt from Thee? Now, therefore, since we have learnt, we reply: In the beginning Thou wast the Word, and Thou the Word wast with God, and Thou the Word wast God; all things were made by Thee: behold the Lord of David. But on account of our weakness, because we lay prostrate despairing flesh, Thou the Word wast made flesh, that Thou mightest dwell in us: behold the Son of David. Certainly when Thou wast in the form of God, Thou didst think it no robbery to be equal with God: behold David's Lord: but Thou didst make Thyself of no reputation, taking upon Thyself the form of a servant: hence Thou art the Son of David. Lastly, in the very words of Thy question, How is He his Son? Thou didst

not deny Thyself to be his Son, but didst ask in what sense it was thus? For Thou sayest, David calleth Him Lord: how is He his Son? I deny it not, but tell Me in what sense He is so. Ought not they, then, to have replied from the Scriptures which they read, but understood not, if they were endeavouring to call to mind the sense of the expression; Dost thou ask in what sense? Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us. A Virgin shall be with child, a Virgin from the seed of David shall bring forth a Son, so that He is the Son of David; for Joseph and Mary were of the family and country of David. But they shall call His Name, Whom she brought forth, Emmanuel, God with us. Lo, thou hast also the Lord of David.

7. Perhaps this Psalm will give us some intimation of this matter, how Christ is said to be David's Son and David's Lord. Let us therefore listen: let us thoroughly treat it: let us knock in piety: let us extort by charity. David, then, himself saith; for it is not lawful to contradict the Lord; David, He saith, in spirit calleth Him Lord. What then doth David himself say of Christ? For, this Psalm is David's own: and this is the whole of the title, simple, without figure of question, without any knot of difficulty. What then saith David? The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Thy footstool is equivalent to beneath Thy feet: for a footstool is beneath the feet. The Lord said, he saith, unto my Lord. David heard this, he heard it in the spirit: when and where he heard it, we have not heard; but we believe him when he saith, and writeth that he heard it. He then doubtless heard it, he heard it in some secret place of truth, he heard it in some sanctuary of mysteries: where the Prophets heard in secret, what they preached openly: there David heard, what he speaketh with much confidence: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. We know that Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, since His resurrection from the dead, and ascent into heaven. It is already done: we saw not it, but we have believed it: we have read it in the Scripture, have heard it preached, and hold it by faith. So that by the very circumstance that Christ was David's Son, He became His Lord also. For That Which was born of the seed of David was so honoured, that It was also the Lord of David. Thou wonderest

at this, as if the same did not happen in human affairs. For if it should happen, that the son of any private person be made a king, will he not be his father's lord? What is yet more wonderful may happen, not only that the son of a private person, by being made a king, may become his father's lord; but that the son of a layman, by being made a Bishop, may become his father's father. So that in this very circumstance, that Christ took upon Him the flesh, that He died in the flesh, that He rose again in the same flesh, that in the same He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of His Father, in this same flesh so honoured, so brightened, so changed into a heavenly garb, He is both David's Son, and David's Lord. For according to this dispensation of Christ's passage, this also is said by the Apostle, Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. He gave Him, he saith, a Name which is above every name; to Christ in His human nature, to Christ Who died in the flesh, arose, ascended, He hath given a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Where can David be, that He should not be his Lord? Whether he be in Heaven, on the earth, or under the earth: He will be his Lord, Who is the Lord of things in heaven, of things on the earth, and of things under the earth. Let therefore David rejoice with us, honoured as he is by the birth of his Son, freed by His dominion; and let him say with joy, let him be heard by rejoicing listeners: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.

8. Sit, not only on high, but in a hidden place: on high, that Thou mayest be Lord; in secret, that Thou mayest be believed in. For what reward would there be for faith, if what we believed were not hid? But the reward of faith is, to see what we believed before we saw it; as the Scripture telleth us, the righteous man liveth by faith. There would then be no righteousness in faith, unless that which we should believe when preached, were hidden; and unless we reached the sight of it by believing in it. For, O how plentiful is Thy goodness, O Lord, that Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee. Hast Thou then hidden it, and have they fallen back? God forbid! and that Thou hast fulfilled to them that put their trust in Thee. Wonderful indeed is the

mystery of Christ sitting on the right hand of God: it hath been hidden that it might be believed, it hath been withdrawn that it might be hoped for. For we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? These are the Apostle's words. Ye indeed recognise them, but for the sake of the ignorant I speak of them unto you. What then saith the Apostle? We are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Since then that which is seen is not hope, Thou hast hidden Thy goodness for them that fear Thee. Because we hope for what we see not, and wait for it with patience; Thou hast fulfilled it to those who trust in Thee. Lastly, most beloved, hear with attention what I am about to say. Since our righteousness is from faith, and our hearts are cleansed by faith, so that we may see what we have believed in; for both these things are stated in Scripture; both, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; and, Purifying their hearts by faith. Since then this is the righteousness of faith, to believe what thou seest not, and by this very merit of faith to reach in its time unto sight; our Lord in the Gospel, when He was promising the Holy Spirit, saith this; He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of what sin, of what righteousness, of what judgment? He proceedeth and explaineth; He alloweth not the conjectures of men: of sin, He saith, because they believe not on Me. How great were other sins of the Jews! and yet, as if this were the only one, He thus spoke: of sin, because they believe not on Me. This is that sin, of which He elsewhere saith, If I had not come, they would not have sin. What meaneth this, If I had not come, they would not have sin? Hast Thou then come to the righteous, and rendered them sinners? But, leaving out other sins, which might be pardoned through faith, He mentioned this one only, which if they had not committed, all might be forgiven. Of sin, He saith, because they believed not on Me: and elsewhere, If I had not come, they would not have sin. For by this very circumstance, that He came, and they believed not on Him, they fell into sin: but if they had not thus fallen, all their other sins might have been pardoned through the merciful dispensation of grace gained by faith. Of sin, therefore, because they believed not on Me: of righteousness, because I go My Father, and ye see Me no more. This is righteousness, because Thou goest to the Father, and they shall no longer see Thee: for this righteousness is of faith.

For, the righteous liveth by faith: and he then liveth by faith, when he seeth not what he believeth. Since then it belongeth to righteousness to live by faith, and no man liveth by faith, save by not seeing what he believeth; that He might create righteousness itself among men, that is, that they might believe what they see not; Of righteousness, He saith, because I go to My Father, and ye shall see Me no more. This, He saith, shall be your righteousness, that ye believe in Him Whom ye see not, and cleansed by faith, may afterwards see Him on Whom ye have believed, on the day of resurrection.

9. Christ, therefore, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Son is on the right hand of the Father, hidden from us. Let us believe. Two things are here said: that God said, Sit Thou on My right hand; and added, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool; that is, beneath Thy feet. Thou dost not see Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father: yet thou canst see this, how His enemies are made His footstool. While the latter is fulfilled openly, believe the former to be fulfilled secretly. What enemies are made His footstool? Those to whom imagining vain things it is said, Why do the heathen so furiously rage together: and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. And have said, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us: let them not rule over us, let them not subject us to them. He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh them to scorn. Thou wast His enemy; thou shalt be beneath His feet, either as adopted or overcome. Consider, then, what place thou holdest beneath the feet of the Lord thy God: for thou must needs hold one either of grace or of punishment. He therefore sitteth at the right hand of God, till His enemies be placed beneath His feet. This is going on, this is taking place: although it is accomplished by degrees, it is going on without end. For though the heathen rage, and though the people imagine a vain thing: though the kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed; will they by their raging, will they by their imagining a vain thing, will they taking counsel together against Christ, prevent the fulfilment of these words; I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession? It shall be surely fulfilled, though they rage, and meditate a vain thing; I will give to

thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession. For they imagine a vain thing: but, that it may be fulfilled, it was not any vain babbler, but the Lord, Who said unto Me, I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. So also we may say in this Psalm: He said; that is, not any man, not they who rage and imagine a vain thing; but, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Let them rage, let them imagine vain things, let them cry aloud; shall it not be fulfilled? Their memorial is perished with a cry. Their memorial is perished with a cry; but, The Lord shall endure for ever: as another Psalm, but not another spirit, saith. He therefore, Who, when their memorial hath perished, for ever endureth, Himself said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand. For He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, till He make His enemies His footstool.

10. Ver. 2. And what followeth? The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. It appeareth, brethren, it most clearly appeareth, that the Prophet is not speaking of that kingdom of Christ, in which He reigneth for ever with His Father, Ruler of the things which are made through Him: for when doth not God the Word reign, Who is in the beginning with God? For it is said, Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. To the King eternal be honour and glory for ever and ever; to what eternal King? To one invisible, incorruptible. For in this, that Christ is with the Father, invisible, and incorruptible, because He is His Word, and His Power, and His Wisdom, and God with God, through Whom all things were made; He is King eternal; but, nevertheless, that reign of temporal government, by which, through the mediation of His flesh, He called us into eternity, beginneth with Christians; but of His reign there shall be no end. His enemies therefore are made His footstool, while He is sitting on the right hand of His Father, as it is written; this is now going on, this will go on unto the end. Let no man say, that what hath been commenced, cannot be fulfilled. Why dost thou despair of a result of what hath been begun? The Almighty hath begun, the Almighty hath promised that He will fulfil what He hath commenced. But how hath He commenced? The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. Jerusalem herself is the same with Sion. Hear the

Lord Himself: It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. Hence He sitteth at the right hand of God, by rising again where He was before. Then when He sitteth at the right hand of God, what is doing? what is doing, that His enemies may be made His footstool? Hear Him teaching and expounding: And repentance and remission of sins shall be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For, the Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. The rod of Thy power, that is, the reign of Thy power; for, Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron. The Lord shall send the rod out of Sion; for it is said, beginning with Jerusalem.

11. When therefore He hath sent the rod of His power out of Sion: what shall happen? Be Thou ruler, even in the midst among Thine enemies. First, Be Thou ruler in the midst of Thine enemies: in the midst of the raging heathen. For shall He rule in the midst of His enemies at a later season, when the Saints have received their reward, and the ungodly their condemnation? And what wonder if He shall then rule, when the righteous reign with Him for ever, and the ungodly burn with eternal punishments? What wonder, if He shall then? Now in the midst of Thine enemies, now in this transition of ages, in this propagation and succession of human mortality, now while the torrent of time is gliding by, unto this is the rod of Thy power sent out of Sion, that Thou mayest be Ruler in the midst of Thine enemies. Rule Thou, rule among Pagans, Jews, heretics, false brethren. Rule Thou, rule, O Son of David, Lord of David, rule in the midst of Pagans, Jews, heretics, false brethren. Be Thou Ruler in the midst of Thine enemies. We understand not this verse aright, if we do not see that it is already going on. Sit Thou therefore on the right hand of God, be hidden that Thou mayest be believed in, until the times of the nations be fulfilled. For thus it is written, Whom the heaven must needs receive until the times of the restitution of all things. Thou hast died, that Thou mightest rise again; Thou hast risen again, that Thou mightest ascend; Thou hast ascended, that Thou mightest sit on the right hand of the Father; therefore, Thou hast died, that Thou mightest sit on the right hand of the Father. For of death came resurrection; of resurrection, ascension; of ascension, sitting on the right hand: the whole of this, therefore, began with death. This exceeding splendour hath a beginning of humility. Whilst Thou then sittest at the right

hand of the Father, the times of the Gentiles are being fulfilled, all enemies are made Thy footstool; and that this may be realized, Thou shalt first rule in the midst of Thine enemies: for for this The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. But that Thou mightest die, and that by Thy death the handwriting of sins might be blotted out, and that repentance and remission of sins might be preached throughout all nations, beginning with Jerusalem, hath come by the blindness of the Jews. For blindness in part hath happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in; and so all Israel might be saved. Israel, who had become in part blind, slew Thee; when slain Thou didst arise again, with Thy blood Thou didst wash away the sins of the heathen; sitting at the right hand of the Father, Thou hast drawn together from every quarter those who suffer, and who fly unto Thee. Blindness, then, in part hath happened to Israel, hath happened, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in; and so all Israel might be saved, and all Thine enemies be made Thy footstool. But this is happening now, what afterwards?

12. Ver. 3. With Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power. What is this day of His power, when is there beginning with Him, or what beginning, or in what sense is there beginning with Him, since He is the Beginning? May the Lord help, that I may neither be confused in explaining to you, nor you in hearing. For I see what has already happened, and I see together with you with the eyes of faith; with the eyes of the flesh also I see what is now going on, and again with the eyes of faith I hope for the future with you. What then hath taken place, what is taking place, and what is to take place? Christ hath suffered, hath died, hath risen on the third day, ascended into heaven, as we know, on the fortieth day, sitteth on the right hand of His Father; this has already taken place, this we have not seen, but we believe. What is going on now? He ruleth in the midst of His enemies, the rod of His power having been sent forth out of Sion: this is going on now. His servants saw Him when present in the form of a servant; His servants believe in Him now that He is absent. We believe this concerning the form of a servant, which we can understand whilst we are still servants. For this is that very milk of infants, which He tempered, making bread pass through flesh. For that bread of angels was in the beginning the Word, yet that man might eat angels' bread, the Creator of angels was made man. Thus we became

capable of receiving the Incarnate Word, which we should not be able to receive unless the Son coequal with God had made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and being found in the likeness of men. That we might therefore in some way receive Him Who could not be received by mortals, He Who was immortal became mortal, that after His death He might make them immortal, and might give something to be beheld, something to be believed, and something to be afterwards seen. He gave the form of a servant to be seen to those who were present, not only to be seen with the eye, but even to be touched with the hands. With the same form He ascended into Heaven, He commanded us to believe what He allowed them to see. But we also have something to see; they saw the rod that was sent out of Sion, we see Him ruling in the midst of His enemies. All this, brethren, pertained unto the assumption of the form of a servant, which is understood tolerably by servants, and loved by His future sons. For that immutable Truth which is the Word of God, God with God, through Whom all things were made, abiding in Himself, altereth all things. In order that we may see this, a great and perfect purity of heart is necessary, and this only cometh through faith. For the form of a servant having been shewn, Truth was delayed as to shewing the form of God. For He when speaking to His servants in the form of a servant saith, He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. He promised that He would manifest Himself to those who saw Him. What did they see? What did He promise? They saw the form of a servant, He promised the form of God; I will manifest Myself, He saith, to him. This is the very clear light into which the kingdom which is now gathering together in the transition of this world is being led; for it is being led to a certain ineffable sight, which the ungodly shall not deserve. Nevertheless, while the form of a servant was here, it was seen by the ungodly; they who believed saw it, they also who slew Him saw it. That thou shouldest not suppose it was any thing great that that form should be seen, His friends saw it, His enemies saw it; and some who saw it, slew Him, some who saw it not, believed. Both the godly and ungodly, then, shall see in the Judgment that form of a servant, which both the godly and ungodly saw in humiliation here. For when the Lord before the eyes of His disciples was being borne into heaven, the voice of an Angel was heard by

those who beheld Him: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. "In like manner," then, in like manner," meaneth in the same form: for it is said of the ungodly, They shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced. They shall see Him when about to judge, Whom they mocked when judged. This form of the servant then will be conspicuous both to the righteous and unrighteous, the godly and the ungodly, the faithful and the unbelieving. What then shall the ungodly not see? For those of whom it is said, They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced: of whom it is also said, Let the ungodly be rooted out, that he may not behold the brightness of the Lord. What is this, brethren? Let us discern it, let us sift it. The ungodly is awakened, that he may see something: he is taken away, that he may not see something. We have already shewn what he will see: that form of which it is said, In like manner He will come. What then will he not see? And I will shew Myself unto him. What meaneth, Myself? Not the form of a servant. What meaneth Myself? The form of God, in which I have not thought it robbery to be equal with God. What meaneth, Myself? Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. This is the brightness of God, the ineffable light, a fountain of light that can never change, truth without defect, wisdom abiding in itself, altering all things: this is the Substance of God. The ungodly therefore shall be rooted out, that he may not see this honour of the Lord. For, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

13. It seemeth therefore to me, my brethren, as far as the Lord deigneth to give me understanding, to be said of time itself: if indeed I should say time; for at some time we shall reach what is not time: it seemeth to be said with this meaning; and I will say this without prejudice, if any man can understand it in a better, a more natural, or more probable sense: this seemeth to me to be the meaning of the words, With Thee is the beginning in the day of Thy power. Besides, he explaineth this adequately, in my opinion, in the following verse. For since His power is here spoken of, by which He subjected nations to His yoke, with which He overthrew peoples, not with the sword but with the word, although in the flesh, although in

humility, although as yet in so far as the form of a servant doth allow, yet His great power is understood; because, the weakness of God is stronger than men; since His power is spoken of here, which he set forth when he said, The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion; be Thou Ruler, even in the midst among Thine enemies: for how great is His power when He ruleth in the midst of His enemies, who rage against Him, who can avail nothing against Him, who are every day saying to themselves, When shall He die, and His name perish? When His glory increaseth among the nations, when they are made subject unto His name, when the ungodly seeth and is wroth, gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away. Since then this also is His power, the prophet wishing to praise His power otherwise, as it is Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, in the perpetual light of an unchangeable truth; for which sight we are reserved, for which sight we are put off for a season, for which sight we are cleansed by faith, from which sight the ungodly is taken away, that he may not see the brightness of the Lord; wishing then to shew this, With Thee, he saith, is the beginning, on the day of Thy power. What meaneth, With Thee is the beginning? Suppose any thing you please as the beginning. Of Christ Himself, it would rather have been said, Thou art the Beginning, than, With Thee is the beginning. For He answered to those who asked Him, Who art Thou? and said, Even the same that I said unto you, the Beginning; since His Father also is the Beginning, of Whom is the only-begotten Son, in which Beginning was the Word, for the Word was with God. What then, if both the Father and the Son are the beginning, are there two beginnings? God forbid! For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, but the Father and the Son are not two Gods, but one God: so is the Father Beginning and the Son Beginning, but the Father and the Son are not two, but one Beginning. With Thee is the beginning. Then it shall appear in what sense the beginning is with Thee. Not that the beginning is not with Thee here also. For hast Thou not also said, Behold, ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; but I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. Here therefore also, the beginning is with Thee. For Thou hast said elsewhere also, But the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth His works.—With Thee is the beginning: nor was the Father ever separated from Thee. But when the Beginning shall appear to be with Thee, then shall it be manifest unto all who are made like Thee; since they shall see Thee as Thou art; for Philip

saw Thee here, and sought the Father. Then therefore shall be seen what now is believed: then shall the beginning be with Thee in the sight of the righteous, in the sight of saints; the ungodly being removed, that they may not see the brightness of the Lord.

14. Let us therefore believe now, brethren, what we shall see then. For Philip himself was reprov'd because he sought to see the Father, and did not recognise the Father in the Son Himself; Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. He saith, he that hath seen Me: not he that hath seen the form of a servant in Me. He therefore who hath seen Me, such as I have hidden Myself for those who fear Me, such as I will give to them to see, who put their trust in Me, have seen the Father also. But since that sight will be afterwards, what shall we have instead of it now? Let us see what He said to Philip, to whom He hath said, He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father. As if Philip silently answered Him, And how shall I see Thee, if Thou appearest otherwise than in the form of a servant? or how shall I see the Father, I a weak mortal, dust and ashes? turning unto him, putting off the sight, commanding faith, after He said, He who hath seen me, hath seen the Father, because it was much unto Philip, and the sight was far distant from him; Dost thou not believe, He said, that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? Believe what thou canst not yet see, that thou mayest deserve to see it. When therefore the time shall be come that we shall see, then will appear with Thee the beginning in the day of Thy power. Of Thy power, not of the power of Thy weakness, since there is power there. Of Thy power: men have now their own virtues, in faith, in hope, in charity, in good works, but they shall go from strength to strength. With Thee therefore is the beginning. Thou shalt appear with the Father, in the Father, as the Father is with Thee the Beginning on the day of Thy power, of that power of Thine which the ungodly shall not see. For this weakness of Thine is stronger than men. For with Thee is the beginning on the day of Thy power.

15. Explain of what power thou speakest. Because here also, as is said, His power is mentioned, when the rod of His power is sent forth out of Sion, that He may be Ruler in the midst of His enemies. Of what power speakest thou, In the splendour of the saints? In the splendour, he saith, of the saints.

He speaketh of that power when the saints shall be in splendour; not when still carrying about their earthly flesh, and groaning in a mortal and corruptible body, which oppreseth the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things; when those very musings do not appear to one another; but what meaneth, in the splendour of the saints? “Until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God. This will be, in the splendour of the saints,—Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Listen to the meaning of the words, in the splendour of the saints; the harvest, He saith, shall come, the end of the world shall come: then the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. In what kingdom? Consider if some sight is reserved concerning which it is said unto us, with Thee the Beginning. In what kingdom? Surely in eternal life. For, He shall say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: then when the ungodly are condemned, and the righteous set apart and praised, what followeth His words, ‘Receive ye the kingdom?’ Then shall the ungodly go away into everlasting fire, but the righteous into life eternal: what He had termed the kingdom, He now calleth life eternal, whither the ungodly shall not go. Consider whether the life eternal be not a certain vision; for this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent, for with Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power; therefore, with Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power in the splendour of the saints.

16. But this is put off, this will be granted afterwards: what is there now? From the womb I have begotten Thee, before the morning star. What is here? If God hath a Son, hath He also a womb? Like fleshly bodies, He hath not; for He hath not a bosom either; yet it is said, He Who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him. But that which is the womb, is the bosom also: both bosom and womb are put for a secret place. What meaneth, from the womb? From what is secret, from what is hidden; from Myself, from

My substance; this is the meaning of, from the womb; for, Who shall declare His generation? Let us then understand the Father saying unto the Son, From My womb before the morning star have I brought Thee forth. What then meaneth, before the morning star? The morning star is put for the stars, as if the Scripture signified the whole from a part, and from one conspicuous star all the stars. But how were those stars created? That they may be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. If therefore the stars are put for signs and for seasons; and if the morning star be put for the other stars; what is before the morning star is also before the stars; and what is before the stars, that is before seasons; if before seasons, that is from eternity: seek not when: eternity hath no when. When and some-when are words applied to seasons. He by Whom seasons were made, was not created by the Father in time. It is therefore said, as it ought to have been said, figuratively, prophetically, so that both the womb is put for invisible substance, and the morning star for seasons. Do ye wish that we should carry our view back to David himself, who called his son his Lord? In order that he might speak thus, he heard this from his Lord; from Him he heard Who could not be deceived: and he then called Him his Lord, because, The Lord, he saith, said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand. He himself speaketh here; it is, as it were, a discourse of his that hath been composed. If then he himself speaketh, he might perhaps himself say, from the womb before the morning star have I begot Thee: from the Virgin's womb, from the womb before the morning star have I begot Thee. For if Christ was born of the womb of that Virgin who was descended from the flesh of David, He was as it were begotten from the womb by David. From the womb, whither no man approached: from the womb altogether, from the womb in a peculiar sense, because He alone was born of the womb alone. Therefore, he saith, from the womb, he who called Him his Lord, from the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. This expression also, before the morning star, is used both figuratively and literally, and was thus fulfilled. For the Lord was born at night from the womb of the Virgin Mary; the testimony of the shepherds doth assert this, who were keeping watch over their flock. From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. O Thou, my Lord, Who sittest at the right hand of my Lord, whence art Thou my Son, except because, From the womb before the morning star I have begotten Thee?

17. Ver. 4. And unto what art Thou born? The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For unto this wast Thou born from the womb before the morning star, that Thou mightest be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For in that character in which He was born of the Father, God with God, coeternal with Him Who begot Him, He is not a Priest; but He is a Priest on account of the flesh which He assumed, on account of the victim which He was to offer for us received from us. The Lord, then, hath sworn. What then meaneth, the Lord hath sworn? Doth the Lord, Who forbiddeth men to swear, Himself swear? Or doth He possibly forbid man to swear chiefly on this account, that he may not fall into perjury, and for this reason the Lord may swear, since He cannot be forsworn. For man, who, through a habit of swearing, may slip into perjury, is rightly forbidden to swear: for he will be farther from perjury in proportion as he is far from swearing. For the man who sweareth, may swear truly or falsely; but he who sweareth not, cannot swear falsely; for he sweareth not at all. Why then should not the Lord swear, since the Lord's oath is the seal of the promise? Let Him swear by all means. What then dost thou, when thou swearest? Thou callest God to witness: this is to swear, to call God to witness; and for this reason there must be anxiety, that thou mayest not call God to witness any thing false. If therefore thou by an oath dost call God to witness, why then should not God also call Himself to witness with an oath? I live, saith the Lord, this is the Lord's oath. Thus He swore concerning the seed of Abraham: I live, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is by the sea shore; and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed. And the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, that seed of Abraham, assuming the flesh from the seed of Abraham, shall be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Concerning the Priesthood, therefore, after the order of Melchisedec, The Lord sware, and will not repent. What of the Priesthood after the order of Aaron? Doth God repent like a man, or is He compelled to do any thing against His will, or doth He stumble forward unawares unto doing a thing, so that it repenteth Him afterwards of His fall? He knoweth what He is doing: He knoweth how far every thing will advance; the means of its being changed into something else, is in the power of the Ruler. Now

by repentance is meant an alteration of things. For just as thou, when any thing maketh thee repent, dost grieve at the deed thou hast done; so when God changeth any thing beyond men's expectation, that is, otherwise than men expect, He saith that He repenteth: even so far that He repenteth of our punishment, if we repent of our sinful life. The Lord sware, then, that is, confirmed: He will not repent, He will not change. What? Thou art a Priest for ever. For ever, for He will not repent. But Priest, in what sense? Will there be those victims, victims offered by the Patriarchs, altars of blood, and tabernacle, and those sacred emblems of the Old Covenant? God forbid! These things are already abolished; the temple being destroyed, that priesthood taken away, their victim and their sacrifice having alike disappeared, not even the Jews have these things. They see that the priesthood after the order of Aaron hath already perished, and they do not recognise the Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec. Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. I speak unto believers. If catechumens understand not something, let them lay aside sloth, and hasten unto knowledge. It is not therefore needful for me to disclose mysteries here: let the Scriptures intimate to you what is the Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec.

18. Ver. 5. The Lord on Thy right hand. The Lord had said, Sit Thou on My right hand; now the Lord is on His right hand, as if they changed seats. Or are not the words, the Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, rather addressed to Christ? The Lord sware, Thou art a Priest for ever. What Lord? That Lord Who said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, hath Himself sworn, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; and these words, the Lord upon Thy right hand, are addressed to the same Lord Who swore thus. O Lord, Thou Who hast sworn and said, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, He is the Priest for ever, the Lord upon Thy right hand; Himself, I say, the Priest for ever, of Whom Thou hast sworn, is the Lord on Thy right hand; because Thou hast said to the same My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. This Lord, then, Who is on Thy right hand, of Whom Thou hast sworn in these words, Thou art a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath. That very Christ, the Lord on Thy right hand, unto Whom Thou hast sworn, and it will

not repent Thee: what doth He, Priest for evermore? What doth He, Who is at the right hand of God, and intercedeth for us, like a priest entering into the inner places, and into the holy of holies, into the mysteries of heaven, He alone being without sin, and therefore easily purifying from sins. He therefore on Thy right hand shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath. What kings, dost thou ask? Hast thou forgotten? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. These kings He wounded by His glory, and by the weight of His Name made kings weak, so that they had not power to effect what they wished. For they strove amain to blot out the Christian name from the earth, and could not; for Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken. Kings therefore fall on this stone of offence, and are therefore wounded, when they say, Who is Christ? I know not what Jew or what Galilean He may have been, who died, who was slain in such a manner! The stone is before thy feet, lying, so to speak, mean and humble: therefore by scorning thou dost stumble, by stumbling thou fallest, by falling thou art wounded. If then so great is the wrath when hidden, what will be His judgment when made manifest? Ye have heard the wrath of the Hidden One, respecting which a Psalm is entitled, For the hidden things of the Son: the ninth Psalm, if I remember right, is entitled, for the hidden things of the Son: and there the secret judgment of hidden wrath is displayed. They who strike upon that stone live beneath the wrath of God; they are wounded. What is the meaning of their being wounded? Hear this of the judgment to come: Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be wounded; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. When therefore any one falleth upon it, it lieth as it were low; it then woundeth: but when it shall grind him to powder, then it will come from above. See how in these two words, it shall wound him and grind him to powder: he striketh upon it, and it shall come down upon him: are distinguished the two seasons, of the humiliation and the majesty of Christ, of hidden punishment and future judgment. He will not crush, when He cometh, that man whom He doth not wound when He lieth. I mean by lying, a contemptible appearance; for He is on the right hand of God, and loudly He crieth from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? but nevertheless, although from Heaven, He would not say, why persecutest thou Me, when no one touched Him, unless He were sitting in Heaven, on the right hand of the Father, in such a manner

that He was still, as it were, lying among us on earth. The Lord is on thy right hand, He shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath.

19. Ver. 6. He shall judge among the heathen, but at present for the hidden things, but there will be a judgment made manifest. He shall judge among the heathen, even now it is going on, their memorial hath perished. In this same Psalm it is written, For the hidden things; their memorial is perished with a noise: but the Lord shall endure for ever; He hath also prepared His seat for judgment: and, He shall judge the world in righteousness. It is there said, Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and destroyed the ungodly: Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever: this is going on in secret. In the day therefore of His wrath He shall wound even kings. He shall judge among the heathen. How? Hear what followeth; He shall fill up what hath fallen. At present He so judgeth among the nations, that He filleth up what hath fallen; for when He shall judge at the end, He will condemn what hath fallen. He will fill up what hath fallen. What that hath fallen? Whoever hath feared His Name shall fall: when he hath fallen, what he was before shall be overthrown, that what he was not may be built up. He shall judge among the heathen: He shall fill up what hath fallen. Whoever thou art who art obstinate against Christ, thou hast raised on high a tower that must fall. It is good that thou shouldest cast thyself down, become humble, throw thyself at the feet of Him Who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, that in thee a ruin may be made to be built up. For if thou abidest in thy evil height, thou shalt be cast down when thou canst not be built up. For of such the Scripture saith in another passage; Therefore shall He break down, and not build them up. Beyond doubt he would not say of some, “therefore He shall break them down, and not build them up:” unless there were some whom He broke down so as to build them up again. And this is going on at this time, while Christ is judging among the heathen in such a manner as to fill up what hath fallen. He shall smite many heads over the earth. Here upon the earth in this life He shall smite many heads. He maketh them humble instead of proud; and I dare to say, my brethren, that it is more profitable to walk here humbly with the head wounded, than with the head erect to fall into the judgment of eternal death. He will smite many heads when he causeth them to fall, but He will fill them up and build them up again.

20. Ver. 7. He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up his head. Let us consider Him drinking of the brook in the way: first of all, what is the brook? the onward flow of human mortality: for as a brook is gathered together by the rain, overflows, roars, runs, and by running runs down, that is, finishes its course; so is all this course of mortality. Men are born, they live, they die, and when some die others are born, and when they die others are born, they succeed, they flock together, they depart and will not remain. What is held fast here? what doth not run? what is not on its way to the abyss as if it was gathered together from rain? For as a river suddenly drawn together from rain from the drops of showers runneth into the sea, and is seen no more, nor was it seen before it was collected from the rain; so this hidden rain is collected together from hidden sources, and floweth on; at death again it travellet where it is hidden: this intermediate state soundeth and passeth away. Of this brook He drinketh, He hath not disdained to drink of this brook; for to drink of this brook was to Him to be born and to die. What this brook hath, is birth and death; Christ assumed this, He was born, He died; thus He drinketh of the brook in the way, for He rejoiced as a giant to run his course. He therefore drinketh of the brook in the way, because He stood not in the way of sinners; since, therefore, He drinketh of the brook in the way, therefore hath He lifted up His head; that is, because he was humble, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ the Lord is in the glory of God the Father.

PSALM 111

Exposition

A Sermon to the people at the Paschal Festival.

1. The days have come for us to sing Allelujah. Attend carefully, brethren, in order to perceive what the Lord doth supply for our exhortation, and to nourish charity, by means of which it is good for us to cling unto God. Listen attentively, good singers, sons of the praise and eternal glory of the true and incorruptible God. Listen attentively, ye who know how to sing and to play in your hearts unto the Lord, Always giving thanks for all things: and praise God; for this is Allelujah. Now these days come only to pass away, and pass away to come again, and typify the day which does not come and pass away, because it is neither preceded by yesterday to cause it to come, nor pressed upon by the morrow to cause it to pass. And to which indeed when we have come, clinging unto Him, we shall not pass away; and as in a certain passage it is sung unto God, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be alway praising Thee; this will be their easy business, this their leisure toil, these their resting works, this their happy care. For as these days succeed in regular season, with a joyful cheerfulness, the past days of Lent, whereby the misery of this life before the Resurrection of the Lord's body is signified; so that day which after the Resurrection shall be given to the full body of the Lord, that is, to the holy Church, when all the troubles and sorrows of this life have been shut out, shall succeed with perpetual bliss. But this life demandeth from us self-restraint, that although groaning and weighed down with our toil and struggles, and desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, we may refrain from secular pleasures: and this is signified by the number of forty, which was the period of the fasts of Moses, and Elias, and our Lord Himself. For it is enjoined unto us both by the Law and the Prophets and the Gospel itself, (which hath testimony from the Law and the

Prophets; for which reason also our Lord shone in the midst between the representatives of each, that we should restrain our eagerness, as it were, by the fasting of temperance from all the snares of the world, by which men are held captive, and forget God; as long as the fulfilment of the Law of the Ten Commandments, like the Psalter of the ten strings, is preached through the four quarters of the same world, that is, over the whole globe, so that ten multiplied by four result in the number forty. But by the number fifty after our Lord's resurrection, during which season we sing Allelujah, not the term and passing away of a certain season is signified, but that blessed eternity; because the denary added to forty signifieth the reward paid to the faithful who toil in this life, which our Father hath prepared an equal share of for the first and for the last. Let us therefore hear the heart of the people of God full of divine praises. He representeth in this Psalm some one exulting in happy joyfulness, he prefigureth the people whose hearts are overflowing with the love of God, that is, the body of Christ, freed from all evil.

2. Ver. 1, 2. I will make confession unto Thee, O Lord, he saith, with my whole heart. Confession is not always confession of sins, but the praise of God is poured forth in the devotion of confession. The former mourneth, the latter rejoiceth: the former sheweth the wound to the physician, the latter giveth thanks for health. The latter confession signifieth some one, not merely freed from every evil, but even separate from all the ill-disposed. And for this reason let us consider the place where he confesseth unto the Lord with all his heart. In the counsel, he saith, of the upright, and in the congregation: I suppose, of those who shall sit upon the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. For there will be no longer an unjust man among them, the thefts of no Judas are allowed, no Simon Magus is baptized, wishing to buy the Spirit, whilst he designeth to sell it; no coppersmith like Alexander doth many evil deeds, no man covered with sheep's clothing creepeth in with feigned fraternity; such as those among whom the Church must now groan, and such as she must then shut out, when all the righteous shall be gathered together.

Ver. 2. These are the great works of the Lord, sought out unto all His wills: through which mercy forsaketh none who confesseth, no man's wickedness

is unpunished: since He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. But if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Let man choose for himself what he listeth: the works of the Lord are not so constituted, that the creature, having free discretion allowed him, should transcend the will of the Creator, even though he act contrary to His will. God willeth not that thou shouldest sin; for He forbiddeth it: yet if thou hast sinned, imagine not that the man hath done what he willed, and that hath happened to God which He willed not. For as He would that man would not sin, so would He spare the sinner, that he may return and live; He so willeth finally to punish him who persisteth in his sin, that the rebellious cannot escape the power of justice. Thus whatever choice thou hast made, the Almighty will not be at a loss to fulfil His will concerning thee. For great are the works of the Lord, and sought out unto all His wills.

3. Ver. 3. Confession and glorious deeds are His work. What is a more glorious deed than to justify the ungodly? But perhaps the work of man preventeth that glorious work of God, so that when he hath confessed his sins, he deserveth to be justified. For the Publican went down from the temple justified rather than the Pharisee; because he would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. This is the glorious work of the Lord, the justification of the sinner; for every one that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and every one that exalteth himself shall be abased. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for he loveth most, to whom most is forgiven. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound. But perhaps a man would deserve justification from works. Not, saith he, of works, lest any man boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. For a man worketh not righteousness save he be justified: but by believing on Him That justifieth the ungodly, he beginneth with faith; that good may not by preceding shew what he hath deserved, but by following what he hath received. Where then is this confession? It is not as yet indeed the work of righteousness, but the condemnation of sin; but whatever it be, do not, O man, even in this glory in thyself, since He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For what hast thou that thou hast not received? It is not only then through this glorious work by which the ungodly is justified, but confession

and glorious works are His work. What shall we say then? Because He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For, His righteousness endureth for ever. Nay but O man of this world, who art thou who repliest against God?

4. Ver. 4, 5. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: by abasing this man, exalting that. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: reserving unusual miracles for a fit season, that thus human weakness, intent upon novelty, may remember them, although His daily miracles be greater. He createth so many trees throughout the whole earth, and no one wondereth: He dried up one with a word, and the hearts of mortals were thunderstruck; but He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered. For that miracle, which hath not through its frequency become common, will cling most firmly to the heart.

5. But of what use were the miracles, save that He might be feared? What too would fear profit, unless the gracious and merciful Lord gave meat unto them that fear Him? meat that doth not spoil, bread that cometh down from heaven, which He gave to no deservings of ours. For Christ died for the ungodly. No one then would give such food, save a gracious and merciful Lord. But if He gave so much to this life, if the sinner who was to be justified received the Word made flesh; what shall he receive when glorified in a future world? For, He shall ever be mindful of His covenant. Nor hath He Who hath given a pledge, given the whole.

6. Ver. 6–9. He shall shew His people the power of His works. Let not the holy Israelites, who have left all their possessions and have followed Him, be saddened; let them not be sorrowful and say, Who then can be saved? For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. For He shewed them the power of His works: for with men these things are impossible, but with God all things are possible.

That He may give them the heritage of the heathen. For they went to the heathen, and enjoined the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, to Whom that is easy which

is difficult for men. For thus many were called, thus the heritage of the heathen has been occupied, thus it hath happened, that even many who have not abandoned all their possessions in this life in order to follow Him, have despised even life itself for the sake of confessing His Name; and like camels humbling themselves to bear the burden of troubles, have entered as it were through a needle's eye, through the piercing straits of suffering. He hath wrought these effects, unto Whom all things are possible.

7. Ver. 7. The works of His hands are verity and judgment. Let verity be held by those who are judged here. Martyrs are here sentenced, and brought to the judgment-seat, that they may judge not only those by whom they have been judged, but even give judgment on angels, against whom was their struggle here, even when they seemed to be judged by men. Let not tribulation, distress, famine, nakedness, the sword, separate from Christ. For all His commandments are true; He deceiveth not, He giveth us what He promised. Yet we should not expect here what He promised; we should not hope for it: but (Ver. 8.) they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and equity. It is equitable and just that we should labour here and repose there; since (Ver. 9.) He sent redemption unto His people. But from what are they redeemed, save from the captivity of this pilgrimage? Let not therefore rest be sought, save in the heavenly country.

8. God indeed gave the carnal Israelites an earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children: but this is the Old Covenant, pertaining unto the old man. But they who there understood the figure, even then were heirs of the New Covenant; for Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our everlasting mother in heaven. But that transitory promises were given in that Old Testament is proved by the fact itself: however, He hath commended His covenant for ever. But what, but the New? Whosoever dost wish to be heir of this, deceive not thyself, and think not of a land flowing with milk and honey, nor of pleasant farms, nor of gardens abounding in fruits and shade: desire not how to gain any thing of this sort, such as the eye of covetousness is wont to lust for. For since covetousness is the root of all evils, it must be cut off, that it may be consumed here; not be put off, that it may be satisfied there. First escape punishments, avoid hell; before

thou longest for a God Who promiseth, beware of one Who threateneth. For holy and reverend is His Name.

9. Ver. 10. But instead of all the delights of this world, which thou hast either experienced, or mayest contrive the means of enhancing and multiplying, long for wisdom, the mother of immortal delights; but, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It will delight, and beyond all doubt will ineffably delight, with the chaste and eternal embraces of truth: but thy debts must first be forgiven thee, before rewards must be asked for. The fear of the Lord, therefore, is the beginning of wisdom. Understanding is good. Who gainsayeth? But to understand, and not to do, is dangerous. It is good, therefore, to those that do thereafter. Nor let it lift up the mind unto pride; for, the praise of Him, the fear of Whom is the beginning of wisdom, endureth for ever: and this will be the reward, this the end, this the everlasting station and abode. There are found the true commandments, made fast for ever and ever; here is the very heritage of the New Covenant commanded for ever. One thing, he saith, I have desired of the Lord, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. For, blessed are they that dwell in the house of the Lord: they will be alway praising Him; for His praise endureth for ever.

PSALM 112

Exposition

A Discourse to the People.

1. I believe, brethren, that ye remarked and committed to memory the title of this Psalm. The conversion, he saith, of Haggai and Zechariah. These prophets were not as yet in existence, when these verses were sung. For between the time of David, and the removal of the people of Israel to Babylon, fourteen generations are computed, as holy Scripture, and chiefly St. Matthew the Evangelist, doth witness; while the restoration of the overthrown temple was expected seventy years after that migration: and when these years were completed, under Darius, king of Babylon, these two Prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, were filled with the Holy Ghost; and either within one year after other began to prophesy that which seemeth to pertain to the restoration of the temple, as was foretold so long before. But whoever fixeth the eye of his heart on things done in the body, and doth not extend his view into the grace of spiritual apprehension, dwelleth in mind among the stones of the temple, wherein a visible fabric is raised aloft by the hands of men; nor is he made a living stone, fit for the temple, which the Lord first typified in His own body, when He said, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. For the holy Church herself is the more full body of the Lord, whose wead ascended into heaven, Who is in the highest sense a living stone, of Whom the blessed Peter saith, To Whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him, shall not be confounded. Therefore that each man may become a living stone fit for such a building, let him understand spiritually the restoration of the temple

from the ancient ruin which was made in Adam, as the renovation of a new people, according to the new and heavenly man: that as we have borne the image of the earthly, we may also bear the image of Him Who is from Heaven, that we may after all the ages of this world, the seventy years, as it were, which are fixed beforehand in the mystic number of perfection, and, as it were, after the bondage of a long pilgrimage, not be built together in a framework that shall fall, but be made firm by an immortality that shall last for evermore. For ye should consider the spiritual Jerusalem as no less your own than of the Jews. For so the Apostle saith, Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. This is the temple of God, unto which pertaineth the mystery of the prophecy of Haggai and Zechariah: to which again the same Apostle saith, For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Whoever therefore converteth himself to the work of this building together, and to the hope of a firm and holy edifice, like a living stone from the miserable ruin of this world, understandeth the title of the Psalm, understandeth the conversion of Haggai and Zechariah. Let him therefore chaunt the following verses, not so much with the voice of his tongue as of his life. For the completion of the building will be that ineffable peace of wisdom, the beginning of which is the fear of the Lord: let him therefore, whom this conversion buildeth together, begin thence.

2. Ver. 1. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he will have great delight in His commandments. God, Who alone judgeth both truthfully and mercifully, will see how far he obeyeth His commandments: since the life of man on earth is a temptation, as holy Job saith. And again it is written: for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth many things. But He who judgeth us is the Lord, nor ought we to judge before the time, until the Lord cometh, and bringeth to light the hidden things of darkness, and shall make clear the counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God. He therefore will see how far each man profiteth in His commandments; yet he

who loveth the peace of this building together, shall have great delight in them; nor ought he to despair, since he shall have great delight in His commandments, and there is peace on earth for men of good will.

3. Ver. 2, 3. Next follows, His seed shall be mighty upon earth. The Apostle witnesseth, that the works of mercy are the seed of the future harvest, when he saith, Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap; and again, But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly. But what, brethren, is more mighty than that not only Zacchæus should buy the kingdom of Heaven by the half of his goods, but even the widow for two mites, and that each should possess an equal share there? What is more mighty, than that the same kingdom should be worth treasures to the rich man, and a cup of cold water to the poor? But there are persons who do these things, while they are seeking earthly possessions, either hoping for a reward from the Lord here, or desiring the praise of men; but, the generation of the right ones shall be blessed; that is, the works of those whose gracious God is the God of Israel, who are right-hearted; now a right heart is not to withstand the Father when He chasteneth, and to trust Him when He promiseth; not theirs, whose feet are moved away, whose treadings go astray and slip, as it is sung in another Psalm, while they are grieved at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity, and imagine that their works perish, because a perishable reward is not given them. But that man who feareth God, and who by the conversion of an upright heart is fitted for an holy temple of God, neither seeketh the glory of men, nor lusteth for earthly riches; but nevertheless, glory and riches shall be in his house. For his house is his heart; where, with the praise of God, he liveth in greater riches with the hope of eternal life, than with men flattering, in palaces of marble, with splendidly adorned ceilings, with the fear of everlasting death. For his righteousness endureth for ever: this is his glory, there are his riches. While the other's purple, and fine linen, and grand banquets, even when present, are passing away; and when they have come to an end, the burning tongue shall cry out, longing for a drop of water from the finger's end.

4. Ver. 4–9. Unto the right-hearted there ariseth up light in the darkness. Justly do the godly direct their heart unto their God, justly do they walk

with their God, preferring His will to themselves; and having no proud presumption in their own. For they remember that they were some time in darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Merciful, pitying, and just is the Lord God. It delighteth us that He is merciful and pitying, but it perhaps terrifieth us that the Lord God is just. Fear not, despair not at all, happy man, who fearest the Lord, and hast great delight in His commandments; be thou sweet, be merciful and lend. For the Lord is just in this manner, that He judgeth without mercy him who hath not shewn mercy; but, (ver. 5.) Sweet is the man who is merciful and lendeth: God will not spew him out of His mouth as if he were not sweet. Forgive, He saith, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you. Whilst thou forgivest, that thou mayest be forgiven, thou art merciful; whilst thou givest that it may be given unto thee, thou lendest. For though all be called generally mercy where another is assisted in his distress, yet there is a difference where thou spendest neither money, nor the toil of bodily labour, but by forgiving what each man hath sinned against thee, thou gainest free pardon for thine own sins also. I imagine that these two offices of kindness, of forgiving sins, as in the passage of the Gospel, forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you; are thus distinguished in this verse also, sweet is the man who is merciful and lendeth. Let us not be slothful in these matters, brethren. He who desireth that he himself be avenged, seeketh glory; but listen to the words of Scripture, he that conquereth his anger is better than he that taketh a city. He who is unwilling to give to the poor, seeketh riches; listen to what is written, Thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Thou wilt not then lose honour by forgiving: for it is a very laudable triumph to conquer anger: wilt not grow poor by giving; for a heavenly treasure is a more safe possession. The former verse, Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house, was pregnant with this verse.

5. He therefore who doth these things, shall guide his words with discretion. His deeds themselves are the words whereby he shall be defended at the Judgment; which shall not be without mercy unto him, since he hath himself shewn mercy. (Ver. 6.) For he shall never be moved: he who, called to the right hand, shall hear these words, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For no works of theirs, save works of mercy, are there mentioned. He therefore

shall hear, Come, ye blessed of My Father; for, the generation of the right ones shall be blessed. Thus, the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. (Ver. 7.) He will not be afraid of any evil hearing; such as the words which he will hear addressed to those on the left hand, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

6. He therefore who seeketh here not his own things, but those of Jesus Christ, most patiently endureth sufferings, waiteth for the promises with faith. Nor is he broken down by any temptations: (ver. 8.) His heart is established, and will not shrink, until he see beyond his enemies. His enemies wished to see good things here, and when invisible blessings were promised them, used to say, Who will shew us any good? Let our heart therefore be established, and shrink not, until we see beyond our enemies. For they wish to see good things of men in the land of the dying; we trust to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living.

7. But it is a great thing to have the heart established, and not to be moved, while they rejoice who love what they see, and mock at him who hopeth for what he seeth not; and he shall not shrink, until he also see not here below, what his enemies see, but above, higher than his enemies, what the eye hath not seen, nor hath the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man what the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him. How great is the value of this which is not seen, and it is bought for so much as each man is able to give for it. On this account he also dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor: he saw not, yet he kept buying; but He was storing up the treasure in heaven, Who deigned to hunger and thirst in the poor on earth. It is no wonder then if his righteousness remaineth for ever: He who created the ages being his guardian. His horn, whose humility was scorned by the proud, shall be exalted with honour.

8. Ver. 10. The ungodly shall see it, and he shall be angered: this is that late and fruitless repentance. For with whom rather than himself is he angered, when he shall say, Our pride, what hath it profited us? the boastfulness of our riches, what hath it given us? seeing the horn of him exalted with honour, who dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor. He shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away: for, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For he will no more bring forth leaves and bloom, as would happen if he

had repented in season: but he will then repent, when the desire of the ungodly shall perish, no consolation succeeding. The desire of the ungodly shall perish, when all things shall pass away like a shadow, when the flower shall fall down on the withering of the grass. But the word of the Lord that endureth for ever, as it is mocked by the vanity of the falsely happy, so will laugh at the perdition of the same when truly miserable.

PSALM 113

Exposition

A Discourse to the people.

1. Ver. 1–3. Ye know, brethren, and ye have very often heard the Lord say in the Gospel. Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; and again, If any man receive not the kingdom of heaven as a little child, he shall in no case enter therein: and in many other passages our Lord, through an extraordinary pattern of humility, chargeth the pride of the old man to lead a new life humbly, by the similitude of the age of infancy. Wherefore, most beloved, when ye hear sung in the Psalms, Praise the Lord, ye children; imagine not that that exhortation pertaineth not unto you, because having already passed the youth of the body, ye are either blooming in the prime of manhood, or growing grey with the honours of old age: for unto all of you the Apostle saith, Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. What malice in particular, save pride? For it is pride that, presuming in false greatness, suffereth not man to walk along the narrow path, and to enter by the narrow gate; but the child easily entereth through the narrow entrance; and thus no man, save as a child, entereth into the kingdom of heaven. But what is worse than the malice of pride, which disliketh to have even God set over it! For it is written, The beginning of pride is when one departeth from God. This pride when it raiseth up itself with swelling neck against the divine commandments, and resisteth the gracious yoke of the Lord, throw ye down, break, crush, and consume, and Praise the Lord, ye children, praise the Name of the Lord. For when pride is laid prostrate and extinguished, praise is perfected from the mouth of babes and infants: when it is crushed and annihilated, let him who glorieth, glory in the Lord. They who think themselves great do not sing thus; they sing not thus who, though they know God, have not glorified Him as God, or given thanks; they praise

themselves, not God; for they are not children. They rather wish their own name to be celebrated, and praise not the Name of the Lord. Therefore, they have become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; and professing themselves to be wise, they have become fools; their own name they wished to be celebrated far and wide to the latest posterity, themselves soon to pass away into a narrow space. It becometh God, it becometh the Lord, to be both always and every where proclaimed. Let Him therefore be alway proclaimed: (ver. 2.) Blessed be the Name of the Lord, from this time forth for evermore. Let Him be proclaimed every where: (ver. 3.) From the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord.

2. If any of the holy children who praise the Name of the Lord were to ask of me and say to me, for evermore I understand to mean unto all eternity; but why from this, and why is not the Name of the Lord blessed before this, and before all ages? I will answer the infant, who asketh not in contumacy. Unto you it is said, masters and children, unto you it is said, Praise the Name of the Lord; blessed be the Name of the Lord: let the Name of the Lord be blessed, from this, that is, from the moment ye speak these words. For ye begin to praise, but praise ye without end. Say not, We begin indeed to praise the Lord, because we are children; but when we have grown up, we shall praise ourselves. Not thus, children, not thus; for the Lord saith in Isaiah, Even to your old age, I AM. He Who IS, is ever to be praised. Praise Him, children, from this, praise Him, old men, for evermore. For your old age will indeed grow white with the hoary hairs of wisdom, but will not wither with the age of the flesh. Or, since in this passage he seemeth to signify rather humility than childhood, the contrary of which is the vain and false greatness of pride; and for this reason none but children praise the Lord, since the proud know not how to praise Him; let your old age be childlike, and your childhood like old age; that is, that neither may your wisdom be with pride, nor your humility without wisdom, that ye may praise the Lord from this for evermore. Wherever the Church of Christ is diffused in her childlike saints, Praise ye the Name of the Lord; that is, from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord.

3. Ver. 4. The Lord is high above all heathen. The heathen are men: what wonder if the Lord be above all men? They see with their eyes those whom they worship high above themselves to shine in heaven, the sun and moon and stars, creatures which they serve while they neglect the Creator. But not only is the Lord high above all heathen; but His glory also is above the heavens. The heavens look up unto Him above themselves; and the humble have Him together with them, who do not worship the heavens instead of Him, though placed in the flesh beneath the heavens.

4. Ver. 5, 6. Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high; and yet beholdeth the humble things? Any one would think that He dwelleth in the lofty heavens, whence He may behold the humble things on earth; but He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth: what then is His high dwelling, whence He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth? Are the humble things He beholdeth His own high dwelling itself? For He thus exalteth the humble, so as not to make them proud. He therefore both dwelleth in those whom He raiseth high, and maketh them heaven for Himself, that is, His own abode; and by seeing them not proud, but constantly subject to Himself, He beholdeth even in heaven itself these very humble things, in whom raised on high He dwelleth. For the Spirit thus speaketh through Isaiah: Thus saith the Highest that dwelleth on high, that inhabiteth eternity; the Lord Most High, dwelling in the holy. He hath expounded what He meant by dwelling on high, by the more full expression, dwelling in the holy. But who are holy, but the humble, who as children praise God? He therefore addeth: and giving courage to the meek, and life unto them that are of a humble spirit. To the holy in whom He dwelleth, unto these humble ones He giveth courage. By giving them courage He setteth them on high, in Whom He hath rest, and dwelleth in them Whom He hath exalted. But since it is the meek to whom He giveth courage, He beholdeth the humble in those very persons in Whom He dwelleth on high. Yet, he saith, He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth.

5. And he hath moved us also to enquire whether the Lord our God beholdeth the same humble things in heaven and in earth: or different humble things in heaven to what He beholdeth on earth. For if they are the

same, I see how I can understand this according to the Apostle's words: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God. Whence then are they mighty, save because they are spiritual? Since therefore the Apostle at once walketh in the flesh, and warreth in the spirit, it is no wonder if his humility both be beholden in heaven on account of the spirit's freedom, and on earth on account of the servitude of the body. For he saith in another passage, For our conversation is in heaven: and also of himself, that it was far better for him to depart, and be with Christ, but to abide in the flesh, he saith, is more needful for your sakes. Whoever therefore understandeth both the conversation of the Apostle in heaven, and his abode in the flesh on earth; should at the same time understand the Lord our God dwelling in the exalted saints, how He beholdeth the same, nevertheless, humble before Himself; both in heaven, since they who have in hope risen again with Christ, set their affections on things above; and on earth; since they are not as yet released from the chain of the flesh, so that they may be with all their life in Christ. But if the Lord our God beholdeth other humble things in heaven to what He doth on earth; I suppose that He already beholdeth in heaven those whom He hath called, and in whom He dwelleth; while on earth He beholdeth those whom He is now calling, that He may dwell in them. For He hath the one with Him musing on heavenly things, the others He is waking, while they yet dream things earthly.

6. But since it is difficult to call even those humble, who have not as yet submitted their necks in piety to the gracious yoke of Christ, since the divine writings throughout the whole Psalm warn us to understand holy by the word humble; there is also another interpretation, which, Beloved, ye may consider with me. I believe that those are now meant by heavens who shall sit upon twelve thrones, and shall judge with the Lord; and under the name of the earth, the rest of the multitude of the blessed, who shall be set on the right hand, that through works of mercy they may be praised and received into everlasting habitations by those, whom they have made friends to themselves from the mammon of unrighteousness in this mortal life. For unto them the Apostle saith, If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? Which may be said in these words: if we have sown unto you heavenly things, is it a

great thing if we shall reap your earthly things? In heaven therefore He beholdeth these sowing heavenly things, in earth those yielding earthly things; yet both these and those humble. For, He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and in earth; because both are mindful of what they were through their own wickedness, and of what they have become through the Lord's grace. For not unto them alone saith the Vessel of Election, For ye were sometimes darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord: and again, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; but he next addeth himself also, saying, For we are His workmanship, created unto good works. He speaketh also separately of himself and of those who are beheld in heaven, for we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. And again, For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another: but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration. Behold the humble things which are beheld in heaven. For they are spiritual, and judge all things; but nevertheless humble, lest they be cast down and judged. What saith he of himself individually; are not his words of like sort? For I am not meet, he saith, to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

7. Ver. 6–8. Lastly, after these verses, in which the Spirit saith in the Psalm, Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth? wishing to teach us why they are called humble things in heaven, when they are now mighty in spiritual power and worthy of judgment-seats; he added at once, (ver. 6.) He taketh up the destitute out of the dust, and lifteth the poor out of the mire; (ver. 7.) that He may set Him with the princes, even with the princes of His people. Let not then the heads of the exalted disdain to be humble, beneath the Lord's right hand. For though the faithful steward of the Lord's money be placed together with the princes of the people of God, although he be destined to sit on the twelve seats, and even to judge angels; yet he is taken up destitute from the dust, and lifted from out of the mire. Was not he

possibly lifted up from the mire, who served divers lusts and pleasures? But perhaps when he was writing this, he was no longer destitute, no longer poor. Why then doth he still groan beneath his burden, longing to be clothed with a heavenly habitation? Why, lest he be lifted up, is he buffeted, and made subject to the angel of Satan, the thorn of his flesh? He is high indeed, the Lord dwelling in him, and having that Spirit which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God: he is therefore in heaven; but even in heaven the Lord beholdeth humble things.

8. What then, brethren, if we have already heard of those humble things which are in heaven, lifted up from the mire, that they might be set with the princes of the people; have we by consequence heard nothing of the humble things which the Lord beholdeth on the earth? For those friends who will judge with their Lord are fewer, while those whom they receive into everlasting habitations are more in number. For although the whole of a heap of corn compared with the separate chaff may seem to contain few in number; yet considered by itself, it is abundant. For more are the children of the desolate than those of her that hath the husband: more are the children of her who conceived through grace in old age, than of her who from her childhood hath been wedded to the bond of the Law. And I say, hath conceived in old age; regarding Sarah our mother in the one Isaac, the mother of the faithful throughout all nations. But consider the character in Isaiah: as if by no means that of a mother, nor of one who hath given birth to any. And yet what is said unto her? The children, he saith, which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thy ears, The place is too strait for us; make room yet for us that we may dwell. Then thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing that I know I am childless and a widow? Who hath brought me up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? The Church then speaketh thus in that sense, wherein she seemeth to bear no offspring among those crowds who have not given up all things, that they might follow the Lord, and might sit upon the twelve thrones. But how many in the same crowd, who make unto themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, shall stand on the right hand through works of mercy? He not only then lifteth up from the mire him whom He is to place with the princes of His people; but also, (ver. 9.) Maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to

be a joyful mother of children: He who dwelleth on high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth, the seed of Abraham like the stars of heaven, holiness set on high in heavenly habitations; and like the sand on the sea shore, a merciful and countless multitude gathered together from the harmful waves, and the bitterness of impiety.

PSALM 114

Sermon I. On the first part of the Psalm.

1. We read indeed, and hold it in our minds, most beloved brethren, as a well-known truth, that, as is detailed in the Book of the Exodus, the people of Israel, when freed from the unjust domination of the Egyptians, passed over by a dry path between the divided waves of the sea: that the river Jordan also, when they were entering across it into the land of promise, when touched by the feet of the priests who bore the Ark, stood still from above with bridled stream, while it flowed down from below, where it ran on into the sea, until the whole people passed over, the priests standing on the dry ground; we know these things, but yet we should not imagine that in this Psalm, to which we have now answered by chaunting Allelujah, it is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, that while we call to mind those deeds of the past, we should not consider that things like unto them were yet to take place. For these things, as the Apostle saith, happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the world are come. When therefore we read in the Psalm, (ver. 1.) When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the strange people, (Ver. 2.) Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion; (Ver. 3.) the sea saw that and fled, Jordan was driven back: think not that past deeds are related unto us, but rather that the future is predicted; since, while those miracles also were going on in that people, things present indeed were happening, but not without an intimation of things future. And therefore that he, who in his Psalms was prophesying these events, might shew that he was acting the same scene in words as was there acted in deeds, one and the same Spirit performing both those deeds and these words, that that which was reserved to be manifested at the end of the world, might be announced by foregoing figures of words and deeds; he hath not described exactly the same deeds as were there done, but some things he hath related

differently to what we have learnt and read there: that he might not truly be thought to be repeating past acts rather than to be prophesying future things. For in the first place, we read not that the Jordan was driven back, but that it stood still on the side nearest the source of its streams, while the people were passing through; next, we read not of the mountains and hills skipping: all which he hath added, and repeated. For after saying, The sea saw that, and fled; Jordan was driven back: he added, (Ver. 4.) The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep: and then asketh, (Ver. 5.) What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest: and thou, Jordan, that thou wast driven back? (Ver. 6.) Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like young sheep?

2. Let us therefore consider what we are taught here; since both those deeds were typical of us, and these words exhort us to recognise ourselves. For if we hold with a firm heart the grace of God which hath been given us, we are Israel, the seed of Abraham: unto us the Apostle saith, Therefore are ye the seed of Abraham. Since as he saith elsewhere; Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision—faith was counted unto Abraham for righteousness; and, he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them that are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, yet being uncircumcised. For he unto whom it was said, I have made thee a father of many nations, was not a father to the carnally circumcised nation only. Many nations meaneth not some in particular, but all: and this is openly expressed in the words, And in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Let therefore no Christian consider himself alien to the name of Israel. For we are joined in the cornerstone with those among the Jews who believed, among whom we find the Apostles chief. Hence our Lord in another passage saith, And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd. The Christian people then is rather Israel, and the same is preferably the house of Jacob; for Israel and Jacob are the same. But that multitude of Jews, which was deservedly reprobated for its perfidy, for the pleasures of the flesh sold their birthright, so that they belonged not

to Jacob, but rather to Esau. For ye know that it was said with this hidden meaning, That the elder shall serve the younger.

3. But Egypt, since it is said to mean affliction, or one who afflicteth, or one who oppresseth, is often used for an emblem of this world; from which we must spiritually withdraw, that we may not be bearing the yoke with unbelievers. For thus each one becometh a fit citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, when he hath first renounced this world; just as that people could not be led into the land of promise, save first they had departed from Egypt. But as they did not depart thence, until freed by Divine help; so no man is turned away in heart from this world, unless aided by the gift of the Divine mercy. For what was there once prefigured, the same is fulfilled in every faithful one in the daily travailings of the Church, in this end of the world, in this, as the blessed John writeth, last time. Hear the Apostle the teacher of the Gentiles, thus instructing us: I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples. What more do ye wish, most beloved brethren? For it is surely clear, not from human conjecture, but from the declaration of an Apostle, that is, of God and our Lord: for God spoke in them, and though from clouds of flesh, yet it was God who thundered: surely then it is clear by so great testimony that all these things which were done in figure, are now fulfilled in our salvation; because then the future was predicted, now the past is read, and the present observed.

4. Hear what is even more wonderful, that the hidden and veiled mysteries of the ancient books, are in some degree revealed by the ancient books. For Micah the prophet speaketh thus. According to the days of thy coming out of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf: licking the dust like serpents, dragging the earth: they shall be disturbed from their close places: they shall be beside

themselves at the Lord our God, and shall fear because of Thee. Who is like unto this God, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of Thine heritage? He retaineth not His anger for a testimony, because He is of good will and merciful. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will drown our iniquities: and Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Ye see, brethren, that the holy mysteries are here more clearly revealed. In this Psalm, therefore, although the wonderful spirit of prophecy doth look into the future, yet it seemeth as it were, to be merely detailing the past. Judah, he saith, was His sanctuary: the sea saw that and fled: was, saw, and fled, are words of the past tense; and Jordan was driven back, and the mountains skipped, and the earth trembled, in like manner have a past expression, without however any difficulty in understanding by them the future. Otherwise we are compelled, contrary to the testimony of the Gospel, to understand these words not as foretold of the future, but as related of the past: They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Although these words are expressed in the past tense, nevertheless they foretold that which, being destined to happen so long afterwards, should be fulfilled in our Lord's Passion. Nevertheless, most beloved, that prophet whom I have mentioned hath sharpened even dull minds, and extended their view without hesitation to understand the future from the past: so that not only on apostolical authority do we believe that they were our examples, but that this was not passed over even by the prophets themselves, so that even by their declarations, seeing and rejoicing, sure and fearless, from the treasury of God we may bring forth both new and old things, agreeing harmoniously with each other. For though it was so long after the departure of that people from Egypt, and so long before these seasons of the Church, that he sang what I have quoted; nevertheless, he witnesseth that he is foretelling the future without any question. According to the days, he saith, of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded. This is what is here said, The sea saw that, and fled: for if in this passage, through words of the past tense the future is secretly revealed, as is the case; who would venture to explain the words, shall see and be confounded, of past events? And a little lower down he alludeth more clearly than light itself to those very enemies of ours, who followed us flying, that they might slay us, that is, our sins, which are overwhelmed and

extinguished in Baptism, just as the Egyptians were drowned in the sea, saying, Since He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He is of good will and merciful, He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us, He will drown our iniquities: and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

5. What is it, most beloved? ye who know yourselves to be Israelites according to Abraham's seed, ye who are of the house of Jacob, heirs according to promise, know that even ye have gone forth from Egypt, since ye have renounced this world; that ye have gone forth from a foreign people, since by the confession of piety, ye have separated yourselves from the blasphemies of the Gentiles. For it is not your tongue, but a foreign one, which knoweth not how to praise God, to Whom ye sing Allelujah. For Judah hath become His sanctuary in you; for he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and by circumcision of the heart. Examine then your hearts, if faith hath circumcised them, if confession hath cleansed them; in you Judah hath become His sanctuary, in you Israel hath become His dominion. For He gave unto you the power to become the sons of God.

6. And now let each of you call to mind, that when he wished to apply his heart unto God, and to submit his devout mind to His gracious yoke, departing from the former longings of his ignorance, and forsaking and throwing aside the carnal deeds of this world, (in which he toiled fruitlessly, as if he were making bricks in Egypt beneath the cruel domination of the devil,) when he hath heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, to run beneath the light burden of Christ: let therefore each of you call to mind how all worldly obstacles yielded, how the voices of those who would dissuade have either not dared to burst forth, or when they have meditated on the Name of Christ that hath been exalted and honoured throughout all lands, have been silenced in trembling. Therefore, the sea saw that, and fled; that the road might without opposition be opened for thee towards spiritual liberty.

7. But I would not that ye should seek without yourselves, how the Jordan was turned back, I would not ye should augur any thing evil. For the Lord

chideth those who have turned their back unto Him, and not their face. And whoever forsaketh the source of his being, and turneth away from his Creator; as a river into the sea, he glides into the bitter wickedness of this world. It is therefore good for him that he turn back, and that God Whom he had set behind his back, may be before his face as he returneth; and that the sea of this world, which he had set before his face, when he was gliding on towards it, may become behind him; and that he may so forget what is behind him, that he may reach forward to what is before him; which is profitable for him when once converted. For before he is converted, if he forgetteth what is behind him, he forgetteth God; because he had rendered Him behind him, towards Whom he had turned his back: and if he reacheth forth unto those things which are before him, he reacheth forth towards the world; since he had placed the world, whither he was eagerly running, before his face. The Jordan therefore signifieth those who have received the grace of Baptism; and thus the Jordan is turned back, when they are turned unto God, so that they may no longer have Him behind them, but with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory.

8. Ver. 4. The mountains skipped like rams: the faithful stewards of the word of truth, the holy Apostles, the holy preachers of the Gospel. And the little hills like young sheep. These are those unto whom it is said, In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel: these are they to whom it is said, I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you; these are they of whom it is said, Bring young rams unto the Lord. Listen throughout all lands, ye who know how to admire these things, and how to rejoice and sing unto the Lord your God; observe how these things, which so long before were done and prophesied in figure, are fulfilled throughout all nations.

9. Ask in these words: (ver. 5.) What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest: and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? (ver. 6.) ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like young sheep? Why is it, O world, that thy hindrances have yielded? Why is it, O so many thousands of faithful ones in the whole world, who renounce this world, that ye have turned unto your Lord? Why is it that ye rejoice, ye unto whom

it shall be said at the end, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things? Why is it that ye rejoice, ye unto whom it shall be said in the end, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?

10. All these things will respond to you, and you will respond to yourselves: (ver. 7.) Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. What meaneth, at the presence of the Lord, save at the presence of Him Who said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. For the earth trembled; but because it had remained slothful, it was made to tremble, so that it might be more firmly fixed at the presence of the Lord.

11. Ver. 8. Who turned the hard rock into standing waters, and the flint stone into springing wells. For He melted Himself, and what may be called His hardness to water those who believe on Him, that He might in them become a fountain of water gushing forth unto everlasting life; because formerly, when He was not known, He seemed hard. Hence they who said, This is an hard saying, Who can bear it? were confounded, and waited not until He should flow and stream upon them when the Scriptures were revealed. The rock, that hardness, was turned into pools of water, that stone into fountains of waters, when on His resurrection, He expounded unto them, commencing with Moses and all the prophets, how Christ ought to suffer thus; and sent the Holy Ghost, of Whom He said, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.

12. Psalm 115. ver. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise. For that grace of the water that gushed from the rock, (now that rock was Christ, was not given on the score of works that had gone before, but of His mercy that justifieth the ungodly. For Christ died for sinners, that men might not seek any glory of their own, but in the Lord's Name.

13. Ver. 2. For Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth's sake. Observe how often these two qualities, loving mercy and truth, are joined together in the holy Scriptures. For in His loving mercy He called sinners, and in His truth

He judgeth those who when called refused to come. That the heathen may not say, Where is now their God? For at the last, His loving mercy and truth will shine forth, when the sign of the Son of man shall appear in heaven, and then shall all tribes of the earth cry woe; nor shall they then say, Where is their God? when He is no longer preached unto them to be believed in, but displayed before them to be trembled at.

14. Ver. 3. As for our God, He is in heaven above. Not in heaven, where they see the sun and moon, works of God which they adore, but in heaven above, which overpasseth all heavenly and earthly bodies. Nor is our God in heaven in such a sense, as to dread a fall that should deprive Him of His throne, if heaven were withdrawn from under Him. In heaven and earth He hath made whatsoever pleased Him. Nor doth He stand in need of His own works, as if He had place in them where He might abide; but endureth in His own eternity, wherein He abideth and hath done whatsoever pleased Him, both in heaven and earth; for they did not support Him, as a condition of their being created by Him: since, unless they had been created, they could not have supported Him. Therefore, in whatsoever He Himself dwelleth, He, so to speak, containeth this as in need of Himself, He is not contained by this as if He needed it. Or it may be thus understood; In heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him, whether among the higher or the lower orders of His people, He hath made His grace His free gift, that no man may boast in the merits of his own works: since whether the mountains skip like rams, or the little hills like young sheep; the earth hath trembled before the face of the Lord, that men might not abide for ever in earthly degradation.

PSALM 115

Exposition ii

On the second part of the Psalm.

(i.e. on Psalm 115.)

1. Although perhaps there is one connection of all the Psalms visible to such as carefully regard them, so that none succeedeth which may not follow from the preceding one; nevertheless, let us so consider this, as if both were one, this, namely, and the preceding one. For as in the former it was said, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise, for Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth's sake: that the heathen may not say, Where is their God? because we worship an invisible God, Who is known unto the bodily eyes of none, and to the pure hearts of few; as if the heathen might say, Where is their God? because they can shew their gods to the eyes; he first reminded us, that the presence of our God is shewn by His works; for since He is in heaven above, in heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him. And as if he should say, let the heathen shew their gods; (ver. 4.) Their idols, he saith, are silver and gold, even the work of men's hands; that is, although we cannot display our God to your carnal eyes, Whom ye ought to recognise through His works; yet be not seduced by your vain pretences, because ye can point with the finger to the objects of your worship. For it were much worthier for you not to have what to point to, than that your hearts' blindness should be displayed in what is exhibited to these eyes by you: for what do ye exhibit, save gold and silver? They have indeed both bronze, and wood, and earthenware idols, and of different materials of this description; but the Holy Spirit preferred mentioning the more precious material, because when every man hath blushed for that which he sets more by, he is much more easily turned away from the worship of meaner objects. For it is said in another passage of

Scripture concerning the worshippers of images, Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth. But lest that man who speaketh thus not to a stone or stock, but to gold and silver, seem wiser to himself; let him look this way, let him turn hitherwards the ear of his heart: The idols of the Gentiles are gold and silver. Nothing mean and contemptible is here mentioned: and indeed to that mind which is not earth, both gold and silver is earth, but more beautiful and brilliant, more solid and firm. Employ not then the hands of men, to create a false Deity out of that metal which a true God hath created; nay, a false man, whom thou mayest worship for a true God; one whom any man who should receive into his friendship as a true man, would be insane. For resemblance of figure, and the imitation of the limbs, hurrieth away the weak hearts of mortals with its degrading affection: but as thou shewest each member as it is constructed, so also shew the duties of each of those members, whose figure, O human vanity, doth attract thee.

2. Ver. 5–7. For they have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not. They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not. They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not; neither cry they through their throat. Even their artist therefore surpasseth them, since he had the faculty of moulding them by the motion and functions of his limbs: though thou wouldest be ashamed to worship that artist. Even thou surpassest them, though thou hast not made these things, since thou doest what they cannot do. Even a beast doth excel them; for unto this it is added, neither cry they through their throat. For after he had said above, they have mouths, and speak not; what need was there, after he had enumerated the limbs from head to feet, to repeat what he had said of their crying through their throat; unless, I suppose, because we perceive that what he mentioned of the other members, was common to men and beasts? For they see, and hear, and smell, and walk, and some, apes for instance, handle with hands. But what he had said of the mouth, is peculiar to men: since beasts do not speak. But that no one might refer what hath been said to the works of human members alone, and prefer men only to the Gods of the heathen; after all this he added these words, neither cry they through their throat: which again is common to men and cattle. Whereas if he had first said it, when he began to enumerate the members from the mouth, they have a

mouth, and speak not; even thus every thing will apply to human nature, nor would the perceptions of the hearer remark any thing common to beasts. But since he said of the mouth what is peculiar to man, and after enumerating the parts of the body which he seemed to have concluded by the mention of the feet, added, neither cry they through their throat; he hath attracted the attention of the reader or listener, so that while he seeketh why this was added, he findeth himself admonished, that he ought to prefer not men only, but even beasts, to the idols of the heathen: so that if they are ashamed to worship a beast whom God hath created with sight, hearing, smell, touch, powers of walking, crying with its throat, they might see how shameful a thing it is to worship a dumb idol, destitute of life and sensibility; possessed of a resemblance to human limbs for this reason, that a soul devoted to carnal senses might yield its affections to a figure that seemed to live and have animation, when it saw those members which it knew to be endued with life and animation in its own body. How much better then do mice and serpents, and other animals of like sort, judge of the idols of the heathen, so to speak, for they regard not the human figure in them when they see not the human life. For this reason they usually build nests in them, and unless they are deterred by human movements, they seek for themselves no safer habitations. A man then moveth himself, that he may frighten away a living beast from his own god; and yet worshippeth that god who cannot move himself, as if he were powerful, from whom he drove away one better than the object of his worship. For he drove away a thing that saw from a thing that was blind: one that heard from one that was deaf, one that had voice from one that was dumb, one that walked from one that could not move, one that had feeling from the insensible, the living from the dead, nay the worse than the dead. For as it is clear that the dead liveth not, so also it is clear that he hath once lived. Wherefore even the dead surpasseth a deity who neither liveth nor hath lived.

3. What, my most beloved brethren, is more clear, what more evident than this? What child if questioned would not reply, that this was certain, that the idols of the heathen have mouths, and speak not; have eyes, and see not; and the rest, as the inspired text hath described? Why then doth the Holy Spirit take such care to insinuate and inculcate these things in many passages as if men were ignorant of them, as if they were not most open and

notorious to all men; except that the figure of the limbs, which they have seen endued with life in living beings, and which we are wont to feel in ourselves, although, as they maintain, constructed for a certain statue and set on a lofty pedestal, when it hath begun to be adored and honoured by the multitude, produceth in each man a most depraved and deceptive feeling, so that, since he findeth not a vital power of motion, he believeth a hidden deity; and yet doth not think that the image, which is like a living body, is without a living inhabitant, being seduced by its figure, and influenced by the authority of seemingly wise institutions and reverential crowds. Hence such notions of men invite evil spirits to take possession of such idols of the heathen, by the varied deceptions of whom, when presiding over them, deadly errors are sown and multiplied. In other passages the inspired writers guard against these things, lest any one should say, when the idols have been ridiculed, "I worship not this visible thing, but the divinity which doth invisibly dwell therein." Thus in another Psalm the same Scripture thus condemneth these divinities, As for all the Gods of the heathen, they are but idols: but it is the Lord that made the heavens. The Apostle also saith; Not that the idol is any thing, but that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

4. But they seem to themselves to have a purer religion, who say, I neither worship an idol, nor a devil; but in the bodily image I behold an emblem of that which I am bound to worship. They therefore interpret these images, by stating one to represent the earth, whence they constantly call it the temple of Tellus; another the sea, as the image of Neptune; another air, as that of Juno; another fire, as that of Vulcan; another the morning star, as that of Venus; another the sun, another the moon, to whose images they give the same name, as in that of Tellus; the various stars too they represent by various figures, and so with other works of creation; for we cannot enumerate them all. And when they begin to be ridiculed for worshipping bodies, and chiefly the earth, and air, and the sea, and fire, all of which we use in common: (for they are not so much ashamed of their adoration of heavenly bodies, since we cannot touch or reach them with our bodies, save by the light of our eyes:) they presume to reply, that they worship not the bodies themselves, but the deities which preside over the government of

them. One sentence of the Apostle, therefore, testifieth to their punishment and condemnation; Who, he saith, have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. For in the former part of this sentence he condemned idols; in the latter, the account they give of their idols: for by designating images wrought by an artificer by the names of the works of God's creation, they change the truth of God into a lie; while, by considering these works themselves as deities, and worshipping them as such, they serve the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever.

5. But who worshippeth or prayeth with his eyes upon an idol, who is not so affected, as to imagine that he is listened to, as to hope that what he desireth is given him by his idol? Thus men who are bound by such superstitions, usually turn their back to the sun itself, pour forth their prayers to a statue which they call the sun; and when they are struck by the dashing of the waves behind them, they strike with their groans the statue of Neptune, as if it could perceive, which they worship in place of the sea itself. For this is a sort of necessary effect of this figure endued with limbs, that the mind which liveth in the bodily senses, should be inclined to suppose that that body which it seeth so closely to resemble its own body, is more apt to feel than a circular sun and an expanse of waves, and any thing which it beholdeth not formed with the same features as those which it constantly seeth endowed with life. In opposition to this affection, whereby human and carnal weakness may easily be snared, the holy Scripture setteth forth sentiments universally recognised, whereby it may arouse the minds of men sleeping in the thralldom of their bodies. The idols, it saith, of the heathen are gold and silver. But it is God Who made gold and silver. Their idols, he saith, are the work of men's hands: for they worship what they have constructed out of gold and silver.

6. But, it will be said, we also have very many instruments and vessels made of materials or metal of this description for the purpose of celebrating the Sacraments, which being consecrated by these ministrations are called holy, in honour of Him Who is thus worshipped for our salvation: and what indeed are these very instruments or vessels, but the work of men's hands? But have they mouth, and yet speak not? have they eyes, and see not? do we

pray unto them, because through them we pray unto God? This is the chief cause of this insane profanity, that the figure resembling the living person, which induces men to worship it, hath more influence in the minds of these miserable persons, than the evident fact that it is not living, so that it ought to be despised by the living. For idols have more power in perverting an unhappy mind because they have a mouth, have eyes, have ears, noses, hands, feet, than in rectifying it, because they speak not, see not, hear not, smell not, touch not, walk not.

7. The result that ensueth is that described in the next verse; (ver. 8.) They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their trust in them. Let them therefore see with open eyes, and worship with shut and dead understandings, idols that neither see nor live.

8. Ver. 9–11. But the house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord. For hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. But that this patience may endure to the end, He is their helper and defender. Do perhaps spiritual persons (by whom carnal minds are built up in the spirit of meekness, because they pray as higher for lower minds) already see, and is that already to them reality which to the lower is hope? It is not so. For even (ver. 10.) the house of Aaron hath hope in the Lord. Therefore, that they also may stretch forward perseveringly towards those things which are before them, and may run perseveringly, until they may apprehend that for which they are apprehended, and may know even as they are known, He is their helper and defender. For both fear the Lord, and have hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and defender.

9. For we do not by our deservings prevent the mercy of God; but, (ver. 12.) The Lord hath been mindful of us, and hath blessed us. He hath blessed the house of Israel, He hath blessed the house of Aaron. But in blessing both of these, (ver. 13.) He hath blessed all that fear the Lord. Dost thou ask, who are meant by both of these? He answereth, both small and great. That is, the house of Israel with the house of Aaron, those who among that nation believed in Jesus the Saviour; for God was not well pleased with all of them. For what, if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid. For they are not all Israel which are of

Israel; neither, because they are of the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, as it is written, a remnant was saved. For in the character of those who out of that nation believed, it is said, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. Seed, because when it has been scattered over the earth, it multiplied.

10. For the great ones, of the house of Aaron, have said, (ver. 14.) May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children. And thus it hath happened. For children that have been raised even from the stones have flocked unto Abraham: sheep which were not of this fold, have flocked unto him, that there might be one flock, and one shepherd; the faith of all nations was added, and the number grew, not only of wise priests, but of obedient peoples; the Lord increasing not only their fathers more and more, who in Christ might shew the way to the rest who should imitate them, but also their children, who should follow their fathers' pious footsteps. For he speaketh thus unto those whom through the Gospel he had begotten in Christ: Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me, even as I of Christ. The Lord therefore hath added, not only unto the mountains that skip like rams, but also unto the little hills that skip like young sheep.

11. Therefore the Prophet saith unto these great and small, the mountains and the little hills, the rams and the young sheep, what followeth; (ver. 15.) Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. As if he should say, Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made the heaven in the great, earth in the small: not this visible heaven, studded with luminaries which are objects to these eyes. For, (Ver. 16.) The heaven of heavens is the Lord's; Who hath elevated the minds of some saints to such a height, that they became teachable by no man, but by God Himself; in comparison of which heaven, whatever is discerned with carnal eyes is to be called earth; which He hath given to the children of men; that when it is contemplated, whether in that region which illumineth above, as that which is called heaven, or in that which is illumined beneath, which is properly called earth, (since in comparison with that which is called heaven of heaven, the whole, as we have said, is earth;) the whole therefore of this earth He hath given to the children of men, that by the consideration of it, as far as they can, they may

conceive of the Creator, Whom with their yet weak hearts they cannot see without that aid to their conception.

12. There is another way of understanding these words, The heaven of heavens is the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men; which I ought not to conceal; that your attention may not stray away from what I have said. For I had said, that the small and the great are signified by what followeth: Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. If therefore we understand the great by the word heaven, the small by earth; since the small are destined to become heaven by growth, and in this very hope are nourished by milk; so those great ones are the heaven of the earth, when they nourish the little ones, that they may understand that they are heaven of heaven, when they consider in what hope the little ones are nourished. But nevertheless since they derive the truth and richness of wisdom, not from man nor through man, but through God Himself, they have received little ones who shall be heaven, that they may know that they are heaven of heaven; as yet however earth, unto which they say, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. For to those very sons of men whom He made heaven, He Who knoweth how to provide for the earth through heaven, hath given earth upon which they may work. May they therefore abide, heaven and earth, in their God, Who made them, and let them live from Him, confessing unto Him, and praising Him; for if they choose to live from themselves, they shall die, as it is written, From the dead, as though he were not, confession ceaseth. But, (ver. 17.) The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence. For the Scripture in another passage proclaimeth, The sinner, when he cometh into the abyss of wickednesses, scorneth. But we, who live, will praise the Lord, from this time forth for evermore.

PSALM 116

Exposition

A Sermon to the common people.

1. Ver. 1. I have loved, since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. Let the soul that is sojourning in absence from the Lord sing thus, let that sheep which had strayed sing thus, let that son who had died and returned to life, who had been lost and was found; let our soul sing thus, brethren, and most beloved sons. Let us be taught, and let us abide, and let us sing thus with the Saints: I have loved: since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. Is this a reason for having loved, that the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer? and do we not rather love, because He hath heard, or that He may hear? What then meaneth, I have loved, since the Lord will hear? Doth he, because hope is wont to inflame love, say that he hath loved, since he hath hoped that God will listen to the voice of his prayer?

2. Ver. 2, 3. But whence hath he hoped for this? Since, he saith, He hath inclined His ear unto me: and in my days I have called upon Him. I loved, therefore, because He will hear; He will hear, because He hath inclined His ear unto me. But whence knowest thou, O human soul, that God hath inclined His ear unto thee, except thou sayest, I have believed? These three things, therefore, abide, faith, hope, charity: because thou hast believed, thou hast hoped; because thou hast hoped, thou hast loved. If I now seek why the soul believed that God inclined His ear unto it: shall I not be answered, Because He first loved us, and spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. For how shall they call upon Him in Whom they have not believed? saith the Teacher of the Gentiles: and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? When I perceived all these things done towards me, how should I not believe that

the Lord hath inclined his ear unto me? But He hath so commended His love towards us, that Christ died for the ungodly. When therefore the beautiful feet of them that preached peace, that published good tidings, preached these things to me, that whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved, I believed that His ear was inclined unto me, and in my days I have called upon Him.

3. And what are thy days, since thou hast said, In my days I have called, upon Him? Are they those perchance, in which the fulness of time came, and God sent His Son, Who had already said, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee? Thou hast heard from the lips of the preacher who came unto thee with beautiful feet, Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation; and thou hast believed, and in thy days hast called upon the Lord, and said, (ver. 5.) O Lord, deliver my soul. This is indeed true: but I may rather call my days the days of my misery, the days of my mortality, the days according to Adam, full of toil and sweat, the days according to the ancient corruption. For I lying, stuck fast in the deep mire, in another Psalm also have cried out, Behold, Thou hast made my days old; in these days of mine have I called upon Thee. For my days are different from the days of my Lord. I call those my days, which by my own daring I have made for myself, whereby I have forsaken Him: and, since He reigneth every where, and is all powerful, and holdeth all things, I have deserved prison; that is, I have received the darkness of ignorance, and the bonds of mortality. I will call upon Him in these my days; for elsewhere also I cry out, Bring my soul out of prison; and since, in the day of salvation, which He hath given me, He hath aided me; the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners cometh before Him. For in these days of mine, (ver. 3.) The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: pains that would not have overtaken me, had I not wandered from Thee. But now they have overtaken me; but I found them not, while I was rejoicing in the prosperity of the world, in which the snares of hell deceive the more.

4. Ver. 4–6. But after I too found trouble and heaviness, I called upon the Name of the Lord. For trouble and profitable sorrow I did not feel; trouble, wherein He giveth aid, unto Whom it is said, O be Thou our help in trouble:

and vain is the help of man. For I thought I might rejoice and exult in the vain help of man; but when I had heard from my Lord, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted: I did not wait until I should lose those temporal blessings in which I rejoiced, and should then mourn: but I gave heed to that very misery of mine which caused me to rejoice in such things, which I both feared to lose, and yet could not retain; I gave heed to it firmly and courageously, and I saw that I was not only agonised by the adversities of this world, but even bound by its good fortune; and thus I found the trouble and heaviness which had escaped me, and called upon the Name of the Lord; (ver. 5.) O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul. wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death, save the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Let then the holy people of God say, I have found trouble and heaviness, and I called upon the Name of the Lord: and let the remainder of the heathen hear, who do not as yet call upon the Name of the Lord; let them hear and seek, that they may discover trouble and heaviness, and may call upon the Name of the Lord, and be saved. We do not enjoin them to seek for a sorrow they have no cause for, but to discover that which they unwittingly harbour; nor is it our desire concerning them, that those earthly necessities, which they require while they live in this mortal state, should be wanting to them; but that they may mourn for this, that, having lost that fulness that cometh from heaven, they have deserved to be in want of those earthly blessings which are not permanently to be enjoyed, but which are needful for sustenance. Let them acknowledge and mourn for this misery; He who willed not even that they should be miserable, will make them blessed in their mourning.

5. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. He is gracious, righteous, and merciful. Gracious in the first place, because He hath inclined His ear unto me; and I knew not that the ear of God had approached my lips, till I was aroused by those beautiful feet, that I might call upon the Lord's Name: for who hath called upon Him, save he whom He first called? Hence therefore He is in the first place gracious; but righteous, because He scourgeth; and again, merciful, because He receiveth; for He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth; nor ought it to be so bitter to me that He scourgeth, as sweet that He receiveth. For how should not (ver. 6.) The Lord, who keepeth little ones, scourge those whom, when of

mature age, He seeketh to be heirs; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? I was in misery, and He helped me. He helped me, because I was in misery; for the pain which the physician causeth by his knife is not penal, but salutary.

6. Ver. 7. Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath done good to thee: not for thy deservings, or through thy strength; but because the Lord hath done good to thee. (Ver. 8.) Since, he saith, He hath delivered my soul from death. It is wonderful, most beloved brethren, that, after he had said that his soul should turn unto rest, since the Lord had rewarded him; he added, since He hath delivered my soul from death. Did it turn unto rest, because it was delivered from death? Is not rest more usually said of death? What is the action of him, whose life is rest, and death disquietude? Such then ought to be the action of the soul, as may tend to a quiet security, not one that may increase restless toil; since He hath delivered it from death, Who, pitying it, said, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Meek therefore and humble, following, so to speak, Christ as its path, should the action of the soul be that tendeth towards repose; nevertheless, not slothful and supine; that it may finish its course, as it is written, In quietness make perfect thy works. For, that quietness might not lead to sloth, it is added, make perfect thy works. For it is not as it is in this life, where the repose of sleep doth refresh us for action; but a good habit of the soul leadeth to an ever watchful rest.

7. But that God, of Whom it is here said, For the Lord hath done good to me. And why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling: bestoweth all things. Whoever feeleth the chain of this flesh, chaunteth these things as fulfilled in hope towards himself. For it is truly said, I was in misery, and He delivered me; but the Apostle saith this also truly, that we are saved by hope. And that we are delivered from death, is well said to be already fulfilled, so that we may understand the death of unbelievers, of whom he saith, Leave the dead to bury their dead: and that in the former Psalm, The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence; but we who live will praise

the Lord. A faithful believer may therefore understand that his soul is delivered from this death, for this very reason, that instead of being unbelieving it hath believed; whence the Saviour Himself saith, He that believeth on Me, is passed from death unto life. But the rest is fulfilled in hope in those who have not yet departed from this life. But now when we consider our most dangerous falls, our eyes cease not from tears; but He will then clear our eyes of tears, when He shall save our feet from falling. For there will then be no slipping of our feet as they walk, when there will be no sliding of the weak flesh. But now, however firm our path, which is Christ, be; yet since we place flesh, which we are enjoined to subdue, beneath us; in the very work of chastening and subduing it, it is a great thing not to fall: but not to slip in the flesh, who can attain?

8. Wherefore since we both are in the flesh, and are not in the flesh, (for we are in the flesh in respect of that chain which is not as yet loosened, because, to be released and to be with Christ is by far the best; and we are not in the flesh, because we have given the first-fruits of the Spirit unto God, if we are able to say that our conversation is in heaven; and if, as it were, with our head we please God, while with our feet, as it were, with the farthest regions of the soul we perceive the slippery ground we tread upon,) hear how that which is expressed as if it were already accomplished belongeth to hope: He hath delivered, it is said, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling: and yet he saith not, I please; but, I shall please in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living; sufficiently shewing that he doth not as yet please in the sight of the Lord, on that side which is in the land of the dead, that is, in mortal flesh. For they that are in the flesh, cannot please God. Whence the same Apostle goeth on to add, But ye are not in the flesh; which he saith in this sense, that the body indeed is dead because of sin; but the Spirit of life because of righteousness; in respect of which they pleased God, because in respect of the Spirit they were not in the flesh. But who can please a living God, in a dead body? But what saith he? But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Then shall we be in the land of the living, pleasing in the sight of the Lord in every respect, absent from Him in no respect. For whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; and,

inasmuch as we are absent from Him, so far we are not in the land of the living. But we are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord; wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. We labour indeed now, because we are awaiting the redemption of our body: but, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality; then there will be no weeping, because there will be no falling; and no falling, because no corruption. And therefore we shall then no longer labour to please, but we shall be entirely pleasing in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living.

1. I imagine that what the Apostle saith is very well known to you, holy brethren: for all men have not faith; and that the number of the unbelieving is wont to be the greater, ye are not ignorant: on which account it is said, Lord, who hath believed our report? Among whom we numbered those also, of whom the Apostle saith, For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's; who, in another passage he saith, preach the word of God, not in sincerity, but for occasions, not purely, that is, not in a temper of pure and sincere love. For they felt one thing, as appeared in their conduct, and preached another, that under a holy name they might please men: for of these again he saith, For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. Yet He alloweth them to preach Christ. For though they rather believed those things which they did, tending unto death: yet they preached those things, which, if others did, believing them, they would be saved; for they preached nothing beside the rule of faith. For these the Apostle doth exclude, in these words, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. They who preach falsehood, preach not Christ; for Christ is Truth. But of these men he saith that they preach Christ, but not purely, that is, not with a mind simple and pure, and with sincere faith that worketh by love; for while they were providing for earthly desires, they preached the kingdom of heaven, with falsehood in their hearts, and truth on their tongue. The Apostle therefore, aware that they who believed even by the preaching of Judas were delivered, alloweth these men in this way: Whether, he saith, in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached. For it was truth which they preached, though they preached not with truth, that is, with a true heart. These now speak

what they believe not, and are therefore reprobate; although they may be profitable unto those whom the Lord teacheth, saying, Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not. Wherefore, except because they believe not that what they enjoin is profitable? But others there are, who believe and say not what they believe, either from sloth or fear. For although the servant had a talent, yet because he chose not to spend it, he is addressed, by the Lord his judge, Thou wicked and slothful servant. And in another passage of the Gospel it is said, that many would have believed in Him among the chief men of the Jews, but that they did not acknowledge Him, that they might not be expelled from the synagogues; but they also were reprov'd and censured; for the Evangelist goeth on to say, For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. If therefore both they who believe not the truth which they utter, and they who utter not the truth which they believe, are deservedly reprov'd; what servant shall he be who may truly be termed faithful, save he to whom it is said, Well done, thou good servant, since thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord? Such a servant, then, neither speaketh before he believeth, nor is silent when he hath believed: lest he should use his talent so as not to have it himself, or by not using it while he hath it should cease to have it. For thus it is said, For unto him that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

2. Ver. 10. Let therefore that good servant, singing Allelujah, that is, offering unto the Lord the sacrifice of praise, from Whom he will hear the words, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; let him rejoice and say, I believed, and therefore will I speak: that is, I have believed perfectly. For they who refuse to utter what they believe, do not perfectly believe: for to this very belief it pertaineth to believe that which is said, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, Him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. For that servant was called faithful, not only because he received, but because he expended and gained more. So also in this passage he saith not, I believed, and I spoke; but he saith, that he spoke, because he believed. For he at the same time believed both what reward he ought to expect for speaking, and what punishment for keeping silence. I believed,

saith he, and therefore did I speak. But I was sorely brought down. For he suffered many tribulations, for the sake of the word which he faithfully held, faithfully preached; and he was sorely brought down; as they feared who loved the praise of men better than that of God. But what meaneth, But I? He should rather say, I believed, and therefore I have spoken, and I was sorely brought down: why did he add, But I, save because a man may be sorely brought down by those who oppose the truth, the truth itself cannot, which he believeth and speaketh? Whence also the Apostle, when he was speaking of his chain, saith, the word of God is not bound. So this man also, since there is one person of the holy witnesses, that is, of the Martyrs of God, saith, I believed, and therefore will I speak. But I; not that which I believed, not the word which I have delivered; but I was sorely brought down.

3. Ver. 11. I said in my trance, All men are liars. By trance he meaneth fear, which when persecutors threaten, and when the sufferings of torture or death impend, human weakness suffereth. For this we understand, because in this Psalm the voice of Martyrs is heard. For trance is used in another sense also, when the mind is not beside itself by fear, but is possessed by some inspiration of revelation. But I said in my haste, All men are liars. In consternation he hath had regard to his infirmity, and hath seen that he ought not to presume on himself; for as far as pertaineth to the man himself, he is a liar, but by the grace of God he is made true; lest yielding to the pressure of his enemies he might not speak what he had believed, but might deny it; even as it happened to Peter, since he had trusted in himself, and was to be taught that we ought not to trust in man. And if every one ought not to trust in man, surely not in himself; because he is a man. Rightly therefore in his fear did he perceive that every man was a liar; since they also whom no fear robs of their presence of mind, so that they never lie by yielding to the persecutors, are such by the gifts of God, not by their own strength. Therefore it is most truly said, Every man is a liar; but God is true, Who said, I have said, ye are Gods, and ye are all the children of the Most Highest. But ye shall die like men: and fall like one of the princes. He consoleth the humble, and filleth them not only with the faith to believe, but with the courage to preach the truth, if they be continually subject to God, and imitate not the devil, one of the princes, who abode not in the truth, and

fell. For if all men are liars, so far will they not be liars, as they are not men; since they will be Gods, and the children of the Most Highest.

4. Ver. 12. The most devoted people of faithful witnesses, then, considering this, how the mercy of God doth not abandon human infirmity, in the fear of which infirmity it is said, All men are liars; how it consoleth the meek, and filleth with the spirit of courage the fearful, so that they live again when their heart is nigh dead, and trust not in themselves, but in Him Who raiseth the dead, and maketh the tongues of children eloquent; Who saith, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you; he then who had said, I said in my haste, All men are liars, considering all these things, and seeing that he was made thankful by the grace of God; What, he asketh, what reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me? He saith not, for all the benefits that He hath done unto me; but, for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me. What deeds then on the man's part had preceded, that all the benefits of God were not said to be given, but returned? What had preceded, on the man's part, save sins? God therefore repayeth good for evil, whilst unto Him men repay evil for good; for such was the return of those who said, This is the heir: come, let us kill him.

5. Ver. 13–15. But this man seeketh what he may return unto the Lord, and findeth not, save out of those things which the Lord Himself returneth. (Ver. 13.) I will receive, he saith, the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. O man, a liar by thy own sin, true by the gift of God, and therefore no longer a man; Who hath given thee the cup of salvation, which when thou takest, and callest upon the Name of the Lord, thou shalt return unto Him a reward for all that He hath returned unto thee? Who, save He Who saith, Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of? Who hath given unto thee to imitate His sufferings, save He Who hath suffered before for thee? And therefore, (ver. 15.) Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. He purchased it by His Blood, which He first shed for the salvation of slaves, that they might not hesitate to shed their blood for

the Lord's Name; which, nevertheless, would be profitable for their own interests, not for those of the Lord.

6. Ver. 16. Let therefore the slave purchased at so great a price confess his condition, and say, Behold, O Lord, how that I am Thy servant: I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid. He is then both bought, and a home-bred slave. Was he bought together with his mother? Or, since he is a home-bred slave, was he stolen for the sin of his running away, and therefore bought, because redeemed? For he is the handmaid's son, because all creation is subject to the Creator, and oweth a most true service to the most true God: which while it yieldeth, it is free, receiving this grace from the Lord, that it may serve Him, not by compulsion, but by free-will. This, therefore, is the son of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, the free mother of us all. And free indeed from sin she is, but the handmaid of righteousness; to whose sons still pilgrims it is said, Ye have been called unto liberty; and again he maketh them servants, when he saith, but by love serve one another: to whom it is also said, When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Let therefore that servant say unto God, Many call themselves martyrs, many Thy servants, because they hold Thy Name in various heresies and errors; but since they are beside Thy Church, they are not the children of Thy handmaid. But I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid.

7. Ver. 17. Thou hast broken my bonds asunder. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise. For I have not found any deserts of mine, since Thou hast broken my bonds asunder; I therefore owe Thee the sacrifice of praise; because, although I will boast that I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid, I will glory not in myself, but in Thee, my Lord, Who hast broken asunder my bonds, that when I return from my desertion, I may again be bound unto Thee.

8. Ver. 18. I will pay my vows unto the Lord. What vows wilt thou pay? What victims hast thou vowed? what burnt-offerings, what holocausts? Dost thou refer to what thou hast said a little before, I will receive the cup of salvation, and will call upon the Name of the Lord; and, I will offer to

Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving? and indeed whosoever well considereth what he is vowing to the Lord, and what vows he is paying, let him vow himself, let him pay himself as a vow: this is exacted, this is due. On looking at the coin, the Lord saith, Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's: his own image is rendered unto Cæsar: let His image be rendered unto God.

9. Ver. 19. But he who remembereth that he is not only the servant of God, but also the son of God's handmaid, seeth where he may pay his vows, being made like unto Christ through the cup of salvation. In the courts, he saith, of the Lord's house. What is the Lord's house, the same is the Lord's handmaid: and what is God's house, save all His people? It therefore followeth, In the sight of all His people. And he now more openly nameth his mother herself. For what else is His people, but what followeth, In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem? For then that which is returned is grateful, if it be returned from peace, and in peace. But they who are not sons of this handmaid, have loved war rather than peace. But that no one may think that by the courts of the Lord's house, and all His people, the Jews are meant, because he closed this Psalm with the words, In the midst of thee, Jerusalem, in whose name the carnal Israelites glory; hear the following Psalm, which is comprised in four verses.

PSALM 117

Exposition

A Sermon to the people.

1. Ver. 1. O praise the Lord, all ye heathen: praise Him, all ye nations. These are the courts of the Lord's house, this all His people, this the true Jerusalem. Let those rather listen who have refused to be the children of this city, since they have cut themselves off from the communion of all nations. (Ver. 2.) For His merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. These are those two things, loving-kindness and truth, which in the 113th Psalm I admonished you should be committed to memory. But the merciful kindness of the Lord is ever more and more towards us, since the furious tongues of hostile nations have yielded to His Name, through which we have been freed: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever, whether in those things which He promised to the righteous, or in those which He hath threatened to the ungodly.

PSALM 118

Exposition i

1. We have heard, my brethren, the Holy Spirit warning and exhorting us to offer the sacrifice of confession unto God. Now confession is either of His praise, or of our sins. Now that confession, whereby we confess unto God our sins, is known unto all; so that the less learned multitude imagine that this only is meant by the word confession in the holy Scriptures; for when this word hath once been heard from the lips of the reader, immediately the pious sound of the beating of breasts followeth. But they ought to consider in what sense it is said in another Psalm: For I will enter into the place of the admirable tabernacle, even unto the house of God; in the voice of thanksgiving and confession; of the sound of them that keep holy day. For here it is surely clear, that the voice and sound of confession doth not relate to the sadness of penitence, but to the joyfulness of a crowded festivity. Or if any one still doubteth concerning so clear a testimony, what will he say to this passage in Ecclesiasticus: Bless the Lord, all His works, magnify His Name, and confess to His praise with the songs of your lips, and with harps, and in confession. Ye shall say after this manner: All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Here certainly the dullest person cannot doubt that confession meaneth the praises of God; unless indeed there is perversity so great in any man's mind, that he dare to say even that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself confessed His sins unto His Father. But if any ungodly person should attempt to make this objection on the ground of the word confession, he would easily be refuted by the context itself: for thus He speaketh: I confess unto Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight. Who would not understand Him to say this in praise of the Father? Who would not see that this confession doth not pertain to sorrowfulness of heart, but to joy;

especially since the Evangelist saith immediately before, In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I confess unto Thee, O Father.

2. Ver. 1. Wherefore, most beloved, since it is not on any ground to be questioned, with so many concurrent testimonies, the like of which ye may of yourselves remark in the Scriptures, that the word confession is used in the inspired writings, not only in the sense of sin, but in that of the praises of God; what more harmonious interpretation can we arrive at, than that we are taught in this Psalm, when we chaunt Allelujah, which meaneth, Praise the Lord, that we should, when we hear the words, Confess unto the Lord, praise the Lord? The praise of God could not be expressed in fewer words than these, For He is good. I see not what can be more solemn than this brevity, since goodness is so peculiarly the quality of God, that the Son of God Himself when addressed by some one as, Good Master, by one, namely, who beholding His flesh, and comprehending not the fulness of His divine nature, considered Him as man only, replied, Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. And what is this but to say, If thou wishest to call Me good, recognise Me as God? But since it is addressed, in revelation of things to come, to a people freed from all toil and wandering in pilgrimage, and from all admixture with the wicked, which freedom was given it through the grace of God, Who not only doth not evil for evil, but even returneth good for evil; it is most appropriately added, Because His mercy endureth for ever.

3. Ver. 2. Let Israel now confess that He is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever. (Ver. 3.) Let the house of Aaron now confess that His mercy endureth for ever. (Ver. 4.) Yea, let all now that fear the Lord confess that His mercy endureth for ever. Ye remember, I suppose, most beloved, what is the house of Israel, what is the house of Aaron, and that both are those that fear the Lord. For they are the little and the great, who have already in another Psalm been happily introduced into your hearts: in the number of whom all of us should rejoice that we are joined together, in His grace Who is good, and Whose mercy endureth for ever; since they were listened to who said, May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children; that the host of the Gentiles might be added to the Israelites who believed in Christ, of the number of whom are the Apostles our fathers,

for the exaltation of the perfect and the obedience of the little children; that all of us when made one in Christ, made one flock under one Shepherd, and the body of that Head, like one man, may say, I called upon the Lord in trouble, and the Lord heard me at large. The narrow straits of our tribulation are limited: but the large way whereby we pass along hath no end. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?

4. Ver. 6, 7. The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man doeth unto me. But are men, then, the only enemies that the Church hath? What is a man devoted to flesh and blood, save flesh and blood? But the Apostle saith, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the princes and rulers of the darkness of this world; that is, the rulers of the wicked, of those who love this world, and are therefore darkness; for we also were at one time darkness, but now are we light in the Lord. Against, he saith, spiritual wickedness in high places; that is, the devil and his angels; that devil whom elsewhere he calleth the prince of the power of the air. Hear therefore what followeth: (ver. 7.) The Lord is my helper: therefore shall I despise mine enemies. From what class soever my enemies may arise, whether from the number of evil men, or from the number of evil angels; in the Lord's help, unto Whom we chaunt the confession of praise, unto Whom we sing Allelujah, they shall be despised.

5. Ver. 8. But, when my enemies have been brought to contempt, let not my friend present himself unto me as a good man, so as to bid me repose my hope in himself: for It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man. Nor let any one, who may in a certain sense be styled a good angel, be regarded by myself as one in whom I ought to put my trust: for no one is good, save God alone; and when a man or an angel appear to aid us, when they do this of sincere affection, He doth it through them, Who made them good after their measure. (Ver. 9.) It is therefore better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes. For angels also are called princes, even as we read in Daniel, Michael, your prince.

6. Ver. 10, 11. All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side; but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. In the words, All nations compassed me round

about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them, he signifieth the toils and the victory of the Church; but, as if the question were asked how she could have overcome so great evils, he looketh back to the example, and declareth what she had first suffered in her Head, by adding what followeth, They kept me in on every side: and the words, All nations, are with reason not repeated here, because this was the act of the Jews alone. But in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them, because there that very religious nation, (which is the body of Christ, and in behalf of which was done all that was done in mortal form with immortal power, by that inward divinity, through the outward flesh,) suffered from persecutors, of whose race that flesh was assumed and hung upon the Cross.

7. Ver. 12. They came about me as bees do a hive, and burned up even as the fire among the thorns: and in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. Here then the order of the words corresponds with the order of events. For we rightly understand that our Lord Himself, the Head of the Church, was surrounded by persecutors, even as bees surround a hive. For the Holy Spirit is speaking with mystic subtlety of what was done by those who knew not what they did. For bees make honey in the hives: while our Lord's persecutors, unconscious as they were, rendered Him sweeter unto us even by His very Passion; so that we may taste and see how sweet is the Lord, Who died for our sins, and arose for our justification But what followeth, and burned up even as the fire among the thorns, is better understood of His Body, that is, of a people spread abroad, whom all nations compassed about, since it was gathered together from all nations. They burned up even as the fire among the thorns, when they consumed this sinful flesh, and the grievous piercings of this mortal life, in the flame of persecution. And, he saith, in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them: either because they themselves, that wickedness, which in them persecuted the righteous, having been extinguished, were joined with the people of Christ; or because the rest of them, who have at this time scorned the mercy of Him Who calleth them, will at the end feel the truth of Him Who judgeth them.

8. Ver. 13. I have been driven on like a heap of sand, so that I was falling, but the Lord upheld me. For though there were a great multitude of

believers, that might be compared to the countless sand, and brought into one communion as into one heap; yet what is man, save Thou be mindful of Him? He said not, the multitude of the Gentiles could not surpass the abundance of my host, but, the Lord, he saith, hath upheld me. The persecution of the Gentiles succeeded not in pushing forward, to its overthrow, the host of the faithful dwelling together in the unity of the faith; since they trusted in Him, Who would uphold both individuals and all collectively; because He could never have been wanting to them when they called upon Him.

9. Ver. 14. The Lord is my strength and my praise, and is become my salvation. Who then fall, when they are pushed, save they who choose to be their own strength and their own praise? For no man falleth in the contest, except he whose strength and praise faileth. He therefore whose strength and praise is the Lord, falleth no more than the Lord falleth. And for this reason He hath become their salvation; not that He hath become any thing which He was not before, but because they, when they believed on Him, became what they were not before, and then He began to be salvation unto them when turned towards Him, which He was not to them when turned away from Himself.

10. Ver. 15. The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous; where they who raged against their bodies thought there was the voice of sorrow and destruction. For they did not know the inward joy of the saints in their future hope. Whence the Apostle also saith, As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; and again, And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.

11. Ver. 16. The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass. What mighty things? saith he. The right hand of the Lord, he saith, hath exalted me. It is a mighty thing to exalt the humble, to deify the mortal, to bring perfection out of infirmity, glory from subjection, victory from suffering, to give help, to raise from trouble; that the true salvation of God might be laid open to the afflicted, and the salvation of men might remain of no avail to the persecutors. These are great things: but what art thou surprised at? hear what he repeateth. Man exalted not himself, man perfected not himself, man gave not himself the glory, man conquered not,

man was not salvation to himself: The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass.

12. Ver. 17. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. But they, while they were dealing havoc and death on every side, thought that the Church of Christ was dying. Behold, he now declareth the works of the Lord. Every where Christ is the glory of the blessed Martyrs. By being beaten He conquered those who struck Him; by being patient of torments, the tormentors; by loving, those who raged against Him.

13. Ver. 18. Nevertheless, let him point out to us, why the body of Christ, the holy Church, the people of adoption, suffered such indignities. The Lord, he saith, hath chastened and corrected me, but He hath not given me over unto death. Let not then the boastful wicked imagine that aught hath been permitted to their power: they would not have that power, were it not given them from above. Oft doth the father of a family command his sons to be corrected by the most worthless slaves; though he designeth the heritage for the former, fetters for the latter. What is that heritage? Is it of gold, or silver, or jewels, or farms, or pleasant estates? Consider how we enter into it: and learn what it is.

14. Ver. 19. Open me, he saith, the gates of righteousness. Behold, we have heard of the gates. What is within? That I may, he saith, go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord. This is the confession of praise full of wonder, even unto the house of God, in the voice of joy and confession of praise, among such as keep holiday: this is the everlasting bliss of the righteous, whereby they are blessed who dwell in the Lord's house, praising Him for evermore.

15. Ver. 20. But consider how the gates of righteousness are entered into. These are the gates of the Lord, he saith, the righteous shall enter into them. At least let no wicked man enter there, that Jerusalem which receiveth not one uncircumcised, where it is said, Without are dogs. Be it enough, that in my long pilgrimage I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar: and that, with them that were enemies unto peace I laboured for peace: I endured even unto the end the intercourse of the wicked, but these are the gates of the Lord: the righteous shall enter into them.

16. Ver. 21. I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. How often is that confession proved to be one of praise, that doth not point out wounds to the physician, but giveth thanks for the health it hath received. But the Physician Himself is the Salvation.

17. Ver. 22. But who is this Whom we speak of? The Stone which the builders rejected; for, It hath become the head Stone of the corner; to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body; circumcision, to wit, and uncircumcision.

18. Ver. 23. By the Lord was it made unto it: that is, it is made into the head stone of the corner by the Lord. For although He would not have become this, had He not suffered; yet He became not this through those from whom He suffered. For they who were building, refused Him: but in the edifice which the Lord was secretly raising, that was made the head stone of the corner which they rejected. And it is marvellous in our eyes: in the eyes of the inner man, in the eyes of those that believe, those that hope, those that love; not in the carnal eyes of those who, through scorning Him as if He were a man, rejected Him.

19. Ver. 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made. This man remembereth that he had said in former Psalms, Since He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live; making mention of his old days; whence he now saith, This is the day which the Lord hath made; that is, wherein He hath given me Salvation. This is the day whereof He said, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee; that is, a day wherein He, the Mediator, hath become the head Stone of the corner. Let us rejoice, therefore, and be glad in Him.

20. Ver. 25. Save me now, O Lord: prosper Thou well my way, O Lord. Because it is the day of Salvation, save me: because we, returning from a long pilgrimage, are separated from those who hated peace, with whom we were peaceful, and who, when we spoke to them, made war upon us without a cause; prosper well our way as we return, since Thou hast become our Way.

21. Ver. 26. Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord. Cursed, therefore, is he that cometh in his own name; as He saith in the Gospel; "I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." We have blessed you out of the house of God. I believe that these are the words of the great to the little, of those great ones, to wit, who in spirit commune with God the Word, Who is with God, as they may in this life; and yet temper their discourse for the sake of the little ones, so that they may sincerely say what the Apostle saith: For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us. They bless the little children from the inner house of the Lord, where that praise faileth not age after age: consider therefore what they proclaim from thence.

22. Ver. 27. God is the Lord, Who hath shewed us light. That Lord, Who came in the Lord's Name, Whom the builders refused, and Who became the head Stone of the corner, that Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, is God, He is equal with the Father, He hath shewed us light, that we might understand what we believed, and declare it to you who understand it not as yet, but already believe it. But that ye also may understand, Declare a holy day in full assemblies, even unto the horns of the altar; that is, even unto the inner house of God, from which we have blessed you, where are the high places of the altar. Declare a holy day, not in a slothful manner, but in full assemblies. For this is the voice of joyfulness among those that keep holy day, who walk in the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God. For if there be there the spiritual sacrifice, the everlasting sacrifice of praise, both the Priest is everlasting, and the peaceful mind of the righteous an everlasting altar. This we say more openly, brethren: whoever desire to understand God the Word, let not flesh suffice for them, because for their sakes the Word was made flesh, that they might be nourished with milk; nor let this holy day suffice on earth, in which that Lamb was slain: but let it be declared in the public paths, until, our minds being raised by God, we reach the inner Divinity of Him, Who hath deigned to vouchsafe to us, that we might be fed with milk, a human nature outwardly.

23. Ver. 29. And what shall we sing there, save His praises? What else shall we say there, save, Thou art my God, and I will confess unto Thee; Thou art

my God, and I will praise Thee. I will confess unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my Salvation. We will not say these things in loud words; but the love that abideth in Him of itself crieth out in these words, and these words are love itself. Thus, as he began with praise, so he endeth: (ver. 29.) Confess unto the Lord, for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever. With this the Psalm commenceth, with this it endeth; since, as from the commencement which we have left behind, so in the end, whither we are returning, there is not any thing that can more profitably please us, than the praise of God, and Allelujah evermore.

PSALM 119

Exposition

Preface.

I have expounded all the rest of the Psalms, which we know the Book of the Psalms containeth, which by the custom of the Church is styled the Psalter, partly by preaching among the people, partly by dictations, as well as I, by the Lord's help, was able: but I put off the 118th Psalm, as well on account of its well-known length, as on account of its depth being fathomable by few. And when my brethren deeply regretted that the exposition of this Psalm alone, as far as pertaineth to the Psalms of the same volume, was wanting to my works, and strongly pressed me to pay this debt, I yielded not to them, though they long entreated and solicited me; because as often as I began to reflect upon it, it always exceeded the utmost stretch of my powers. For in proportion as it seemeth more open, so much the more deep doth it appear to me; so that I cannot shew how deep it is. For in others, which are understood with difficulty, although the sense lie hid in obscurity, yet the obscurity itself appeareth; but in this, not even this is the case; since it is superficially such, that it seemeth not to need an expositor, but only a reader and listener. And now that at length I approach its interpretation, I am utterly ignorant what I can achieve in it: nevertheless, I hope that God will aid me with His Presence, that I may effect something. For thus He hath done in all those which, though at first they seemed to me difficult, and almost impracticable, I have succeeded in adequately expounding. But I decided to do this by means of sermons, which might be delivered among the people, such as the Greeks term *ὁμιλίας*. For this is, I think, more equitable, that the assemblies of the Church be not defrauded of the comprehension of this Psalm, by the singing of which, as much as by that of others, they are wont to be charmed. But let the preface end here: we must

now speak of the Psalm itself, to which we have thought it right to make this Preface.

Discourse I

1. Ver. 1. From its commencement, dearly beloved, doth this great Psalm exhort us unto bliss, which there is no one who desireth not. For who either can, or could, or ever will be found, who is unwilling to be blessed? What need therefore is there of exhortation unto that which the human mind of its own accord seeketh? For truly, he who exhorteth aims at this, that the will of him with whom he dealeth may be excited towards that on account of which the exhortation is employed. Why then are we exhorted to will that which we cannot but will; save because, though all desire bliss, yet most men know not by what means to attain to it? And therefore this is the lesson which he teacheth, who saith, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. As much as to say, I know what thou wishest, thou art seeking bliss: if then thou wouldest be blessed, be undefiled. For the former all desire, the latter fear: yet without it, what all wish cannot be attained. But where will any one be undefiled, save in the way? In what way, save in the law of the Lord? And on this account, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord, is not said superfluously, but is an exhortation necessary to our minds. For what good that is whereunto many are slothful, (that is, that they should walk undefiled in the way, which is the law of the Lord,) is thus shewn, when it is declared, that they who do this are blessed, so that on account of that which all wish, that may be done which most do not wish. For to be blessed is so great a good, that both good and bad men wish for it. Nor is it wonderful that good men are good on this account; but this is wonderful that wicked men are wicked, that they may be blessed. For whoever abandons himself to lusts, and is corrupted by luxury and debauchery, seeketh somewhat blissful in his wickedness, and thinketh himself miserable, when he attaineth not to the pleasure and joy of his lust, while he never hesitates to boast of his bliss, when he doth attain it. And whoever burneth with the flames of avarice, collecteth for this reason riches by every means he can, that he may be blessed; whoever desireth to shed the blood of his enemies, whoever seeketh dominion, whoever feedeth his cruelty by the

disasters of others, seeketh bliss in all his crimes. These then, wanderers, and seekers of a false bliss by true misery, are recalled to the way by these divine words, if they be listened to: Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord: as if he said, Whither are ye going? ye are perishing, and ye know it not. The road ye are traversing is not the road to where ye wish to go: for ye wish to be blessed; but those roads whereby ye run are miserable, and lead unto still greater misery. Seek not so great a good through evil means: if ye wish to reach that end, come hither, travel by this road. Ye who cannot abandon the wish for blessedness, abandon the wickedness of a perverse road. Ye are wearied with fruitless endeavours to reach what ye are polluted by attaining. But they are not blessed who are polluted with error, who walk in the perverse ways of the world; but, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord.

2. Ver. 2. Listen now to what he addeth: Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart. No other class of the blessed seemeth to me to be mentioned in these words, than that which has been already spoken of. For to examine into the testimonies of the Lord, and to seek Him with all the heart, this is to be undefiled in the way, this is to walk in the law of the Lord. He then goeth on to say, (ver. 3.) For they who do wickedness, shall not walk in His ways. If therefore they who walk in the way, that is, in the law of the Lord, are those who search His testimonies, and seek Him with all their heart; doubtless they who do wickedness, search not His testimonies. And yet we know that the workers of wickedness do search the testimonies of the Lord for this reason, that they prefer being learned to being righteous: we know that others also search the testimonies of the Lord, not because they are already living well, but that they may know how they ought to live. Such then do not as yet walk undefiled in the law of the Lord, and for this reason are not as yet blessed. How then are we to understand, Blessed are they that search His testimonies; since we see men search into His testimonies without being blessed, because they are not undefiled? For the Scribes and Pharisees, sitting in the seat of Moses, of whom the Lord saith, All that they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not; even they searched into the testimonies of the Lord, that they

might have good things to say, though they did evil things. But let us leave these men, for we shall be justly answered, that they do not search into the testimonies of the Lord. For they do not seek them themselves, but they seek somewhat else through them, that is, that they may be glorified by men, or enriched. This is not to search into the testimonies of God, not to love what they shew, and to refuse to go where they lead, that is, unto God. Or if they themselves search the testimonies of God, yet if they do so not that they may seek and find Him, but something else, from these testimonies; surely they do not seek Him with all their heart, which we thus see is added here not without a purpose. For the Spirit Who saith this, aware that many search His testimonies for the sake of some other object, not for that which is set before them, hath not only said, Blessed are they that search His testimonies, but hath added, and seek Him with their whole heart, as if teaching in what manner, or with what object, the testimonies of the Lord should be searched. Lastly, Wisdom itself speaking in the Book of Wisdom, saith, The wicked seek Me, but they find Me not; for they hate knowledge. And what else is this, save, they hate Me? They seek Me, He saith, and they who hate Me find Me not. In what sense then are they said to seek what they hate, save because they seek not this, but somewhat else there? For they desire not to be wise for the glory of God, but they wish to seem wise for the glory of men. For how do they not hate wisdom, which teacheth that what they love ought to be despised? Therefore, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that search His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart. For by searching His testimonies thus, that they may seek Him with their whole heart, they walk undefiled in the law of the Lord. Did he then, who said, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life, not search His testimonies, not seek Him? But how did he seek Him with his whole heart, to Whose counsel he preferred his own wealth, on hearing Whose counsel he went away very sorrowful? For the prophet Isaiah also saith, Seek the Lord; and when ye have found Him, let the ungodly man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

3. Both the ungodly and the unrighteous, then, seek the Lord, that when He is found, they may not be wicked and ungodly. How then are men already blessed, when they are searching His testimonies, and seeking Him, since

even the wicked and ungodly can do this? But that the wicked and ungodly are blessed, what wicked or ungodly man even can say? Through hope, then, are they blessed, as they are blessed who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake: not for what is present to them, as long as they suffer evils; but for what will be present, since the kingdom of heaven is theirs; and, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; not because they hunger and thirst, but for what followeth, for they shall be filled; and, Blessed are they that weep, not because they weep, but because they shall laugh. Therefore, Blessed are they that search His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart: not because they search and seek, but because they will find what they seek: for they seek with their whole heart, not negligently. If therefore they are blessed in hope, in hope perhaps also they are undefiled. For truly in this life, though we may walk in the law of the Lord, although we search His testimonies, and seek Him with our whole heart, yet, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But this must be more carefully enquired into. For the next words are, For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways. From which it may seem, that they who walk in the way of the Lord, that is, in the law of the Lord, by searching His testimonies, and seeking Him with their whole heart, may be already undefiled, that is, without sin, on account of the following words: For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways. But, Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, saith the blessed John; and he addeth, for sin is the transgression of the law. But this discourse must now be closed, nor ought so important a question to be contracted within a narrow space.

Discourse II

1. Ver. 3. It is written, and is read, and is true, in this Psalm, that They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways. But we must endeavour, with the help of God, in Whose hand are both we and our words, that what is rightly said, by not being rightly understood, may not confuse the reader or hearer. For we must beware, lest all the Saints, whose words these are, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; may either not be thought to walk in the ways of the Lord, since sin is wickedness, and they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways; or, because it is not

doubtful that they walk in the ways of the Lord, may be thought to have no sin, which is beyond doubt false. For it is not said, If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, merely for the sake of avoiding arrogance and pride. Otherwise it would not be added, And the truth is not in us; but it would be said, Humility is not in us: especially because the following words throw a clearer light on the meaning, and remove all the causes of doubt. For when the blessed John had said this, he added, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What doth the damnable pride of ungodliness say here, what doth it say in answer? For if the Saints refuse to say that they have no sin, for the sake of avoiding arrogance, and not of confessing the truth; what is it that they confess, that they may gain remission and cleansing? Is this also done, that arrogance may be avoided? How then can a true cleansing of sins be entreated, when the confession of them is false? Let then this grass-like self-exaltation of the proud, that deceiveth itself, be silenced, and dry up, which in the ears of men with a feigned humility declareth that it hath sin, but in its heart with ungodly pride denieth that it hath sin. For they who say this, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. But when they say this in the ears of men, they deceive not only themselves, but others also, with the perversity of their insane doctrine; but when they say this in their heart, there they deceive themselves, there truth is not in them; and thereby they deceive themselves in their own hearts, and in their own heart lose the light of truth. But let the holy family of Christ exclaim, producing fruit and increasing in the whole world, humbly true and truly humble; let them exclaim, I say, If we say, that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. As these words are spoken, so let them be felt. For then will humility be sincere, if it be not merely displayed upon the tongue; so that we may be, according to the Apostle, Not minding high things, but consenting with men of lowliness: he saith not, taking with them, but, consenting with them; which is not the part of the mouth, but of the heart. Hypocrite, if thou sayest that thou hast, though thou believest that thou hast not, sin: without, thou feignest humility; within, thou dost embrace vanity. Therefore both in thy mouth and in thy heart, thou hast not truth. What doth it profit thee that that seemeth to men to be humble, which

thou sayest, if God seeth that thy thoughts are high? Surely, if the divine oracle thus sounded in thy ears, Speak not high words; even thus, thou wouldest not be condemned unjustly, if thou shouldest speak proudly with thy tongue before men, and proudly with thy heart before God. But when thou art told, Be not high-minded, but fear; (for he speaketh not of words, but of the mind;) why art thou not humble within, where thou mindest? Is the mind puffed up with lofty thoughts, that the tongue may feign a false humility? Thou readest, or hearest, Be not high-minded, but fear: and thou art so far high-minded, that thou thinkest thou hast not sin; and for this reason, because thou wilt not fear, nothing remaineth for thee, save to be puffed with pride.

2. For why, thou askest, is it written, For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways? Do not then the Saints of the Lord walk in the paths of the Lord? If they walk, he saith, they do wickedness: if they do no wickedness, they have no sin: for sin is wickedness. Lord Jesus, rise to my assistance, and aid me, through the Apostle confessing, against the proud heretic. Behold, where is that man of Thine, who maketh himself empty, that he may be filled with Thee? Let us hear himself, my brethren; let us ask him concerning this question, if it pleaseth, nay, since it doth please you. Tell us, most blessed Paul, whether thou didst walk in the ways of the Lord, while thou wast still living in the flesh? He answereth: Why did I say, Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule? Why did I say, Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same footsteps? Why did I say, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight. What is a more certain way of the Lord, than that faith from which the righteous liveth? What other path was I traversing towards the regions above, when I said, This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? Lastly, in what other path had I run, when I said, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course? Let these answers suffice, whereby we have learnt that the Apostle Paul walked in the ways of the Lord, but let us ask another question also of him. Tell us, I beseech thee, O Apostle, since whilst thou still wast living in the flesh thou didst walk in the ways of the Lord; hadst thou sin, or wast

thou without sin? Let us hear whether he deceiveth himself, or whether he hath the same mind as the blessed John, his brother Apostle; since truth was in them. And here therefore he answereth; Have ye not read where I confess, saying, For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that do I? This also we have heard; we therefore now ask this, how didst thou walk in the ways of the Lord, if thou didst that evil, which thou didst hate; when the holy Psalm saith, They who do wickedness, walk not in the ways of the Lord? Hear him answering in the next sentence: If then I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Behold how they who walk in the ways of the Lord, do not commit sin, and nevertheless are not without sin; because they no longer work it themselves, but the sin which dwelleth in them.

3. Here some one will say, How did he do that evil which he wished not to do: how was it not he that did it, but the sin that dwelt in him? Meanwhile this question hath been now answered, and it hath sufficiently appeared by the authority of canonical Scripture, that it may be that men walking in the ways of the Lord, though they be not without sin, may not nevertheless themselves commit it. For they who do wickedness, that is, sin, since sin is wickedness, walk not in His ways. Yet in what way we may understand, how he did this on account of the body of this death, in which the law of sin dwelleth, and how he did it not himself on account of the ways of the Lord in which he walketh; we must explain in another discourse, since this must be closed.

Discourse III

1. Ver. 3. In the words of this Psalm, For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways, since sin is wickedness, as the Apostle John saith, a difficult question arose, viz. How could the saints in this life both be not without sin; since this is true, If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; and nevertheless walk in the ways of the Lord, which they who do wickedness do not walk in; which was solved in the words of the Apostle Paul, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For how is he without sin, in whom sin dwelleth? Yet he walketh in the ways of the Lord, which they who do wickedness walk not in; because it is no longer he himself that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in him. But this question has been

solved in such a way, that another more difficult arises. How can a man do what he himself doth not? For he saith both: What I would, that I do not; and, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Whence we ought to understand, that when the sin that dwelleth in us, worketh in us, that then we do not act ourselves; when our will by no means consenteth unto it, and even commandeth the members of the body, so that they may not obey its desires. For what doth sin work without our will, save illicit desires only? And if the assent of the will be denied them; some passion indeed is excited, but no effect is yielded to it. This the same Apostle enjoined, when he said, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. There are therefore desires of sin, which he forbade us to obey. These desires therefore work sin; which if we obey, we also work sin: but if we obey the Apostle and do not obey them, it is not we who do the sin, but the sin that dwelleth in us. But if we had no unlawful desires, neither we, nor sin could work any evil in us. Moreover, we are said to be agents in the motion of an unlawful desire, by not obeying which we are not ourselves the authors of it, for this reason, that it is not the power of another's nature, but the weakness of our own; from which weakness we shall be altogether safe, when we shall have become immortal both in mind and body. Wherefore, on the one hand, because we walk in the ways of the Lord, we obey not the desires of sin; and, on the other hand, because we are not without sin, we have the desires of sin. And for this reason we no longer ourselves act in them, by not obeying them; but, the sin dwelleth in us, by stirring them up. For they who do wickedness, that is, obey the desires of sin, walk not in the ways of the Lord.

2. We have now to enquire what we pray to be forgiven us, when we say to God, Forgive us our trespasses: whether the sins we commit, when we obey the desires of sin; or whether we pray that the desires themselves may be forgiven us, which are not our own work, but that of the sin which dwelleth in us. As far indeed as I can understand, the whole guilt of that our sickness and weakness, whence unlawful desires spring, which the Apostle calleth sin, is washed away by the Sacrament of Baptism, together with all that we have done, said, thought, in obedience to it; nor would that sickness be imputed to us again, though it were in us, if we never yielded any obedience

to any of its unlawful suggestions, whether by deed, word, or silent consent; until even this itself were healed, when that should be fulfilled which we pray for, whether in the words, Thy kingdom come; or in these, Deliver us from evil; but, since the life of man on earth is temptation; although we be far from actual crimes, yet there is no want of occasions when we yield to the desires of sin, either in deed, word, or thought, since when we are watching against greater temptations, certain minute ones creep upon us while we are off our guard, which if they be gathered together against us, though they do not singly crush us with their own weight, yet all together overwhelm us in the heap. And for these reasons, even those who walk in the ways of the Lord, say, Forgive us our debts: since both prayer itself and confession pertain to the ways of the Lord; although sins pertain not to them.

3. In the ways of the Lord then, all of which our faith doth embrace, whereby we believe in Him, Who justifieth the ungodly, Who also said, I am the way; no man doth work sin, but confesseth it. He departs from the way then, when he sinneth; and therefore the sin which is committed by a deviation from the way, is not ascribed to the way; but in the way of faith they are held not to be sinners, unto whom sins are not imputed. Concerning whom the Apostle Paul, commending the righteousness of faith, hath shewn that it is written in the Psalms, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. This the ways of the Lord give; and through this, since the righteous liveth by faith, that iniquity, which is unbelief, doth estrange from the way of the Lord. But in this path, that is, in pious faith, whosoever walketh, either doth no sin, or if any is committed by his deviating from the way, it is not imputed to him on account of the way, and he is accepted as if he had not committed sin. And therefore the words, They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways, are well understood to signify that wickedness, which departeth from faith, or which doth not advance to faith. For as the Lord saith of the Jews, If I had not come, they had not had sin; nor were they without any sin, before Christ came in the flesh, and, since He came, then began to have sin; but He would have some particular sin, that is, of unbelief, to be understood, since they did not believe in Him: thus they who do wickedness, not any wickedness in general, but that of unbelief

in particular, walk not in His ways; for, All the the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth; but both are in Christ, and besides Christ they exist no where. Now I say, that Christ, saith the Apostle, was a minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. Mercy in that He redeemed us; truth in this, that He fulfilled what He promised, and will fulfil what He promiseth. They then who do wickedness, that is, are unbelievers, walk not in His ways; because they have not believed in Christ. Let them therefore be converted, and piously believe in Him Who justifieth the ungodly, and let them find in Him mercy when their sins are pardoned, and truth when His promises are completed, that is, all the ways of the Lord, walking in which they will not do wickedness; because they will not hold to unbelief, but to faith which worketh by love, and to which sin is not imputed.

Discourse IV

1. Ver. 4. Who is it, most beloved, who saith to the Lord, Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much? (Ver. 5.) O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes. (Ver. 6.) So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. Who is he Who saith this, save every member of Christ, or rather the whole body of Christ? And what meaneth, Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much? is it, Thou hast charged too much? or, to keep too much? Whichever of these we understand, the sense seems contrary to that memorable and noble sentiment which the Greeks praise in their wise men, and which the Latins agree in praising. ‘Do nothing too much?’ For if it be true, that nothing be done too much; how is that true which is here said, Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much? since how could God either charge any thing too much, or wish any thing to be kept too much, if all that was too much was worthy of blame? We should therefore say, that we are not bound by any authority of the Greek writers, considering what is written, Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? and should rather believe that sentiment to be false, whereby it is said, ‘Do nothing too much?’ than the divine words, where we read and sing, Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much;

unless, not Greek vanity, but true reason recalled us. For that is said to be, too much, which is more than it ought to be. For too little and too much are contrary to one another. For too little is, what is less than it ought to be; and too much, more than it ought to be. There is a measure between these, which is called enough. As therefore it is useful in life and morals, that we should do nothing more than we ought; we ought indeed rather to confess the sentiment, ‘Do nothing too much,’ to be true, than to deny it. But the Latin language sometimes uses this word “nimis” in such a sense, that we find it in the holy Scripture, and employ it in our discourses, as signifying, very much. In this passage, Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much, we simply understand very much, if we understand rightly; and if we say to any very dear friend, I love you too much, we do not wish to be understood to mean more than is fitting, but very much. Lastly, this Greek sentiment does not contain a word answering to that which is here read: for there, ἄγαν is used, which is nimis; but here σφόδρα, which is equivalent to valdè, very much. But sometimes, as we have said, we find nimis used, and use it ourselves, for what means valdè, whence some Latin copies have not, Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much, but very much. Very much therefore hath God charged this: and very much ought the commandments of God to be kept.

2. Ver. 5. But listen to what pious humility or humble piety, and faith not unmindful of grace, addeth, O that, he saith, my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes. Thou indeed hast charged: O that I could realize what Thou hast charged. When thou hearest, O that, recognise the words of one wishing; and having recognised the expression of a wish, lay aside the pride of presumption. For who saith that he desireth what he hath in such a manner in his power, that without need of any help he can do it? Therefore if man desireth what God chargeth, God must be prayed to grant Himself what He enjoineth. For from whom must it be desired, save from Him, from that Father of lights, from Whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down, by the testimony of holy Scripture? But on account of those who think that we are helped from heaven by this means alone to works of righteousness, because the commandments of God are brought to our knowledge, that these when known, without any grace of God, may be fulfilled solely by the strength of our own will; he doth not

here wish his ways directed to keep the statutes of God, until he hath received His commandment from His own injunction. For what he said before pertaineth unto this, Thou hast charged that we should diligently keep Thy commandments. As if he should say, I have already received Thy law, I know it; for Thou hast charged that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments: and Thy commandments are holy, righteous, and good; but sin worketh death to me by that which is good, unless Thy grace aid me. O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes!

3. Ver. 6. So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. We ought to look upon the commandments of God, whether when they are read, or when they are recalled to memory, as a looking glass, as the Apostle James saith, If any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. This man wisheth himself to be such, that he may regard as in a looking glass the commandments of God, and may not be confounded; because he chooses not merely to be a hearer of them, but a doer. On this account he desireth that his ways may be made direct to keep the statutes of God. How to be made direct, save by the grace of God? Otherwise he will find in the law of God not a source of rejoicing, but of confusion, if he hath chosen to look into commandments, which he doth not.

4. Ver. 7. I will confess unto Thee, he saith, O Lord, in the directing of my heart; in that I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness. This is not the confession of sins, but of praise; as He also saith in Whom there was no sin, I will confess unto Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth; and as it is written in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, Thus shalt thou say in confession, of all the works of God, that they are very good. I will confess unto Thee, he saith, in the directing of my heart. Indeed, if my ways are made straight, I will confess unto Thee, since Thou hast done it, and this is Thy praise, and not mine. Then indeed I will confess, when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness, if I shall have a heart made

straight, when my ways are made straight so that I may keep Thy statutes. For what will it profit me, if I shall have learnt them, if I in my wicked heart go away to evil ways? For I shall not rejoice in them, but I shall be accused by them.

5. Ver. 8. Next he addeth; I will keep Thy ordinances. All which things are connected with those words, O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. And I will confess unto Thee in the directing of my heart, and I will keep Thy ordinances. But what is it that followeth? O forsake me not even exceedingly! or, as some copies have it, even too much, instead of, even exceedingly. For the same Greek word is here too, namely, σφόδρα: as though he wished himself to be forsaken of God, but not even exceedingly. Far be it! But since God had left the world to the desert of sins, He would have forsaken it even exceedingly, if so powerful a cure had not supported it, that is, the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; but now, according to this prayer of the body of Christ, He forsook it not even exceedingly; for, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. It may also be understood, as the words of him, who when he had said in his abundance, I shall never be removed, as if relying in his own might, that God might shew him that He had given power to his excellency not from merits of his own, but of His will, found the face of God turned from him, and was troubled. Finding therefore what he was, and no longer presuming in himself, he crieth, O forsake me not even exceedingly. For if Thou hast forsaken me, so that I am seen to be weak without Thy help, forsake me not even exceedingly, lest I perish. Thou, then, hast charged, that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments: I can no longer excuse myself on the ground of ignorance; but since I am weak, O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. Then will I confess unto Thee in the directing of my heart; when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness; then will I keep Thy ordinances; and if Thou hast forsaken me, lest I should glory in myself, do not forsake me even exceedingly, and when justified by Thee, I will glory in Thee.

Discourse V

1. Ver. 9. Let us, most beloved, consider these verses in this Psalm, and, as the Lord giveth, let us search into His sacred Book: Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? even by keeping Thy words. He questioneth himself, and answereth himself. Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? So far it is a question: next cometh the answer, even by keeping Thy words. But in this place the keeping of the words of God, must be understood as the obeying His commandments in deed: for they are kept in memory in vain, if they are not kept in life also. For some men in keeping the words of God are concerned only to avoid forgetting them, and not to correct themselves in life: but this man saith not, wherewithal shall the young man exercise his memory? but, wherewithal shall a young man correct his ways? and replieth thereto, By keeping Thy words. Nor can the way ever be called straight, as long as the life shall be crooked.

2. But what is meant by young man here? For he might have said, wherewithal shall any one (homo) correct his way? or, wherewithal shall a man (vir) correct his way? which is usually put by the Scriptures in such a way, that the whole human race, understood by the more honoured sex, by a mode of expression wherein the whole is signified by a part. For we cannot but suppose that a woman is blessed, who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly; where nevertheless the words are, Blessed is the man. But in this passage he saith neither any one, nor a man, but, a young man. Is then an old man to be despaired of? or doth an old man correct his way by any other means than by ruling himself after God's word? Or is it perhaps an admonition at what age we ought chiefly to correct our way; according to what is elsewhere written, My son, gather instruction from thy youth up: so shalt thou find wisdom till thy gray hairs. There is another mode of interpreting it, by recognising in the expression the younger son in the Gospel, who having departed from his father to a distant region, spent his substance in riotous living with harlots; and after he had fed swine, suffering poverty and hunger, at length returned to himself, and said, I will arise and go to my father. Wherewithal did he correct his way, save by ruling himself after the words of God, which he desired as one longing for his father's bread. For his elder brother, who said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time Thy commandment, corrected not his way. The younger son then corrected his

way, which he confessed that he had so depraved and perverted, that he said to his father, I am no longer worthy to be called thy son. A third interpretation occurreth to me, which I indeed, according to the slight measure of my knowledge, prefer to the two former: by which the elder is understood to mean the old man; the young man, to mean the new man; the elder, who beareth the image of the earthly man; the younger, who beareth that of the heavenly: because that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. However decrepit therefore any man may be from old age of body, he will be young in the sight of God when converted by the newness of grace, which he hath received; and herein he correcteth his way, by keeping God's words, that is, the word of faith which we preach, and this is the faith which worketh through love.

3. Ver. 10. But this younger people, the child of grace, the new man, who singeth the new song, the heir of the new covenant, this younger people, not Cain, but Abel; not Ishmael, but Isaac; not Esau, but Israel; not Manasses, but Ephraim; not Heli, but Samuel; not Saul, but David; hear what it addeth, With my whole heart, he saith, have I sought thee; O repel me not from Thy commandments. Behold, he prayeth that he may be aided to keep the words of God, wherewith he had said that the young man corrected his way. For this is the meaning of the words, O repel me not from Thy commandments: for what is it to be repelled of God, save not to be aided? For human infirmity is not equal to obeying His righteous and exalted commandments, unless His love doth prevent and aid. But those whom He aideth not, these He is justly said to repel, as the unworthy are repelled by a flaming sword from stretching forth their hand to the tree of life. But who is worthy, since sin entered into the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus passed into all men, since all have sinned? But our deserved misery is healed by the undeserved mercy of God. For how could he who saith, With my whole heart have I sought Thee, do this, unless He unto whom it is said, Wilt Thou not turn again and quicken us, turned him unto Himself when he was turned away, and unless He who saith, I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, sought him when lost, and recalled him when wandering?

4. Ver. 11, 12. Hence it is too that he correcteth his path by keeping the words of God, from Him ruling, Him working; for he could not do it by himself, since the prophet Jeremiah confesseth and saith, O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. For the Psalmist also desired this of the Lord above, where he saith, O that my ways were made so direct: and here where he addeth, (ver. 11.) Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee; he at once sought the Divine aid, lest the words of God might be hidden without fruit in his heart, unless works of righteousness followed. For after saying this, he added, Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy righteousnesses. Teach me, he saith, as they learn who do them; not as they who merely remember them, that they may have somewhat to speak of. For he had already said, Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee: why then doth he still seek to learn those things which he already keepeth hidden within his heart? which he surely would not have done, had he not learnt them. Why then doth he add, and say, Teach me Thy righteousnesses, save because he wisheth to learn them by deeds, not by speaking or retaining them in his memory? Since then, as it is read in another Psalm, He shall give blessing, Who gave the law; therefore, Blessed art Thou, O Lord, he saith, O teach me Thy righteousness. For because I have hidden Thy words in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee, Thou hast given a law; give also the blessing of Thy grace, that by doing right I may learn what Thou by teaching hast commanded. Let this suffice, so that your minds may be nourished without being wearied. What followeth calls for another discourse.

Discourse VI

1. Ver. 13. This verse, With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth, is the commencement of our discourse in the Psalm on which we are commenting. What is this, most beloved? What is this? Who can tell all the judgments of God, since he cannot trace them? Do we hesitate to exclaim with the Apostle, O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! The Lord saith, I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And though He promised them at

once all truth through the Holy Ghost; yet the blessed Paul crieth out, we know in part: so that we may understand that we are led unto all truth by the Holy Ghost, whence we have received a pledge: but we shall only know Him, when we have reached another life, after the looking glass and darkness of this life, and when we shall see face to face. How then doth he say, With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth? And it is he who saith this, who in a former verse a little before had said, Teach me Thy righteousnesses. How then could he, who still wisheth to learn His righteousness, tell of all the judgments of His mouth? Did he already know all His judgments, and did he yet long to know His righteousness? But this is still more wonderful, if he already knew the unsearchable things of God, and yet knew not what He enjoined upon men to do. For by His righteousness is meant not the words, but the deeds, of justice; the works, that is, of the righteous, which God commandeth. They are said to be God's deeds, although they are done by us, because they are not done, save by His gifts. Those also are God's judgments, whereby the world is judged by Him both now and at the end of the world. But since all, that is, both the righteousnesses and the judgments of God are comprised in His works; why doth he who saith that he hath hidden the words of God in his heart, still seek to learn His righteousnesses? For he saith, Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I should not sin against Thee: and then goeth on to say, Blessed art Thou, O Lord: O teach me Thy righteousnesses; and next, With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth. These two things indeed do not seem opposed to each other, but rather kindred and connected; viz. that since he hath hidden the words of God in his heart, he may tell with his lips of His judgments; for, with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation: but how what is read between these two verses, Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy righteousnesses, suiteth a man in whose heart are the words of God, and who told with his lips all the judgments of God: how it agreeth with this, that he still wisheth to learn the righteousnesses of God, save that he may be understood to wish to learn them by acts, not by retaining them in his memory, and speaking of them; and he hath shewn that we ought to seek this of the Lord, without Whom we can do nothing. But this we have already treated of in another discourse: but we have undertaken, as far as the Lord alloweth, to treat the question, in

what sense he hath said that he hath told all the judgments of God with his lips, though they have been styled unsearchable, and though it is elsewhere said of their depth, Thy judgments are like the great deep.

2. Consider now, what we ought to understand here. Doth not the Church know the judgments of God? Surely she knoweth them. For she knoweth unto what sort of persons the Judge of the quick and the dead will say, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom: and unto what sort of persons He shall say, Depart into everlasting fire. She knoweth, I say, that neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor such and such whom the Apostle Paul here enumerateth, shall inherit the kingdom of God: she knoweth that wrath and indignation, tribulation and distress, are in store for the soul of every man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. These and the like clearly revealed judgments of God the Church knoweth: but these are not all; since some are unsearchable, and, like the great deep, profound and hidden. And are these also known to some of the more excellent members of this man, who with the Saviour, the Head, is the whole Christ? For they are perhaps said to be unsearchable to man, because by his own strength he cannot investigate them. But why can he not by the gift of the Holy Spirit, he, that is, upon whom the Lord deigneth to confer this gift? For thus it is said, God dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto; and yet we hear, Come unto Him, and be enlightened. This question is thus answered, He is unapproachable to our strength, but we may approach Him through His own gifts. Nevertheless, although it is given to none of the Saints, as long as the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, to know all the judgments of God, since it is too much for man, because (to give an illustration whereby the infinitude of God's judgments may be conjectured) no man without the judgment of God is slow in mind, or halt in body: yet the Church, that is the purchased people, hath ground for saying, and truly saying, with my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth; that is, I have kept silent nothing of Thy judgments, which Thou didst will should become known to me through Thy words, but I have been telling of all of them without exception with my lips. This he seemeth to me to signify, since he saith not, all Thy judgments, but, all the judgments of Thy mouth; that is, which Thou hast

revealed unto me: that by His mouth we may understand His word, which He hath discovered unto us in many revelations of the Saints, and in the two Testaments; all which judgments the Church ceaseth not to declare at all times with her lips.

3. Ver. 14. He then subjoineth, I have had as great delight in the way of Thy testimonies, as in all manner of riches. We understand that there is no more speedy, no more sure, no shorter, no higher way of the testimonies of God than Christ, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Thence he saith that he hath had as great delight in this way, as in all riches. Those are the testimonies, by which He deigneth to prove unto us how much He loveth us. But God commendeth His love in us, since while we yet were sinners, Christ died for us. Since therefore He Himself saith, I am the way, and the humility of His carnal Birth and Passion are evident testimonies of the divine love towards us; beyond doubt Christ is the way of the testimonies of God. For through these testimonies, which we see fulfilled in Him, we expect and trust that the everlasting promises of the future will be fulfilled. For He Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things?

4. Ver. 15, 16. I will talk of Thy commandments, and have respect unto Thy ways. The Greek word is, ὁδολεσχῆσω, which the Latin translators have rendered sometimes by talking, sometimes by being exercised in: and these seem different from one another: but if the exercise of the understanding be understood, with a certain delight in uttering, they are connected with one another, and one thing, in a manner, is made up of both, so that talking is not foreign to this sort of exercise. And thus the Church doth exercise herself in the commandments of God, by speaking in the copious disputations of the learned against all the enemies of the Christian and Catholic faith; which are fruitful to those who compose them, if nothing but the ways of the Lord is regarded in them; but All the ways of the Lord are, as it is written, mercy and truth; the fulness of which both is found in Christ. Through this sweet exercise is gained also what he subjoineth: My meditation shall be in Thy statutes, and I will not forget Thy word.—My meditation shall be therein, that I may not forget them. Thus the blessed man in the first Psalm shall meditate in the law of the Lord day and night.

5. In all that I have above said, as I could, let us remember, most beloved, that he who hideth in his heart the words of the Lord, and telleth with his lips all the judgments of His mouth, and in the way of His testimonies taketh as much delight as in all manner of riches, and talking or exercising himself in His commandments, hath respect unto His ways, and doth meditate on His statutes, that he may not forget His words, through all which things he appeareth armed with the law and learning of God; yet prayeth and saith, Blessed art Thou, O Lord: O teach me Thy statutes. Where he is understood to ask nothing else, save the aid of grace, that he may learn in deeds what he already knoweth in words.

Discourse VII

1. Ver. 17. If, most beloved, ye remember the former parts of this Psalm, they ought to help us to understand what followeth. For those which seemingly speak in the person of an individual, are the members of Christ, and pertain to one Head as one body. He had said above, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? Even by keeping Thy words. Behold he now more openly asketh aid that he may do this: Reward, he saith, Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. If he asked that good might be rewarded him for good deeds, he had already kept God's words. But he said not, Reward Thy servant, because I have kept Thy words: as if he were demanding a recompense of good for the good of obedience: but he said, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. And what is this, but to declare the dead incapable of keeping God's words? that is, the unbelieving of whom it is said, Suffer the dead to bury their dead. If therefore we understand the unbelieving by the dead, and believers by the living: since the righteous liveth by faith, and the word of God cannot be kept without faith, which worketh by love; it is this that he asketh who saith, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. And since before faith nought save evil for evil is due unto man, and as God, through grace which is not due, rewardeth good for evil; it is this reward that he asketh, who saith, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. For there are four modes of reward: either evil for evil, as God will reward everlasting fire to the unrighteous: or good for good, as He will reward an everlasting kingdom to the righteous: or good for evil, as Christ by grace

justifieth the ungodly; or evil for good, as Judas and the Jews through their wickedness persecuted Christ. Of these four modes of reward, the first two belong to justice, whereby evil is rewarded for evil, good for good; the third to mercy, whereby good is rewarded for evil: the fourth God knoweth not; for to none doth He reward evil for good. But that which I have placed third in order, is in the first instance necessary: for unless God rewarded good for evil, there would be none to whom He could reward good for good.

2. Consider that Saul, afterwards Paul: Not by works of righteousness, he saith, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration. And again: I who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And again: Yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful: that is, to live; for the righteous liveth by faith. He was therefore dead formerly owing to his own unrighteousness, before he lived through the grace of God. Moreover he thus confesseth his own death: When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. God therefore rewardeth unto him good for evil, that is, life for death; such a reward, in fact, as is here asked for, where it is said, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. He both lived, and kept His word, and began to belong to another reward, wherein good is rewarded for good: on account of which he saith, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. Righteous truly, in rewarding good for good: for He was merciful in the former case, in rewarding good for evil. Although justice itself, whereby good things are rewarded for good, is not separate from mercy: for thus it is written, Who crowneth thee with compassion and mercy. For he who said, I have fought a good fight, how could he conquer, save by the gift of Him of Whom he saith, Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. And he who finished his course, how could he run, how could he reach the goal, save by the aid of Him of Whom he saith, It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. And he who kept the faith, how could he do this, unless, as he himself saith, he had obtained mercy that he might be faithful.

3. No where then let human pride raise itself up: God giveth good rewards unto His own gifts. But this man who now prayeth, saying, Reward Thy servant: let me live; if he were entirely dead, would not pray: but from Him he received the beginning of a good desire, from Whom he asketh the life of obedience. For they who said, Lord, increase our faith, had some faith. But he who, when he was questioned whether he believed, said, I believe, Lord, help Thou mine unbelief: confessed his own want of faith, and yet did not deny his faith. He then, who when he believeth prayeth for obedience, now beginning to live prayeth for life: not for a reward for having preserved it, but for help that it may be preserved. For he who is renewed day by day, is quickened with increasing life every day.

4. Ver. 18. But, knowing that the words of God cannot be kept through obedience, unless they be seen by understanding, this also he addeth to his prayer, and saith, Open Thou mine eyes, and I will consider wondrous things of Thy law. What he addeth, (Ver. 19.) I am a lodger upon earth: or, as some copies read, I am a sojourner upon earth, O hide not Thy commandments from me, hath the same meaning; for what he said before, in, open Thou mine eyes; the same he said afterwards, in, hide not from me: Also what he said there, in, wonderful things of Thy law, the same he repeats in other words, Thy commandments. But there is nothing more wonderful in the commandments of God, than, Love your enemies; that is, reward good for evil. But my discourse respecting this pilgrimage must not be narrowed: and therefore we must not now treat of the subject, but hope to do so in another discourse, which we shall deliver to you with the Lord's help.

Discourse VIII

1. Ver. 19. I must now answer your expectations, beloved brethren, by discoursing on the sequel of this long Psalm, beginning with the verse, I am a sojourner upon earth; O hide not Thy commandments from me! or, as some copies read, I am a lodger upon earth. For the Greek word *πάροικος* is variously rendered by our translators, incola, inquilinus, or advena. Lodgers (inquilini) who have no house of their own, dwell in another man's; but sojourners (incolæ), or strangers (advenæ), are spoken of as foreigners (adventitii). Here an important question ariseth respecting the soul. For the

words, I am a sojourner, or lodger, or stranger upon earth, cannot seem to have been said in reference to the body, since the body derives its origin from the earth. But in this most profound question I dare not define any thing. For if it might justly have been said in respect of the soul, (which God forbid we should suppose derived from the earth,) I am a lodger, or stranger upon earth; or in reference to the whole man, since he was at one time an inhabitant of Paradise, where he who spake these words was not; or, what is more free from all controversy, if it be not every man who could say this, but one to whom an everlasting country hath been promised in heaven: this I know, that the life of man on earth is a temptation; and that there is a heavy yoke upon the sons of Adam. But it pleaseth me more to discuss the question in accordance with this construction, that we say we are tenants or strangers upon earth, because we have found our country above, whence we have received a pledge, and where when we have arrived we shall never depart. For he also who in another Psalm saith, I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were; saith not, as all men: but by saying, as all my fathers, beyond doubt intends the righteous to be understood, who preceded him in time, and in this pilgrimage sighed with pious groans for their country above. Concerning whom it is written to the Hebrews, These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city. And these words, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, may be understood here not to refer to all men, but to the believing: for all men have not faith: and we see what the Apostle addeth to these words; for, after saying, As long as we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; he saith, for we walk by faith, not by sight: that we might understand that this pilgrimage belongs to those, who walk by faith. But the unbelieving, whom God hath not foreknown, or predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, cannot truly call themselves strangers upon earth, since they are there where they were born after the flesh: for they have not a city elsewhere; and for this

reason they are not aliens on the earth, but natives of the earth. Whence another passage of Scripture saith of some one, He hath made his home with death, and his chariot he hath set in hell with the earth-born. But these very persons are aliens and sojourners, not in respect of this earth, but of the people of God, from which they are estranged. Whence the Apostle saith to them that believe, and are beginning to possess a holy city, which is not of this world: Now therefore ye are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. These then are citizens of the earth, who are strangers to the people of God; while they who are citizens in the people of God, are strangers upon earth; because the whole of the same people, as long as it is in the body, is sojourning away from the Lord. Let it therefore say, I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me.

2. But who are they from whom God hideth His commandments? Hath not God willed that they be every where preached? Would that they were dear to many, as they are clear to many! For what is clearer than this, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour even as thyself? On which two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. And who is he from whom these commandments are hid? For they are known to all believers, and to many unbelievers. Why then doth the believer pray, that that may not be hidden from him which he seeth not to be hidden even from the unbeliever? Because it is difficult to know God, doth it follow then that it must be difficult to understand the words, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, lest one thing be loved in place of another? For it seemeth easier to know one's neighbour. For every man is every man's neighbour, nor is any distance of race to be thought of, where there is a common nature. Although he who said to the Lord, And who is my neighbour? knew not even his neighbour. A certain man was then set before him, who while going from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers: whose neighbour the very person who had asked judged no man to have been, save him who shewed him pity; and it was clearly shewn, that in doing an act of mercy, none should be held a stranger by him who loveth his neighbour. But many know not even themselves; because to know one's self, as a man ought to know himself, is not all men's lot. How then can he, who knoweth not himself, love his

neighbour as himself? It was not, then, without reason that the younger son, who departed into a far country, and there squandered his substance by riotous living, in order that he might say, I will arise and go to my father, first came to himself, but because he had wandered so far, that he had lost even himself. Yet he could not return to himself, if he were utterly ignorant of himself; nor could he say, I will arise, and go to my father, if he were utterly ignorant of God. Wherefore to some extent these things are known, and are not undeservedly the subject of petitions that they may be even better known. Wherefore in order that we may know how to love God, God must be known; and that a man may know how to love his neighbour as himself, he first ought through loving God to love himself: and how can he do this, if he knoweth not God, if he knoweth not even himself? Rightly then is it said unto God, I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me! For justly they are hidden unto those who are not strangers upon earth: for although they hear these commandments, they savour not of them; because they savour of earthly things. But those whose conversation is in heaven, as far as they converse here, are in truth strangers. Let them pray therefore that the commandments of God may not be hidden from them, whereby they may be freed from this temporary sojourn, by loving God, with Whom they will be for evermore; and by loving their neighbour, that he may be there where they also themselves will be.

3. Ver. 20. But what is loved by loving, if love itself be not loved? Whence by consequence that stranger upon earth, after praying that the commandments of God might not be hidden from him, wherein love is enjoined either solely or principally; declareth that he desireth to have a love for love itself, saying, My soul hath coveted to have a desire alway after Thy judgments. This coveting is worthy of praise, not of condemnation. It is not of this that it is said, Thou shalt not covet; but of that whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit. But seek where it is written of this good coveting whereby the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and thou wilt find, Therefore the coveting of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom; and many other testimonies are found of a good coveting. But there is this difference, that the object of the coveting is mentioned when a good coveting is spoken of: but when the object of the coveting is not subjoined,

but the coveting alone mentioned, none but an evil passion is meant. As in the passage just quoted, if he had not added the word wisdom, he could not say, Coveting bringeth to a kingdom. But the Apostle, in the words, I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: added not the object of the lust, or what thou art not to covet; for it is certain that by this expression none save an evil coveting is understood. What then did this man's soul covet? to have a desire, he saith, after Thy judgments alway. I conclude he did not desire them as yet, when he coveted to desire them. But by judgments are meant righteous deeds, that is, works of righteousness. Since then he who already desireth them, hath them not as yet, how far from them was he who as yet coveted to desire them? and how much farther are they who do not even covet to desire them?

4. But it is wonderful how a desire can be coveted without that desire being in us, the coveting of which is in us. For it is not some beautiful substance, as gold, or a beautiful person, which a man may long for without having, because it is situate without, not in the man. Who knoweth not that coveting is, and that desire is, in a man? Why then is its possession coveted after, as though it were brought in from without? Or how can the coveting of it be felt without itself, since it is even itself nothing but a coveting? For to desire is beyond doubt to covet. What is this wonderful and inexplicable infirmity? Yet it doth exist. For the sick man who laboureth from loathing of food, and wisheth to escape this evil, coveteth to have a desire for food, while he coveteth not to have loathing; but this loathing is a disease of the body. Whereas that longing whereby he longeth to desire food, that is, to be free from his loathing, is in the mind, not in the body; and it is not the delight of the gullet and the palate that inspires it, for that is impeded by the loss of appetite: but the hope of recovering health, whereby it is foreseen that the loathing will be remedied. And in this case we need not wonder if the mind desire that the body may desire, since the mind desires here, without the body desiring. But when both acts belong to the mind, and when both are acts of coveting, why do I covet a desire of the judgments of God? How is it that in one and the same mind of mine I have the coveting of this desire, and have not the desire itself? or how is it that there are two acts and not one? How is it that I long to desire these judgments, and that I do not rather covet the judgments themselves than the desire of them? or

how can I covet a desire of these judgments, and yet not covet the judgments themselves; since I long for the desire of them, for this reason, that I desire to have them themselves? And if this be so, I already long for them. What need then that I should covet the desire of them, since I already have, and am aware that I have it? For I could not covet the desire of righteousness, save coveting righteousness? Is this what I said above, that the love itself whereby that is loved, which is a right object of love, should be loved? For we detest that coveting of ours whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit; and what is this coveting, save an evil love? And we love that coveting of ours, whereby the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and what is that coveting, save a righteous love? And when it is said, it must be loved; what else is said than this, it should be coveted? Wherefore, since the judgments of God are rightly coveted, the coveting of the judgments of God is rightly longed for. For this may be otherwise expressed; if the judgments of God are rightly loved, the love of the judgments of God is rightly loved. Is it one thing to covet, another to desire? Not that coveting is not desire, but because not all coveting is desire. For both things which are possessed, and things which are not possessed, are coveted; for by coveting them, a man enjoyeth the things that he hath; but by desiring them, he coveteth things absent. What then is desire, save the coveting things absent? But how can the judgments of God be absent, save when they are not known? And when they are known, and are not practised, are they to be regarded as absent? For what are judgments, save righteous deeds, not words? And for this reason they may through the weakness of the soul not be desired; and the desire of them may be coveted by the reason in the mind, when it is apparent how profitable and salutary they are. For we often see what ought to be done, and yet do it not; because it delighteth us not to do it, and we desire it may delight us. The intellect flieth in advance; and the weak affection of men followeth slowly, and sometimes followeth not at all. For this reason therefore he coveted to desire those things which he saw to be goods, wishing to take delight in those things the reason of which he could discern.

5. But he saith not, coveteth, only; but, My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments. For perhaps this stranger upon earth was one who had already arrived at what he coveted, and was now desiring those judgments, the

desire of which, he saith, he had at one time coveted. But if he already desired them, why had he not them? For there is no obstacle to possessing the judgments of God, save that they are not desired, while love hath no warmth toward winning them, though their light is so clear and shining. Did he possess them, and did he practise them? For a little after he saith; For Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes. But by what steps, so to speak, they are arrived at, he sheweth. For the first is, that it may appear how useful and honourable they are; next, that the desire of them be coveted; lastly, that with the increase of light and health the practice of those judgments may please, only the notion of which pleased before. But what followeth shall, with the Lord's help, be discussed in another discourse with more convenience, since this is already of considerable length.

Discourse IX

1. Ver. 21. The parts of this Psalm which remain to be treated of, warn us to remember the cause of our misery. For after he had said, My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments, in all time; that is, whether in prosperity or adversity, because righteousness ought to delight us both in toil and in sufferings, nor ought to be loved in peaceful times in such a sense as that it may be forsaken in stormy times, but it should be embraced in all time: he instantly added, (ver. 21.) Thou hast rebuked the proud: and cursed are they that do err from Thy commandments. For the proud err from the commandments of God. For it is one thing not to fulfil the commandments of God through infirmity or ignorance; another to err from them through pride; as they have done, who have begotten us in our mortal state unto these evils. For the words, Ye shall be as gods, pleased them; and thus through this pride they erred from the commandment of God, which they knew that He had enjoined upon them, and which they might have fulfilled with the greatest ease, without any weakness recalling, impeding, retarding them. And behold, the whole of this hard and unhappy anxiety of mortals, is in some respect an hereditary rebuke of the proud. For when God said, Adam, where art thou? He was not ignorant where he was, but He rebuked his pride. Where he then was, that is, what misery he had come to, He desired not to know, but in the question He admonishes him, and with rebuke. But consider now, after saying, Thou hast rebuked the proud, he

saith not, Cursed are they that have erred from Thy commandments; so that only that sin of the first men should come into the mind; but he saith, Cursed are they that do err. For it was needful that all might be terrified by that example, that they might not err from the divine commandments, and by loving righteousness in all time, recover in the toil of this world, what we lost in the pleasure of Paradise.

2. Ver. 22. But since the proud even after such a rebuke lower not their necks, and when they are cast down by the punishment of toil and death, are yet exalted by the puffing up of pride, imitating the exaltation of the falling, mocking the humility of the rising; the body of Christ prayeth for them, saying, O turn from me shame and rebuke; for I have sought out Thy testimonies. Testimonies are called in Greek μαρτύρια, which word we now use for the Latin word: whence those who on account of their testimony to Christ have been brought low by various sufferings, and have contended unto death for the truth, are not called ‘testes,’ but by the Greek term Martyrs. Since then ye hear in this term one more familiar and grateful, let us take these words as if it were said, O turn from me shame and rebuke; because I have sought out Thy martyrdoms. When the body of Christ speaketh thus, doth it consider it any punishment to hear rebuke and shame from the ungodly and the proud, since it rather reacheth the crown by this means? Why then doth it pray that it should be removed from it as something heavy and insupportable, save because, as I said, it prayeth for its very enemies, to whom it seeth it is destructive, to cast the holy name of Christ as a reproach to Christians, and, through the abiding and increase of the same pride, to despise that Cross which was mocked at by the Jews, and the whole medicine of Christian humility, whereby alone that pride is healed, which puffed us up to our fall, and yet worse puffed us up when fallen? Let therefore the body of Christ say; for it hath already begun to love its enemies; let it say to the Lord its God, O take Thou away from me shame and rebuke, because I have sought out Thy martyrdoms: that is, the rebuke which I hear, and the shame whereby I am despised, because I have sought out Thy testimonies—take them away from me. For my enemies, whom Thou enjoimest to be loved by me, who more and more die and are lost, when they despise Thy martyrdoms and accuse them in me, will indeed be recalled to life and be found, if they reverence Thy martyrdoms

in me. Thus it hath happened: this we see. Behold, martyrdom in the name of Christ, both with men and in this world, is not only not a disgrace, but a great ornament: behold, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men, precious is the death of His Saints; behold, His martyrs are not only not despised, but honoured with great distinctions. Behold that younger son, who in place of the swine which he fed, that is, of the unclean devils he worshipped, once persecuted the part of him that went before in the few Christians, now most religiously proclaiming among many great Gentile nations those Martyrs, upon whom formerly he heaped rebukes, and exalting with the highest praises those whom he despised, had died and returned to life, had been lost and was found. In this so great gain of the chastening, the conversion, and redemption of their enemies, the body of Christ said unto God, O turn from me shame and rebuke: and as if it were asked, Shame in what, rebuke from what? he subjoins, Because I have sought out Thy testimonies.

3. Ver. 23, 24. Where is now that rebuke? where now that shame? They have departed and have passed away; and because they who had been lost have been found, they have been lost sight of. But while the Church prayed for such a result, she was suffering that shame and rebuke. For, (ver. 23.) Princes did sit and speak against me, he saith. Thence arose heavy persecution, because princes sitting, that is, raised on their judicial seats, decreed it. Apply this to the Head Himself: thou wilt find that the princes of the Jews sat, taking counsel how they might slay Christ. Apply this to His Body, that is, the Church; thou wilt find that the kings of the earth considered and gave commands by what means the Christians might cease to exist. For princes also did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant is exercised in Thy statutes. Thou who desirest to know what sort of exercise this was, understand what he hath added, For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors. Remember what I have above instructed you, that testimonies are acts of martyrdom. Remember that among the statutes of the Lord there is none more difficult and more worthy of admiration, than that every man should love his enemies. Thus then the body of Christ was exercised, so that it meditated on the acts of martyrdom that testified of Him, and loved those from whom, while they rebuked and despised the Church for these very martyrdoms, she suffered

persecutions. For it was not for herself, as I have already said, but for them rather that she prayed thus, O take Thou from me shame and rebuke. Princes, therefore, did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant was exercised in Thy statutes. In what manner? For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors. Counsel against counsel: the counsel of princes sitting on their judgment-seats was to destroy the Martyrs whom they found: the counsel of the suffering Martyrs was to recover their lost enemies. The former then were returning evil for good: the latter, good for evil. What wonder then if the former failed in slaying them; the latter conquered by dying? What wonder, I ask, is it if the Martyrs, when the heathen raged, most patiently bore a temporal death, and the heathen at the prayer of the Martyrs could arrive at everlasting life; while the body of Christ is exercised in such a way that it doth meditate martyrdoms, and pray for blessings upon the wicked persecutors of the Martyrs?

Discourse X

1. Ver. 25. These words follow in this great Psalm, which it is our duty to consider, and to expound throughout, in so far as the Lord shall grant us. My soul cleaveth to the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word. What meaneth, My soul cleaveth to the pavement? For when he addeth, O quicken Thou me according to Thy word, he hath before stated the reason why he prayeth that he may be quickened, in these words, My soul cleaveth to the pavement. Since then he prayeth to be quickened, because his soul cleaveth to the pavement, it is wonderful if he wisheth any thing good to be understood by this. The whole sentence is as if he should say, I am dead: O quicken Thou me. What then meaneth the pavement? If we look upon the whole world as one great house, we see that the heavens represent its vaulting, the earth therefore will be its pavement. He wisheth therefore to be rescued from earthly things, and to say with the Apostle, Our conversation is in heaven. To cling therefore to earthly things is the soul's death; the contrary of which evil, life is prayed for, when he saith, O quicken Thou me.

2. But we must see whether these words suit that man who had before spoken things which implied that he had clung rather to God than to the

dust of the pavement, so that his conversation was held not in earthly things, but in heavenly. For how could he be understood to have clung to earthly things, who saith, But Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes; for Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors? For such are his foregoing words of which these are the sequel, My soul cleaveth to the pavement. Ought we to understand from this, that however much any man may advance in the statutes of God, he yet hath the affection of mortal flesh towards those earthly things, wherein the life of man upon the earth is a temptation, and if he perseveringly recovereth himself from this death, that he every day returns to life, by the quickening Spirit of Him, by Whose grace our inner man is renewed day by day? For when the Apostle was saying these words, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, and desired to depart and to be with Christ; his soul had clung to the pavement. Whence the body itself also, because it is of the earth, is reasonably understood by the word pavement; since, because it is still corruptible and weigheth down the soul, we justly groan while in it, and say unto God, My soul cleaveth to the dust of the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word. For we shall not be without our bodies when we shall be for evermore with the Lord; but then, because they will not be corruptible, nor will they weigh down our souls, if we view it strictly, we shall not cleave unto them, but they rather unto us, and we unto God. Wherefore these are the words of another Psalm, But it is good for me to hold me fast by God: so that our bodies will live from us, by cleaving unto us; but we draw our life from God: because it is good for us to hold fast by God. For the expression, My soul cleaveth to the pavement, doth not seem to me to signify the union of the flesh and the soul, although some have understood this also; but rather the carnal affection of the soul, whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit. And if this be a right interpretation, he certainly who saith, My soul cleaveth to the dust of the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word, prayeth not that he may be released from the body of this death, by the intervention of the death of this body; which the last day of this life, which on account of its brevity cannot last long, will at some time bring about; but that the lust whereby we lust against the Spirit, may be more and more diminished, and that the lust whereby we lust against the flesh may more and more increase, until this is

brought to an end within us, and that the lust of the spirit against the flesh is perfected through the Holy Spirit which is given us.

3. Ver. 26. He justly saith not, O quicken Thou me according to my merit, but, according to Thy word: and what else is this, save according to Thy promise? He wisheth to be the son of promise, not the son of pride; so that the promise may be firm to all the seed according to grace. For this is the word of promise: In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For what he was by himself, he confesseth in the following words: I have acknowledged my ways, and Thou heardest me. Some copies indeed read, Thy ways: but more, and the best Greek, read my ways, that is, evil ways. For he seemeth to me to say this; I have confessed my sins, and Thou hast heard me; that is, so that Thou wouldest remit them. O teach me Thy statutes. I have acknowledged my ways: Thou hast blotted them out: teach me Thine. So teach me, that I may act; not merely that I may know how I ought to act. For as it is said of the Lord, that He knew not sin, and it is understood, that He did no sin; so also he ought truly to be said to know righteousness, who doeth it. This is the prayer of one who is improving. For if indeed he utterly neglected acts of righteousness, he would not say those words above, But Thy servant was occupied in Thy statutes. He doth not then wish to learn from the Lord those wherein he was occupied; but he desireth to arrive from these at others, by edification, as it were by growth.

4. Ver. 27, 28. Finally he addeth, Intimate to me the way of Thy righteousnesses; or, as some copies have it, instruct me; which is expressed more closely from the Greek, Make me to understand the way of Thy righteousnesses; so shall I be exercised in Thy wondrous things. These higher commandments, which he desireth to understand by edification, he calleth the wondrous things of God. There are then some righteousnesses of God so wondrous, that human weakness may be believed incapable of fulfilling them by those who have not tried. Whence the Psalmist, struggling and wearied with the difficulty of obeying them, saith, My soul hath slumbered for very heaviness: O stablish Thou me with Thy word! What meaneth, hath slumbered? save that he hath cooled in the hope which

he had entertained of being able to reach them. But, he addeth, Stablish Thou me with Thy word: that I may not by slumbering, fall away from those duties which I feel that I have already attained: stablish Thou me therefore in those words of Thine that I already hold, that I may be able to reach unto others through edification.

5. Ver. 29. And what hindereth to walk in the commandments of God in such a manner, that a man may easily arrive at those wonderful things? What, do we suppose, save that which he prayeth in the next words may be removed from him: Take Thou from me the way of iniquity? And since the law of works hath entered in, that sin might abound; he addeth, And pity me according to Thy law. By what law, save by the law of faith? Hear the Apostle: Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works. Nay: but by the law of faith. This is the law of faith, whereby we believe and pray that it may be granted us through grace; that we may effect that which we cannot fulfil through ourselves; that we may not, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish our own, fail to submit ourselves unto the righteousness of God. In the law of works, therefore, is the righteousness of God Who commandeth; but in the law of faith, the mercy of Him Who aideth.

6. Ver. 30–32. But after he had said, And pity me according to Thy law; he mentioneth some of those blessings which he hath already obtained, that he may ask others that he hath not yet gained. For he saith, I have chosen the way of truth: and Thy judgments I have not forgotten. (Ver. 31.) I have stuck unto Thy testimonies: O Lord, confound me not—I have chosen the way of truth, wherein to run: Thy judgments I have not forgotten, that I might run. I have stuck unto Thy testimonies, while I was running: O Lord, confound me not: may I persevere in striving toward the point whereunto I am running: may I arrive whither I am running! So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. He next saith, I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart. I could not run hadst Thou not widened my heart. The sense of the words, I have chosen the way of truth, and Thy judgments I have not forgotten: I have stuck unto Thy testimonies, is clearly explained in this verse. For this running is along the way of the commandments of God. And

because he doth allege unto the Lord rather His blessings than his own deservings; as if it were said unto him, How hast thou run that way, by choosing, and by not forgetting the judgments of God, and by sticking to His testimonies? Couldst thou do these things by thyself? I could not, he replieth. What then? I will run, he saith, the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart. It is not therefore through my own will, as though it needed no aid of Thine; but because Thou hast widened my heart. The widening of the heart is the delight we take in righteousness. This is the gift of God, the effect of which is, that we are not straitened in His commandments through the fear of punishment, but widened through love, and the delight we have in righteousness. For He promiseth us His own breadth, when He saith, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. For how large is the place where the Lord walketh! in this breadth is love shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given us. Whence also it is said, and let rivers of waters be dispersed in thy streets; for the word signifying streets in Latin (platea) is derived from the Greek πλατὺ, which meaneth, broad. These are the waters of which the Lord saith, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and, He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: and the Evangelist explaineth what He meant; but this spake He of the Spirit, which they who believe on Him should receive. Many things might be said of this breadth of heart, but ye already complain of the length of this discourse.

Discourse XI

1. Ver. 33. In this great Psalm there cometh next in order that which, with the Lord's help, we must consider and treat of. Set a law for me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall seek it alway. The Apostle saith, The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, and the like characters, the mention whereof he concludeth with these words: And if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. Was he then who said, Set a law for me, O Lord, like in character to those for whom the blessed Paul declareth that the law was made? God forbid! For if he had been such, he would not have said above, I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my

heart. Why then doth he pray that the law may be taught him by the Lord, if it be not taught the righteous? Is it given to the righteous not in the same sense as it was given to a stiffnecked people, on tables of stone, not in fleshly tables of the heart? according to the old covenant from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, not according to the new covenant, concerning which it is written through Jeremiah the Prophet, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; for they abode not in my covenant, and I forsook them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. Behold in what manner this man wisheth a law to be set him by the Lord: not as it is laid down for the unholy and the disobedient, who belong to the old covenant, on tables of stone; but as it is given in the mind to the holy sons of the free, that is, the heavenly Jerusalem, the sons of promise, the sons of an everlasting heritage, by the Holy Spirit, as it were by the finger of God, and written in the heart: not one which they may hold in remembrance, and neglect in life; but which they may know by understanding, perform by loving, in the breadth of love, not in the narrowness of fear. For he who doth the work of the law through fear of punishment, not from love of righteousness, truly doth it against his will. But what he doth against his will, if it could be so, he would prefer should not be commanded at all: and thus he is not a friend, but a foe of the law, which he would wish should not exist; nor is he who is unclean in will, cleansed by his act. Such a man cannot say what this man said in the foregoing verses, I did run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hadst widened my heart: for that widening signifieth love, which according to the Apostle is the fulfilling of the Law.

2. Why then doth this man still pray for a law to be laid down for him; which, if it had not been laid down for him, he could not have run the way of God's commandments in the breadth of his heart? But since one speaketh who is growing in grace, and who knoweth that it is God's gift that he profiteth in grace; what else doth he pray, when he prayeth that a law may be laid down for him, save that he may profit more and more? As, if thou

boldest a full cup, and giveth it to a thirsty man; he both exhausts it by drinking it, and prayeth for it by still longing for it. But those unrighteous and disobedient men for whom the law is laid down on tablets of stone, are thereby made guilty of transgression, not the sons of promise. But he also who remembereth it, and yet loveth it not, is guilty in this way, because his memory is as it were a sort of written stone, not to adorn him, but to weigh him down; an onerous load, not a title of honour. This law he hath termed the way of the judgments of God; nor is the path of His commandments, which he had already stated he had run when his heart was expanded, different. He therefore both hath run and is running, until he reach the palm of the heavenly calling of God. Lastly, after he had said, Set a law for me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes; he addeth, and I shall seek it evermore. For why doth he seek for what he hath, save because he both hath it by acting, and seeketh it by improving?

3. But what meaneth, Evermore? Will there be no end of seeking; as it is said, His praise shall be ever in my mouth; because there will be no end of praising Him: for we shall not cease to praise God, when we shall have reached His everlasting kingdom, since we read, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee? Doth evermore mean as long as we live here, because we progress in grace so long; but after this life, he who was in a good course of improvement here, is made perfect there? Just as it is said of certain women, that they were ever learning: but these learnt ill, for he addeth, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But he who always profiteth in growth unto edification here, arrives at the goal which he striveth to attain by progress in grace, where he will no longer progress, because he here resteth, made perfect, without end. But the expression, Ever learning is not used of those women to mean that even after death they continue endeavouring to learn vain and fruitless things; since everlasting punishments, not studies, succeed that species of learning. Here therefore the law of God is examined into, as long as we progress in it, both by knowing it and by loving it: but there its fulness abideth for our enjoyment, not for our examination. Thus also is this spoken, Seek His face evermore. Where, evermore, save here? For we shall not there also seek the face of God, when we shall see face to face. Or if that which is loved without a change of affection is rightly said to be sought

after, and our only object is, that it be not lost, we shall indeed evermore seek the law of God, that is, the truth o God: for in this very Psalm it is said, And Thy law is the truth. It is now sought, that it may be held fast; it will then be held fast that it may not be lost: even as it is said of the Spirit of God, that It searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; not indeed, that It may discover what It knoweth not, but because It leaveth nothing that It knoweth not.

4. Ver. 34. The grace of God therefore is particularly commended unto us, when he who already knew the law according to its letter, prayeth that a law may be set for him by the Lord. But since the letter killeth, while the Spirit giveth life; he prayeth that he may be enabled through the Spirit to perform that which he knew through the letter; lest, on account of his knowledge of a commandment which he had not obeyed, the charge even of disobedience might come upon him. However no man, unless he hath received the comprehension thereof from the Lord, can comprehend how the law is to be known as it ought to be, that is, how its real meaning may be understood, why it was imposed upon those who were not to keep it, what profit even this hath in it, that the law entered that sin might abound: whence he addeth, (ver. 34.) Give me understanding, and I shall search Thy law, yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart. For when each man hath searched the law, and searched its deep things, in which its whole meaning doth consist; he ought indeed to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself. For on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. This he seemeth to have promised, when he said, Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

5. Ver. 35. But since he hath no power to do even this, save he be aided by Him Who commandeth him to do what He commandeth, Make me, he addeth, to go in the path of Thy commandments, for therein is my desire. My desire is powerless, unless Thou Thyself makest me to go where I desire. And this is surely the very path, that is, the path of God's commandments, which he had already said that he had run, when his heart was enlarged by the Lord. And this he calleth a path, because the way is narrow which leadeth unto life; and since it is narrow, we cannot run therein save with a heart enlarged.

6. Ver. 36. But since he still profiteth, he still runneth; and he therefore seeketh the Divine help whereby he may be conducted, since it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy: for it is God that worketh in us even to will, for the will is prepared by the Lord. He next saith, Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. This then he prayeth, that he may profit in the will itself. But what are the testimonies of God, save those wherein He beareth witness to Himself? For something is proved by testimonies; and on this account the judgments and commandments of God are proved by the testimonies of God: and whatever God willeth to persuade us, He persuadeth us by His own testimonies: towards which the Psalmist prayeth that his own heart may be inclined, and not to covetousness. For God enjoins us by His testimonies to worship Him for nought; which covetousness, the root of all evils, hindereth. He useth here a Greek expression, from which covetousness generally may be understood, whereby every man seeketh more than is enough: for the word πλεον meaneth more, and ἔξις signifieth having, being derived from the verb to have. It is therefore termed πλεονεξία, from having too much: a word which the Latin translators in this passage have variously rendered by emolument, utility, and avarice, which last is best. But the Apostle saith, Avarice is the root of all evils. But in the Greek, whence these words have been rendered into our tongue, the word used by the Apostle is not πλεονεξία, which occurs in this passage of the Psalms; but φιλαργυρία, by which is signified love of money. But the Apostle must be understood to have meant genus by species when he used this word, that is, to have meant avarice universally and generally by love of money, which is truly the root of all evils. For the first human beings would not have been deceived and cast down by means of the serpent, unless they had desired to have more than they had received, and to be more than they had been made. For this was the tempter's promise, Ye shall be as gods. By this covetousness then (πλεονεξία) they were ruined. For by wishing to have more than they had received, they lost even what they had received. A trace of this truth, which hath been universally diffused, may be found in the civil law, which provides that he who claimeth more than his due shall be nonsuited: that is, that he who hath demanded more than was due to him, should lose even what was due to him. But all covetousness is cut away from about us, if God be worshipped for nought. This is the

challenge given by the tempter to Job in his temptation, when he asketh respecting him, Doth Job fear God for nought? For the devil thought, that in fearing God the righteous man's heart was inclined to covetousness, and served Him, like a hireling, for his wages, for the sake of profit, or the advantage of his temporal fortunes wherewith God had enriched him; but when he was tempted, it appeared how that he served God for nought. If therefore our heart be not inclined to covetousness, we fear God only for God's sake, so that He is the only reward of our serving Him. Let us love Him in Himself, let us love Him in ourselves, Him in our neighbours whom we love as ourselves, whether they have Him, or in order that they may have Him. Since this is given to us by His own gift, it is therefore said to Him, Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. But what followeth, must be treated of in another discourse.

Discourse XII

1. Ver. 37. The next words in the Psalm which we have undertaken to expound are, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken Thou me in Thy way. Vanity and truth are directly contrary to one another. The desires of this world are vanity: but Christ, Who freeth us from the world, is truth. He is the way, too, wherein this man wisheth to be quickened, for He is also the life: I am the way, the truth, and the life, are His own words. But what meaneth, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity? While we are in this world, can we avoid seeing vanity? For every creature was made subject unto vanity, which is understood to be in man; and, All is vanity; what profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? Doth he pray that his life may not be under the sun, where all is vanity; but in Him, in Whom he prayeth that he may be quickened? For He ascended not only above the sun, but far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And they who do not fruitlessly hear what the Apostle saith, live rather in Him than under the sun: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Therefore if our life be there where Truth is, our life is not under the sun, where is vanity. But this so great blessing we have rather in hope than possess in deed. And the blessed Apostle spake those words according to our hope; for after he had said, The creature is made subject to

vanity, he added, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope. In hope therefore, wherein we hope that we shall cling to the contemplation of the Truth, we are meanwhile made subject unto vanity. For the whole of this spiritual, animal, and bodily creation is in man; yea, it is man. It willingly sinned, and became an enemy to truth; but that it might justly be punished, it was not willingly made subject unto vanity. Lastly, after a few words; not only they, (that is, the whole creation,) but ourselves also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit: that is, who not in our whole substance, but in that part of it whereby we surpass cattle, are subject unto God, not unto vanity, that is, through the first-fruits of the Spirit: we also ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. As long therefore as we are here according to the flesh, whose adoption and redemption we here wait for in patience of hope: so long, in that respect in which we are under the sun, we are made subject unto vanity. As long therefore as we are in this state, how can we avoid seeing vanity, whereunto we are even subject in hope? What then is the meaning of his words, O turn Thou mine eyes away, lest they behold vanity? Doth he pray this, that what we hold in hope may not indeed in this life be fulfilled, but that its lot may be this, which may be at some time fulfilled in Him, when it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, both in spirit, soul, and body, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, where it shall no longer see vanity?

2. These words may indeed thus be understood, not beside the rule of faith; but there is here another sense, which I confess pleaseth me more. The Lord saith in the Gospel, If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! It is therefore of great consequence, when we do any thing good, what object we have in view in doing it. For our duty should be weighed, not by the act of duty, but by our end; so that we should consider not merely whether what we are doing be good, but especially if the object on account of which we do it be good. He prayeth that those eyes wherewith we consider on what account we do what we do, may be turned away that they behold not vanity;

that is, that he may not look to vanity, as his motive, when he doeth any thing good. In this vanity the first place is held by the love of men's praise, on account of which many great deeds have been wrought by those who are styled great in this world, and who have been much praised in heathen states, seeking glory not with God, but among men, and on account of this living in appearance prudently, courageously, temperately, and righteously; and when they have reached this they have reached their reward: vain men, and vain reward. The Lord, anxious to turn away the eyes of His disciples from this vanity, saith, Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven. Presently, in detailing certain offices of righteousness, and giving precepts concerning alms, prayer, and fasting, He every where warns us that none of these things be done for the sake of the glory of men, and He every where saith that they who do them for this reason have received their reward; that is, not the everlasting one, which is laid up for the Saints with the Father, but the temporal one, which they who regard vanity in their works seek for: not that the praise of men by itself is to be blamed, (for what is so desirable for men, as that those deeds which they ought to imitate should please them?) but to do good for the sake of praise, this is to regard vanity in one's works. Since, however bountifully the praise of men may have been conferred on a righteous man, the end of his good deeds ought not to be placed in that praise, but this very praise should be referred to the praise of God, for Whose sake the truly good do good deeds; since they are not made good by themselves, but by Him. Lastly, in the same discourse our Lord had said to them, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. We ought to look thither, where He hath placed our end, when we do any thing good, if our eyes are turned away from vanity. Let not therefore the end of a good work be in the praises of men, but let us correct these very praises of men, and refer all things to the praises of God, by Whom every thing is given unto us which is praised without error on the part of him Who praiseth. Moreover, if it be a vain thing to do good works for the sake of men's praises, how much more vain for the sake of getting money, or increasing it, or retaining it, and any other temporal advantage, which cometh unto us from without? Since all things are vanity: what is man's abundance, with all his toil, wherein he laboureth under the sun? For our

temporal welfare itself finally we ought not to do our good works, but rather for the sake of that everlasting welfare which we hope for, where we may enjoy an unchangeable good, which we shall have from God, nay, what God Himself is unto us. For if God's Saints were to do good works for the sake of this temporal welfare, never would the martyrs of Christ achieve a good work of confession in the loss of this same welfare. But they received aid in trouble, not beholding vanity, for vain is the help of man; and they desired not the day of man, for man is like a thing of nought, and his time passeth away as a shadow.

3. Ver. 38. But when God is prayed that those things which are seemingly in our own power, that is, the turning away of the eyes lest they behold vanity, may be granted us by Him, what else than His grace is praised? For some have not turned away their eyes from that vanity, because they have imagined that they become righteous and good of themselves, and have loved the praise of men more than the praise of God; for they are themselves men, who have been too much pleased with themselves, and have presumed on the strength of their own will: but this also is vanity and vexation of spirit. After he had said, therefore, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken Thou me in Thy way: and this way is not vanity, but truth: he addeth, (ver. 38.) O stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee. And what else is this than, Grant unto me that I may do according to what Thou sayest? For the word of God is not stablished in those who remove it in themselves by acting contrary to it; but it is stablished in those in whom it is immoveable. God therefore stablisheth His word, that they may fear Him, in those unto whom He giveth the spirit of the fear of Him; not that fear of which the Apostle saith, Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; for perfect love casteth out this fear, but that fear which the Prophet calleth the spirit of the fear of the Lord; that fear which is pure, and endureth for ever; that fear which feareth to offend Him Whom it loveth. For the adulteress hath a different fear of her husband from that of the chaste wife: the adulteress feareth him, lest he come: the chaste feareth, lest he forsake her.

4. Ver. 39. Take away my reproach which I have suspected, for Thy judgments are sweet. Who is he who suspected his own reproach, and who

doth not know his own reproach better than that of his neighbour? For a man may rather suspect another's than his own; since he knoweth not that which he suspecteth; but in each one's own reproach there is not suspicion for him, but knowledge, wherein conscience speaketh. What then mean the words, the rebuke which I have suspected? The meaning of them must be derived from the former verse; since as long as a man doth not turn away his eyes lest they behold vanity, he suspecteth in others what is going on in himself; so that he believeth another to worship God, or do good works, from the same motive as himself. For men can see what we do, but with a view to what end we act, is hidden; and there is thus room allowed for suspicions, so that one man dareth to judge of the hidden secrets of another, and generally falsely, and to suspect at random things that are unknown to him, even if they be true. On this account the Lord, when He was speaking of the end, on account of which we ought to act righteously, in order that He might turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, warned us not to do good works for the sake of the praise of men, in these words: Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them. He warned them against doing them for the sake of money, thus: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth; and, Ye cannot serve God and mammon. He warned them against doing so for the sake even of their necessary food and raiment: Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. And after He had given all these warnings, since we may suspect that they whom we see living righteously, though we see not with what object they do so, do good works from some such motive as those mentioned, He added, Judge not, that ye be not judged. For this reason, after the Psalmist had said, Take away my reproach that I have suspected; he added, for Thy judgments are sweet; that is, Thy judgments are true. For a lover of truth declareth that to be sweet which is true. But the judgments of men concerning the hidden secrets of men are not sweet, but rash. And therefore he called that his reproach, which he had suspected of others; for this too the Apostle saith, Comparing themselves with themselves they understand not: for a man the more readily suspecteth in another what he is conscious of in himself. This reproach of his therefore he prayed might be taken away, viz. what he had felt in himself, and had suspected in others; that he might not be like the devil, who had suspected concerning the hidden things of the holy Job, that he did not worship God

for nought. Job, whom he demanded to be allowed to tempt, that he might discover some charge to impute against him.

5. Ver. 40. But since nothing save envy suspecteth another's reproach, while a good work cannot be censured, because that which is open speaketh for itself; and since it is censured on the score of the motive from which it is done; and thus any man who pleaseth may suspect him of evil, because he seeth not what is hidden, and envieth what is above himself; against this fault truly, under the influence of which each man suspecteth of a man evil which he discerneth not, charity must be held fast, which envieth not; which our Lord especially commendeth, where He saith, A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another; and, By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another; and, speaking of the love of God and of our neighbour, On these two commandments, he saith, hang all the Law and the Prophets. Whence the Psalmist also, against the reproach of his suspicion which he longeth to be cut off, saith, (ver. 40.) Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness. Behold, I have coveted to love Thee with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my mind, and my neighbour as myself, but, O quicken Thou me not in my own, but in Thy righteousness, that is, fill me with that love which I have longed for. Aid me that I may do that which Thou chargest me: Thyself give what Thou dost command. O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness: for in myself I had that which would cause my death: but I find not save in Thee whence I may live. Christ is Thy righteousness, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. And in Him I find Thy commandments, which I have coveted, that in Thy righteousness, that is, in Him, Thou mayest quicken me. For the Word Himself is God; and the Word was made flesh, that He Himself also might be my neighbour.

Discourse XIII

1. Ver. 41. With the foregoing exposition on this Psalm, the longest of all, we must connect this, on the words which follow in it. And let Thy loving mercy come also unto us, O Lord. This sentence seems annexed to the foregoing: for he doth not say, Let it come unto me, but, And let it come

unto me. Now the foregoing verse is this, Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken me in Thy righteousness: next to which come the words, and let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord. What then doth he here pray for, save that through His loving mercy Who commanded, he may perform the commandments which he hath coveted? For he explaineth in some degree what he meant by the words, Quicken me in Thy righteousness; by adding, And let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord: even Thy salvation, according to Thy word: that is, according to Thy promise. Whence the Apostle desireth us to be understood as the children of promise: that we may not imagine that what we are is our own work, but refer the whole to the grace of God. For Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. In the words then, Quicken me in Thy righteousness; he prayeth to be quickened in Christ, and this is the very loving mercy which he prayeth may come upon him. Christ Himself is the salvation of God; the expression by which he hath explained what loving mercy he was speaking of when he said, And let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord. If therefore we ask, what is that loving mercy, let us hear what followeth: Thy salvation, according unto Thy word. For this was promised by Him, Who calleth those things which be not as if they were. For those unto whom the promises were made were not as yet in existence, that no man might glory in his deservings. And those unto whom it was promised, were themselves also promised; so that the whole body of Christ may say, By the grace of God I am what I am.

2. Ver. 42. And so shall I make answer, he saith, to them that reproach me with the word. It is doubtful whether it be ‘reproach me with a word;’ or, ‘I will answer with a word;’ but either signifieth Christ. They to whom Christ crucified is a stumblingblock or foolishness, reproach us with Him; ignorant that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us; the Word which was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God. But although they may not reproach us with the Word Which is unknown unto them, because His Divinity is not known unto those by whom His weakness on the Cross is despised; let us nevertheless make answer of the Word, and let us not be terrified or confounded by their reproaches. For if they had known the Word, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. But he, unto

whom hath come the loving mercy of God, answereth those who blaspheme the Word; that is, His salvation cometh to protect, not to crush. For He will come upon some and crush them, who, while they scorn His humility, are shaken by stumbling against Him. For thus He saith in the Gospel; Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. They therefore who make Him a reproach unto us, stumble and fall over Him. But let us not fear their reproaches, that we may not stumble and fall, but let us answer unto them the Word. This is the word of faith which we preach. That if, he saith, thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. It is not enough, therefore, to have Christ in the heart, and to have no will to confess Him when reproach is feared; but the Word must be answered to them that blaspheme Him. Now that the martyrs might be able to do this, it was promised them, For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Therefore, when the Psalmist had said, I will make answer unto them that reproach me with the word: he at once addeth, For my trust is in Thy words, which meaneth exactly, in Thy promises.

3. Ver. 43. But since very many, although members of Christ's very Body, Whose words these are, when the heavy weight of persecution pressed upon them, had not courage to endure the reproach, and through fainting denied Christ, he addeth, O take not the word of Thy truth away out of my mouth even exceedingly. He saith, out of my mouth, because the unity of the body is speaking, among whose members those also are counted who failed at the hour by denying, but by penitence afterwards came again to life, or even, by renewing their confession, received the palm of martyrdom, which they had lost. The word of truth, therefore, was not even exceedingly, or, as some copies have it, even every way, that is not altogether taken from the mouth of Peter, in whom was the type of the Church; because although he denied for the hour, being disturbed with fear, yet by weeping he was restored, and by confessing was afterwards crowned. The whole body of Christ therefore speaketh, that is, the whole of the holy Church; in which body either because, while very many denied, there remained brave men who

contended for the truth even unto death, or because out of those who had denied many were restored, the Word of truth was not taken away from her mouth, even exceedingly. In the words, O take not, we must understand, Suffer not to be taken; on which account we say in praying, Lead us not into temptation. And the Lord Himself saith unto Peter, I have prayed, that thy faith fail not; that is, that the word of truth be not taken out of thy mouth even exceedingly. Next followeth, for I have hoped in Thy judgments. Or, as some have more strictly rendered it from the Greek, I have hoped more; a word which, although compounded in a somewhat unusual way, yet answers the necessary purpose of conveying the truth in a translation. We must more attentively search into the meaning of these words, I have hoped in Thy word, and, I have hoped more in Thy judgments. I will make answer, he saith, of the word to them that reproach me, for I have hoped in Thy words: that is, since Thou Thyself hast promised me this. O take not the word of Thy truth even utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Thy judgments: that is, since Thy judgments, by which Thou chastenest and scourgest me, do not only not destroy my hope, but even increase it: for the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Behold the saints and the humble in heart when they have trusted in Thee, have not failed in persecutions: behold also those who from trusting in themselves have failed, and nevertheless have belonged to the Very Body, have wept when they became known unto themselves, and have found Thy grace a more solid support, because they have lost their own pride. Therefore, O take not the word of Thy truth even utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in Thy judgments.

4. Ver. 44. So shall I alway keep Thy law: that is, if Thou wilt not take the word of Thy truth out of my mouth, I will alway keep Thy law. Yea, unto age, and age of age: he sheweth what he meant by alway. For sometimes by alway is meant, as long as we live here; but this is not, unto age, and age of age. For it is better thus translated than as some copies have, to eternity, and to age of age, since they could not say, and to eternity of eternity. That law therefore should be understood, of which the Apostle saith, Love is the fulfilling of the law. For this will be kept by the saints, from whose mouth the word of truth is not taken, that is, by the Church of Christ Herself, not only during this world, that is, until this world is ended; but for another also

which is styled, world without end. For we shall not there receive the commandments of the Law, as here, to keep them, but we shall keep the fulness of the Law itself, as I have said, without any fear of sinning; for we shall love God the more fully when we shall have seen Him; and our neighbour too; for God will be all in all; nor will there be room for any false suspicion concerning our neighbour, where no man will be hidden to any.

Discourse XIV

1. Ver. 45–48. The former verses of this long Psalm contain a prayer; but these following, the subject of our present exposition, a narration. For the man of God in the above lines was praying for the aid of God's grace, when he said, Quicken me in Thy righteousness: and let Thy loving mercies come also upon me, O Lord! and other passages of the same kind both above and after this. But he now saith, And I walked at liberty: for I sought Thy precepts. (Ver. 46.) And I spoke of Thy testimonies also before kings, and was not ashamed. (Ver. 47.) And I meditated on Thy commandments, which I have loved. (Ver. 48.) My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved; and I was exercised in Thy statutes. Where these are the words of one narrating, not of one praying; as if, after he had received what he had prayed for, he were confessing in the praises of God what the loving mercy of God had made him, which he had prayed might come upon him. For he hath not connected these lines with the preceding, as if he had written thus, "And take not from my mouth the word of truth even utterly, for I have hoped more in Thy judgments, and I will keep Thy law continually for ever and ever, and I will walk at liberty, for I have sought out Thy precepts, and I will talk of Thy statutes in the sight of kings, and will not be ashamed;" and the rest in this way: for this would seem to have been the mode in which what follows should have been connected with the foregoing verses; but he says, And I walked at liberty. Here the copulative conjunction, and, is not used as a connecting particle; for he doth not say, and I will walk, as he had said, and I will keep Thy commandments for ever and ever: or if this latter verse be in the optative mood, and may I keep Thy law; he doth not add, And may I walk at liberty, as if he had desired and prayed for both of these things; but he saith, And I walked at liberty. If this conjunction were not used here, and if the sentence

were introduced free from any such connection with what preceded, I walked at liberty, the reader would never be induced by any thing unusual in the mode of speech to think he should seek for some hidden sense. Doubtless, then, he wished what he hath not said to be understood, that is, that his prayers had been heard; and he then added what he had become: as if he were to say, When I prayed for these things, Thou heardest me, And I walked at liberty; and so with the remaining expressions which he hath added to the same purpose.

2. What then mean the words, And I walked at liberty, save, I walked in love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given us. In this liberty he walked who said, O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you: our heart is enlarged. Now the whole of this love is comprised in those two commandments, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, on which all the Law and the Prophets hang. Whence after he had said, And I walked at liberty, he subjoined the reason, For I sought out Thy commandments. Some copies have not commandments but testimonies: but we find commandments in most, and especially in the Greek; and who would hesitate rather to believe this tongue, as prior to our own, and that from which these Psalms have been rendered into Latin? If then we wish to know how he sought out these commandments, or how they ought to be sought out, let us consider what our good Master, Who both taught and gave them, saith: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. And a little lower, If ye then, He saith, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him? Where He evidently sheweth, that the words He had spoken, seek, ask, knock, belong only to earnestness in asking, that is, in praying. Moreover, another Evangelist saith not, He will give good things to them that ask Him; which may be understood in many ways, either as earthly or spiritual blessings; but has excluded other interpretations, and very carefully expressed what our Lord wished us to pray earnestly and instantly for, in these words: How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. This is that Spirit by which love is shed abroad in our hearts, so that by loving God and our neighbour we may execute the divine commandments. That is that Spirit in which we cry,

Abba, Father! And on this account it is He Himself Whom we desire to receive Who causeth us to ask: Himself causeth us to seek, Whom we wish to find: Himself causeth us to knock, unto Whom we strive to come. This the Apostle teacheth; for while in one passage he saith that we cry out in the Holy Spirit, Abba, Father, in another passage again he saith, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. How do we cry, if He Himself crieth in us, save because He caused us to cry, when He began to dwell in us? Also, He so acteth when He is received, that He is desired by asking, by seeking, by knocking, to be more fully received. For whether He leadeth them to seek a good life, or to live well; as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Therefore he saith, I walked at liberty, for I sought out Thy commandments. He had sought and found, since He had sought and received the good Spirit, whereby having been made good he might do good works well, by faith which worketh by love.

3. Ver. 46. I spoke of Thy testimonies also, he saith, before kings, and I was not ashamed: as one who had sought and had received grace to answer those who reproached him with the word, and the promise that the word of truth should not be taken from his mouth. Struggling for this truth even unto death, not even before kings was he ashamed to speak of it. For testimonies, whereof he doth avow that he was speaking, are in Greek styled μαρτύρια, a word which we now employ instead of the Latin. The name of Martyrs, unto whom Jesus foretold, that they should confess Him even before kings, is derived hence.

4. Ver. 47. And I meditated, he saith, on Thy commandments, which I have loved. (Ver. 48.) My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved; or, as some copies read, which I have loved exceedingly, or too much, or vehemently, as they have chosen to render the Greek work σφόδρα. He then loved the commandments of God because he walked at liberty; that is, through the Holy Spirit, through Whom love itself is shed abroad, and enlargeth the hearts of the faithful. But he loved, both in thought and in acts. With a view to thought, he saith, And I meditated on Thy commandments: as to action, My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments. But to both sentences he hath annexed the words, which I

have loved: for the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart. When the commandment of God is obeyed with this end, then a really good work is done; and then our hands are lifted up, because that towards which they are lifted is above. On this account, when the Apostle was about to speak of charity, he saith, I shew unto you a higher way; and in another passage, To know the love of Christ, which is exceeding high, above knowledge. For if the reward of earthly happiness be sought for from the performance of God's commandments, the hands are rather lowered than lifted up; since earthly rewards, which are not above but below, are sought for by that obedience. The following words, And my study was in Thy statutes, relate to both. This expression most of the translators have preferred to this, I rejoiced in, or I talked of, a version which some have given from the Greek ἡδολέσχουν. For he who keepeth the commandments of God, which he loveth, both in thought and in works taking delight in them, is exercised with joy, and with a certain abundance of speech, in the judgments of God.

Discourse XV

1. Ver. 49. Let us consider, as far as the Lord alloweth, and let us thoroughly treat of these verses of this great Psalm: O remember Thy word unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope. Is forgetfulness incident to God, as it is to man? Why then is it said unto Him, O remember? Although in other passages of holy Scripture this very word is used, as, Why hast Thou forgotten me? and, Wherefore forgettest Thou our misery? and God Himself, through His Prophet, says, I will forget all his transgressions: and in other passages this is read again and again frequently. But these things are not understood of God in the same way as they happen among men. For as it is said that God repenteth, when He changeth things contrary to men's expectation, without His counsel being changed, for The Lord's counsel endureth for ever; He is said to forget, when He seemeth to delay His aid or His promise, or not to recompense sinners as they deserve, or any thing of this sort, as if what is either hoped or feared had slipped from His memory, and so doth not take place. These expressions are borrowed from moral discourses on human affections; although God doth these things according to a fixed dispensation, with no failing memory, nor with an understanding

obscured, nor with a will changed. When therefore it is said unto Him, O remember, the desire of him who prayeth is displayed, because he asketh for what was promised; God is not admonished, as if the promise had escaped from His mind. O remember, he saith, Thy word unto Thy servant: that is, fulfil Thy promise to Thy servant. Wherein Thou hast given me hope: that is, in Thy Word, since Thou hast promised, Thou hast caused me to hope.

2. Ver. 50. The same is my comfort in my humiliation. Namely, that hope which is given to the humble, as the Scripture saith: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Whence also our Lord Himself saith with His own lips, For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. We well understand here that humiliation also, not whereby each man humbleth himself by confessing his sins, and by not arrogating righteousness to himself; but when each man is humbled by some tribulation or mortification which his pride deserved; or when he is exercised and proved by endurance; whence a little after this Psalm saith, Before I was troubled, I went wrong. And this passage in the Book of Wisdom; In grief, hold up, and have patience in thy humiliation. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation. In the expression, acceptable, he hath inspired a hope which may console us in our humiliation. And the Lord Jesus, when He foretold that this humiliation would be brought upon His disciples by their persecutors, did not leave them without a hope; but gave them one, whereby they might find comfort, in these words: In your patience shall ye possess your souls; and declared even of their very bodies, which might be put to death by their enemies, and seemingly be utterly annihilated, that not a hair of their heads should perish. This hope was given to Christ's Body, that is, to the Church, that it might be a comfort to Her in her humiliation. On account of which hope saith also the Apostle Paul: But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. But this is the hope of everlasting rewards: there is also another hope, which in the low estate of tribulation comforteth very much, a hope that is given to the Saints in the Word of God, Who promiseth the aid of His grace, that no man may faint. Of this hope the Apostle saith, God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a

way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. This hope our Saviour gave also with His own lips, when He said, This night Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not. This hope He gave in the prayer which He taught us, where He enjoined us to say, Lead us not into temptation: for He in a manner implicitly promised that He would give to His disciples in their danger that which He taught them to ask for in their prayers. And indeed this Psalm is rather to be understood to speak of this hope: (ver. 50.) The same is my comfort in my humiliation, for Thy word hath quickened me. Which they have rendered more closely who have put not word, but utterance. For the Greek has λόγιον, which is utterance; not λόγος, which is word.

3. Ver. 51. The next verse is, The proud dealt exceeding wickedly: yet have I not shrunk from Thy law. By the proud he wished to be understood the persecutors of the pious; and he therefore added, yet have I not shrunk from Thy laws, because the persecution of the proud attempted to force him to do this. He saith that they dealt exceeding wickedly, because they were not only wicked themselves, but even tried to make the godly wicked. In this humiliation, that is, in this tribulation, that hope comforted him which was given in the word of God, Who promised aid, that the faith of the Martyrs might not faint; and Who by the Presence of His Spirit gave strength to them in their toils, that they might escape from the snare of the fowlers, and say, If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, perchance they had swallowed us up quick.

4. When he saith, The same is my comfort in my humiliation, doth he mean that humiliation whereby man was thrown down and delivered unto death, in consequence of that sin which was most unhappily committed in the bliss of Paradise? For in this humiliation, wherein man is made like unto vanity, and his days pass away as a shadow, all are sons of wrath, but that they are reconciled unto God through the Mediator, who were predestined to everlasting salvation before the foundation of the world; that Mediator in Whom the righteous of old had hope, when they foresaw His coming by the spirit of prophecy. That word then which came to them concerning Him is well understood as the word here spoken of, if we understand the passage of these men; that word of which it is said, (ver. 49.) O remember Thy word

unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope. (Ver. 50.) The same is my comfort in my humiliation: that is, in this my mortal state: for Thy word hath quickened me; so that when cast out unto death, I had hopes of life. The proud dealt very wickedly: since indeed not even the low estate of mortality tamed their pride. Yet have I not shrunked from Thy law: which the proud were attempting to make me do.

5. Ver. 52. For I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord, and received comfort; or, as other copies have it, and I was exhorted, that is, I received exhortation. For either might be rendered for the Greek παρεκλήθην. From the beginning of the world, that is, from the birth of the human race, I was mindful of Thy judgments upon the vessels of wrath, which are fitted unto perdition: and I received comfort, since through these also hast Thou shewn the riches of Thy glory on the vessels of Thy mercy.

6. Ver. 53. Weariness hath held me; for the ungodly that forsake Thy law. (Ver. 54.) Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. This is the low estate, in the house of mortality, of the man who sojourneth away from Paradise and the Jerusalem above, whence one going down to Jericho fell among robbers; but, in consequence of the deed of mercy which was done him by that Samaritan, the statutes of God became his song in the house of his pilgrimage; although he was weary for the ungodly that forsook the law of God, since he was compelled to converse with them for a season in this life, until the floor be threshed. But these two verses may be adapted to the two clauses of the preceding verse, respectively: so that the words, I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord, be referred to these, Weariness hath seized me, for the ungodly who forsake Thy law: and the words, I received comfort, may be referred to these, Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

7. Ver. 55. I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law. Night is that low estate, wherein is the trouble of mortality: night is in the proud who deal exceeding wickedly: night is the fear for the ungodly who forsake the law of the Lord; night is, lastly, the house of this pilgrimage, until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and

then shall every man have praise of God. In this night, therefore, man ought to remember the Name of the Lord; So that he who glorieth, may glory in the Lord; on which account this also is written, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. For thus every man keepeth the law of God, not in his own glory, but in the glory of the Lord; because he doth it not in his own righteousness, but in that of God, that is, in the righteousness given him of God; even as this man saith, I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept Thy law. But he would not have kept it, if trusting in his own strength, he had not thought upon the Name of the Lord: for our help standeth in the Name of the Lord.

8. Ver. 56. Considering this, he addeth, This was made unto me, because I sought out Thy righteousnesses. Thy righteousnesses, whereby Thou dost justify the ungodly; not mine, which never make me godly, but proud. For this man was not one of those who, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Others have better interpreted these righteousnesses, as those whereby men are justified for nought through God's grace, though by themselves they cannot be righteous, justifications; since the Greek hath not δικαιόσυναι, that is, acts of righteousness; but δικαιώματα, acts of justification. But what meaneth, This was made unto me? What is This? It is perhaps the law? as he had said, and I have kept Thy law; to which he subjoins, This was made unto me, meaning, This was made my law. But we need not delay by expounding in what manner the law of God was made his law. For the Greek words whence these Latin words have been translated, sufficiently declare that it could not have been said of the law, for the word law is in Greek of the masculine gender, and the feminine pronoun is used in the Greek text as well. We must therefore enquire first what was thus made unto him, next in what manner, whatever it may have been, was made unto him. This, he saith, was made unto me: not, This law, for the Greek, as I have said, refuseth this sense. Perhaps then, This night: since the whole of the preceding sentence stands thus: I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season: and have kept Thy law; and the next words are, This was made unto me: since then it is not the law, it must truly be the night which is thus spoken of. What then meaneth, I had the night-season: for I have

sought out Thy righteousnesses? Rather light had come unto him than night, since he sought out the righteousnesses of God. And it is thus rightly understood, It was made unto me, as if it were said, It became night for my sake, that is, that it might profit me. For if that low estate of mortality is not absurdly understood as night, where the hearts of mortals are hid to one another, so that from such darkness innumerable and heavy temptations arise, so that in the same night wild beasts of the forest pass through, the young of the lions roaring, seeking their meat from God; whence of that lion who roareth and seeketh whom he may devour, our Lord saith what I have mentioned above, This night Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you like wheat; that is, in this night, wherein the beasts of the forest roam about, that great lion sought you from God as his prey: indeed this very low estate in the house of this pilgrimage, which is rightly understood as night, profiteth those who are healthfully exercised in it, that they may learn not to be proud; since that is the sin on account of which man was banished into this night. For the beginning of pride is when one departeth from God. But let him who hath been justified for nought, and who hath encountered various temptations of this night that he may profit in this low estate, when he now understandeth, say, what is said some verses below in this Psalm, It is good for me that Thou hast brought me low, that I may learn Thy righteousnesses. For what else meaneth, It is good for me that Thou hast brought me low, save that this low estate which is called night, was made for me, that is, was made that it might profit me? But wherefore this? Because I have sought out Thy righteousnesses, not mine own.

9. We may also so understand what is here said, This was made for me, so that neither the law, nor night be understood, but the pronoun this be taken as it is found in another Psalm, where it is said, One thing have I desired of the Lord, this I will require. He saith not what is this one thing, or what one, of which he said, This I will require; but the feminine gender (*hanc requiram*) is seemingly put for the neuter. For it is an unusual expression, *Unam petii, hanc requiram*; where it is not understood what that one is: the more common construction would be, “*Unum petii a Domino, hoc requiram, ut inhabitem in domo Domini.*” For in these neuters we do not usually look for any neuter which is to be understood, as, for instance, one

good thing, or one gift, or any thing of this sort; but whatever it is, though it have its name of the masculine or feminine gender, or without any gender be set forth in any form of expression, according to a well-known rule it is understood in the neuter gender. In this way therefore the words, *Hæc facta est mihi*, may have been used, as if it had been said, *Hoc factum est mihi*. But if we enquire what this be, what he had said above occurs, I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law. This hath been done for me; that is, my having kept Thy law, was not done through myself, but was done for me, by Thee: because I sought out, not my but Thy righteousnesses. For, it is God, saith the Apostle, that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. For God saith this through the Prophet: And I will cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. Wherefore since God saith, I will cause you to keep My judgments and do them; he very rightly saith, This hath been made for me: so that when thou askest what that is, he answereth what he had said above, that I might keep the law of God. But since this exposition hath already reached a great length, what followeth will, with the Lord's help, be better treated with in a fresh beginning.

Discourse XVI

1. Ver. 57. We will now attempt to treat of these verses of this great Psalm, with the will of God; The Lord is my portion; for which some read, My portion, O Lord. Whether this be said, because each one who clingeth unto Him shareth in Him, as it is written, But it is good for me to hold me fast by God; for it is not by themselves being so that men become gods, but by sharing in that one God Who is the true God: or because men choose themselves parts in this world, or take by lot, one man one thing, another another, whence each may live; in a certain sense God is the portion of the pious whereby they may alway live: either sense is not absurd. But let us hear what followeth: I have promised to keep Thy law. What meaneth, My portion, O Lord: I have promised to keep Thy law; save because the Lord will be each man's portion then, when he hath kept His law?

2. Ver. 58. But how doth he keep it, unless the lifegiving Spirit grant this, and aid him unto this; that the letter may not kill, and that sin, taking occasion by the commandment, may not work in man all manner of

concupiscence. He must therefore be called upon: for thus doth faith gain from Him what the law commandeth: for whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved. Consider therefore what he subjoineth: I entreated Thy face with my whole heart: and saying in what manner he prayed: O be merciful, he saith, unto me, according to Thy word. And as if he had been heard and aided by Him Whom he prayed unto, I thought, he saith, on mine own ways, and turned away my feet unto Thy testimonies. That is, I turned them away from mine own ways, which displeased me, that they might follow Thy testimonies, and there might find a path. For most of the copies have not, Because I thought, as is read in some; but only, I thought. But what is here written, and I turned away my feet: some read, Because I thought, Thou also hast turned away my feet: that this may rather be ascribed to the grace of God, according to the Apostle's words, For it is God Who worketh in us; unto Whom also it is said, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity. If the eyes, lest they behold vanity, why not the feet also, lest they follow error? On which account this also was written: Mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. But whether, Thou hast turned my feet, or, I have turned, be read, we do this by His means, Whose Presence he prayed for with his whole heart, and unto Whom he said, O be merciful unto me, according to Thy word, that is, according to the word of Thy promise. For the children of the promise are counted for the seed of Abraham.

3. Ver. 60. Lastly, when he had received this blessing of grace, he saith, I was ready, and was not disturbed, that I may keep Thy commandments. Which some have rendered, to keeping Thy commandments, some that I should keep, others to keep, the Greek being τοῦ φυλάξασθαι.

4. Ver. 61. But in what manner he was ready to keep the divine commandments, he hath added, in these words: The bands of the ungodly have surrounded me: but I have not forgotten Thy law. The bands of the ungodly are the hindrances of our enemies, whether spiritual, as the devil and his angels, or carnal, the children of disobedience, in whom the devil worketh. For this word peccatorum is not from 'peccata,' 'sins,' but from 'peccatores,' 'sinners.' Therefore when they threaten evils, with which to alarm the righteous, that they may not suffer for the law of God, they, so to

speak, entangle them with bands, with a strong and tough cord of their own. For they draw iniquity like a long rope, and thus endeavour to entangle the holy, and sometimes are allowed so to do. But if they entangle the body, they do not entangle the mind, when it hath not forgotten the law of God; because the word of God is not bound.

5. Ver. 62. At midnight, he saith, I rise to give thanks unto Thee: because of Thy righteous judgments. This very fact, that the bands of the ungodly surround the righteous, is one of the righteous judgments of God. On which account the Apostle Peter saith, The time is come when judgment must begin at the house of the Lord: and if it first begin at us, he addeth, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? For he saith this of the persecutions which the Church suffered, when the bands of the ungodly surrounded them. I suppose, therefore, that by midnight we should understand the heavier seasons of tribulation. In which he said, I arose: since He did not so afflict him, as to cast him down; but tried him, so that he arose, that is, that through this very tribulation he might advance unto a bolder confession.

6. Ver. 63, 64, But, since these things are brought about by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Saviour Himself addeth the voice of His own Person to His Body through the medium of this prophecy. For I imagine that what followeth, I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments, doth relate to the Head Himself, as it is in the Epistle which is inscribed to the Hebrews: Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. And a little lower, Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part in the same. And what else meaneth this than, He became their companion? For we should not be made sharers in His Divinity, unless He were made a sharer in our mortal nature. For in the Gospel it is said in these words, that we have been made sharers in His Divine nature: To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. But that this might be so, since He also hath become a sharer in

our mortal nature, it is also said, And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Through this sharing of His in our flesh, grace is ministered unto us, that we may have a chaste fear of God, and may keep His commandments. Therefore Jesus Himself speaketh in this prophecy: some things in His Members and in the Unity of His Body, as if in one man diffused over the whole world, and growing up in succession throughout the roll of ages: and some things in Himself our Head. Whence are these words: I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments. And on this account, that since He became the companion of His brethren, God of men, the Immortal of the mortal, for this reason the seed fell upon the earth, that by its death it might produce much fruit; he next addeth concerning this very fruit, The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy. And whence this, save when the ungodly is justified? That we may make progress in the knowledge of this grace, he addeth, O teach me Thy righteousnesses!

Discourse XVII

1. Ver. 65. These verses of this Psalm, on which by the will of God we are about to speak, commence thus: O Lord, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant: according unto Thy word; or rather, according unto Thine utterance. The Greek word χρηστότης hath been variously rendered by our translators by the words sweetness and goodness. But since sweetness may exist also in evil, since all unlawful and unclean things afford pleasure, and it may also exist in that carnal pleasure which is permitted; we ought to understand the word sweetness, which the Greeks termed χρηστότης, of spiritual blessings: for on this account our translators have preferred to render it by goodness. I think therefore that nothing else is meant by the words, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, than this, Thou hast made me feel delight in that which is good. For when that which is good delighteth, it is a great gift of God. But when the good work which the law commandeth is done from a fear of punishment, not from a delight in righteousness, when God is dreaded, not loved; it is the act of a slave, not of a freeman. Now the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever: for perfect love casteth out fear. Thou hast, therefore, dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, O Lord: by making him a son, who was a

slave: according unto Thine utterance, that is, according unto Thy promise; that the promise might be sure to all the seed through faith.

2. Ver. 66. O learn me sweetness, and understanding, and knowledge, he saith, for I have believed Thy commandments. He prayeth these things may be increased and perfected; for how could he who had just said, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, say, O learn me sweetness, save in this sense, that the grace of God may become more and more known unto him through the sweetness of goodness? For they who said, Lord, increase our faith, had faith. And as long as we live in this world, these are the words of those who are making progress. But he addeth, understanding, or, as most copies read, discipline. Now the word discipline, for which the Greeks use παιδεία, is employed in Scripture, where instruction through tribulation is to be understood: according to the words, Whom the Lord loveth He disciplineth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. In the literature of the Church this is usually called discipline, translated from the Greek παιδεία. For this word is used in the Greek in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Latin translator saith, “No discipline for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that have been exercised thereby.” He therefore toward whom the Lord dealeth in sweetness, that is, he in whom He mercifully inspires delight in that which is good; to speak more plainly, he unto whom is given by God the love of God, and the love of our neighbour on account of God; he indeed ought to pray instantly, that this gift may be so increased unto him, that he may not only despise all other delights in comparison with it, but also that he may endure any amount of sufferings for its sake. Thus is discipline healthfully added to sweetness. This discipline ought not to be desired, and prayed for, for a small measure of grace and goodness, that is, holy love; but for so great, as may not be extinguished by the weight of the chastening; but, like a great conflagration under the impulse of the wind, in proportion as it is withstood, may rekindle with redoubled ardour. For this reason it was not enough to say, Thou hast dealt in sweetness toward Thy servant: without again praying that He would teach him sweetness, so much in fact as to enable him to endure with the utmost patience the discipline. In the third place is mentioned knowledge; since, if knowledge in its greatness outstrips the increase of love, it doth not

edify, but puffeth up. When therefore love in the sweetness of goodness shall be so strong, as that it cannot be extinguished by the tribulations which discipline useth; then will knowledge be useful, whereby a man learneth what he hath himself deserved, and what hath been given him of God, through which he discovereth that he can do what he knew not that he could do, and what he could not do by any means by himself.

3. But in that he saith, not, Give unto me; but, O learn me; how is the sweetness taught, if it be not given? Since many know what doth not delight them, and find no sweetness in things of which they have knowledge. For sweetness cannot be learnt, unless it please. Also discipline, which signifieth the tribulation which chasteneth, is learnt by receiving; that is, not by hearing, or reading, or thinking, but by feeling. But knowledge, which he hath placed third of the things of which he says, Teach me, is given by teaching. For what is to teach, save to give knowledge? and these two things are so mutually connected, that the one cannot exist without the other. For no one is taught except he learn, and no one learneth save he be taught. And therefore if a pupil be not able to understand what is said by the teacher, the teacher cannot say, I taught him, but he did not learn: though he may say, I told him what was to be said, but he did not learn; because he had no perception, no comprehension, no understanding. For, in truth, he too would have learnt, if the teacher had taught. And therefore God, when He would teach, first giveth understanding, without which a man cannot learn those things which pertain to the divine doctrine: whence also the Psalmist a little below saith, O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments. A man may then, when he wisheth to teach any one, say those words which our Lord said to His disciples, after He rose from the dead: but he cannot do what He did. For the Gospel saith, Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them. But what He said unto them, is read there: but they understood what He said, because He opened unto them the means of understanding it. God therefore teacheth sweetness by inspiring delight, He teacheth discipline by tempering tribulation, he teacheth knowledge by insinuating perception. Since then there are some things which we learn merely that we may know them, others that we may also do them; when God teacheth them, He so teacheth that we may know what ought to be known, by

opening the truth; so teacheth that we may do what we ought to do, by inspiring sweetness. For it is no idle prayer to Him: Teach me that I may do Thy will. He saith, Teach me that I may do, not merely that I may know. For the righteous deeds we work, are the fruits which we render unto our Landlord; but Scripture saith, The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her increase. But what is that land, save that concerning which it is said to Him Who giveth sweetness, My soul gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land.

4. After saying, O learn me sweetness, discipline, and knowledge, he addeth, for I have believed Thy commandments: and herein we may justly enquire, why he said not, I obeyed, rather than, I believed. For commandments are one thing, promises another. We undertake to obey commandments, that we may deserve to receive promises. We therefore believe promises, obey commandments. What then meaneth, I have believed Thy commandments, save this, I believe that Thou didst command them; Thou, not some human being, although they have been ministered unto men through men? Since therefore I believed that they were Thy commandments, let that faith of mine whereby I believed this, gain from Thee grace whereby I may do what Thou hast commanded. For if a man were to command me this outwardly, would he assist me inwardly to do what he ordered? Teach me therefore sweetness by inspiring charity, teach me discipline by giving patience, teach me knowledge by enlightening my understanding: for I have believed Thy commandments. I have believed that Thou Who art God, and Who givest unto man whence Thou mayest cause him to do what Thou commandest, hast commanded these things.

5. Ver. 67. Before I was humbled, I went wrong; wherefore I have kept Thy word; or, as some have it more closely, Thy utterance, that is, lest I should be humbled again. This is better referred to that humiliation which took place in Adam, in whom the whole human creature, as it were, being corrupted at the root, as it refused to be subject to truth, was made subject to vanity. Which it was profitable to the vessels of mercy to feel, that by throwing down pride, obedience might be loved, and misery perish never again to return.

6. Ver. 68. Sweet art Thou, O Lord; or, as many have it, Sweet art Thou, even Thou, O Lord. Some also, Sweet art Thou, or, Good art Thou: as we have before treated of this word: and in Thy sweetness teach me Thy statutes. He truly desireth to do the righteousnesses of God, since he desireth to learn them in His sweetness from Him unto Whom he hath said, Sweet art Thou, O Lord.

7. Ver. 69. Next he saith, The iniquity of the proud hath been multiplied upon me: of those, that is, whom it profited not that human nature was humbled after it went wrong. But I will search Thy commandments with my whole heart. Howsoever, he saith, iniquity shall abound, love shall not grow cold in me. He, as it were, saith this, who in His sweetness learneth the righteousnesses of God. For in proportion as the commandments of Him Who aideth us are the more sweet, so much the more doth he who loveth Him search after them, that he may perform them when known, and may learn them by doing them; because they are more perfectly understood when they are performed.

8. Ver. 70. Their heart is curdled as milk. Whose, save the proud, whose iniquity he hath said hath been multiplied upon him? But he wisheth it to be understood by this word, and in this passage, that their heart hath become hard. It is used also in a good sense, as in the 67th Psalm, A hill that is cheesed, a rich hill; and is understood to mean, full of grace: for this word, some have also interpreted curdled. But see what he contrasts on his own part with their hardness of heart: But I, he saith, delight in Thy law. What law? One that is most just, and most merciful; whence it is said unto Him, And have mercy upon me according to Thy law. He resisteth the proud, that they may become hardened; but giveth grace to the humble, that they may love obedience, and receive excellence. For by delight in this law voluntary humiliation is preserved, so that penal humiliation be escaped, of which he presently speaketh.

9. Ver. 71. It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me: that I might learn Thy righteousnesses. He hath said something kindred to this above: Before I was troubled, I went wrong: therefore have I kept Thy word. For by the fruit itself he sheweth that it was a good thing for him to be humbled; but in the former passage he hath stated the cause also, in that he had felt

beforehand that humiliation which resulted from his punishment, when he went wrong. But in these words, Wherefore have I kept Thy word: and again in these, That I might learn Thy righteousnesses: he seemeth to me to have signified, that to know these is the same thing as to keep them, to keep them the same thing as to know them. For Christ knew what He reproveth; and yet he reproveth sin, though it is said of Him that He knew not sin. He knew therefore by a kind of knowledge, and again he knew not by a kind of ignorance. Thus also many learn the righteousnesses of God, and learn them not. For they know them in a certain way; and again do not know them from a kind of ignorance, since they do them not. In this sense the Psalmist therefore is to be understood to have said, That I might learn Thy righteousnesses, meaning that kind of knowledge whereby they are performed.

10. Ver. 72. But that this is not gained, save through love, wherein he who doeth them hath delight, on which account it is said, In Thy sweetness teach me Thy righteousnesses: the following verse sheweth, wherein he saith, The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver: so that love loveth the law of God more than avarice loveth thousands of gold and silver.

Discourse XVIII

1. Ver. 73. When God made man out of dust, and gave him life with His breath, it is not there mentioned that He made him with His hands. Why therefore some should have thought that God created every thing else by His word, but man, as if the chief part of His creation, with His hands, I do not see: save perhaps, because the human body is said to have been formed out of dust, they imagine it could not have been created except by hands; nor do they heed that as it is written in the Gospel concerning the word of God, All things were made by Him, this cannot be consistent, unless the human body also was made by the Word. But they adduce testimony from this Psalm, saying, Behold where a man so clearly crieth out, (ver. 73.) Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me. As if it were not also openly said, I will consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers: nor less openly, And the heavens are the work of Thy hands; and even more openly, and His hands formed the dry land. The hands of God are therefore the power of God. Or

if the plural number moveth them, since it is not said, Thy hand, but, Thy hands; let them understand by the hands of God the power and wisdom of God, both of which titles are given to one Christ; Who is also understood under the figure, Arm of the Lord, where it is read, And unto whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Or let them understand by the hands of God, the Son and the Holy Spirit; since the Holy Spirit worketh conjointly with the Father and the Son: whence saith the Apostle, But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit: he said, one and the self-same; lest as many spirits as works might be imagined, not that the Spirit worketh without the Father and the Son. It is easy therefore to see how the hands of God are to be understood: provided, at the same time, that He be not denied to do those things through His Word which he doth by His hands: nor be considered not to do those things with His hands, which He doth through His word; nor on account of the expression, hands, a bodily form, one left and another right hand; nor on account of the term, word, any oral sound, or passing emotion of the mind, be supposed to exist in God Who worketh.

2. And there have been some who thus distinguished these two words, made and fashioned me, as to say that God made the soul, and fashioned the body; because God saith of the soul, I have made every soul; while it is said of the body, And God formed man of the dust of the ground; as if every thing that was formed were made, although every thing that is made is not also formed. Thus they assert, that the soul was rather made than formed because it is not body, but spirit; as if it were not written, He who formed the spirit of man within him. Nevertheless, when each of these words is used of man in the same passage, and since each element of man, that is, both soul and body, are not denied to be divinely created: special epithets are with some elegance applied to each, respectively; so that the soul is understood to be made, but the body to be formed, or fashioned, or shaped. (For some translators have not chosen to put *finxerunt* me, but *plasmaverunt*; being better pleased to derive an indifferent Latin word from the Greek, than to say *finxerunt*, which is sometimes used also for making a counterfeit.)

3. But is this said in respect of Adam? from whom since all men were propagated, what man, since Adam was made, may not say that he himself

also was made by reason of procreation and generation from Adam? Or may it rightly be said, in this sense, Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me, namely, that every man is born even of his parents not without the work of God, God creating, they generating? Since, if the creative power of God be withdrawn from things, they perish: nor is any thing at all, either of the world's elements, or of parents, or of seeds, produced, if God doth not create it. On which account He saith to the prophet Jeremiah, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee. But did God make man without understanding, either the first man, or each man born, so that he now saith unto Him, Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me: O give me understanding? Was not understanding given to human nature itself, that it might thus be distinguished from the herd? Hath it been so deformed by sinning, that even this must needs be formed again in it? On which account also the Apostle saith unto all who belong to the regeneration, Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind: and the understanding is, of course, in the mind. Hence again he saith, Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind; and of those who were not partakers of this regeneration, This I say, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. On account therefore of these inward eyes, whose blindness it is not to understand, that they may be opened, and may be made more and more clear, hearts are purified by faith. For although, unless he understand somewhat, no man can believe in God; nevertheless, by the very faith whereby he believeth, he is helped, that he may understand greater things. For there are some things which we do not believe, save we understand them; and there are other things which we do not understand, save we believe them. For since faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ; how can one believe him who preacheth the faith, if he (to say nothing of other points) understandeth not the very tongue which he speaketh? But unless, on the other hand, there were some things which we cannot understand, unless we believe them first, the prophet would not say, if ye will not believe, ye shall not understand. Our understanding therefore profiteth to the understanding of that which it believeth, and faith profiteth to the believing of that which it understandeth; and the mind itself, in

proportion as these things are more and more understood, in the very comprehension of them profiteth. But this doth not take place of its own or natural strength: but by the aid and gift of God; as it happeneth by medicine, not through nature, that the diseased eye recovereth its power of sight. He therefore who saith unto God, O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments, is not altogether devoid of it, as if a beast; nor in such a state, though a man, as to be reputed among the number of those who walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God. For if he were such, he would not even say this. For the understanding which knoweth from whom understanding should be sought, is not of slight value; and we must reflect in how much deeper a sense the Divine commandments should be understood; since he, who already to such a degree understandeth them, and hath already declared that he hath kept the words of God, still prayeth that understanding may be given him to learn them.

4. The Greek version hath a more concise expression for our, Give me understanding, συνέτισόν με, expressing ‘give understanding’ by the single word συνέτισον, which the Latin cannot do; as if one could not say, Heal me; and it were necessary to say, Give me health, as it is here said, Give me understanding; or, make me whole, as here it may be said, make me intelligent. This indeed an Angel could do: for he said to Daniel, I am come to give thee understanding; and this word is in the Greek, as it is here also, συνέτισαί σε; as if the Latin translator were to render θεραπεῦσαί σε by sanitatem dare tibi. For the Latin interpreter would not make a circumlocution by saying, to give thee understanding, if, as we say from health, “to heal thee,” so one could say from intellect, “to intellectuate thee.” But if an Angel could do this, what reason is there that this man should pray that this be done for him by God? Is it because God had commanded the Angel to do it? Just so: for Christ is understood to have given this command to the Angel, in the passage where the Prophet saith, And it came to pass, when I Daniel had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me the appearance of a man, and I heard a man’s voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Make this man to understand the vision: and in the Greek the same word συνέτισον is used as here. God therefore, of Himself, because He is light,

enlighteneth pious minds, so that they may understand the divine truths which are declared or exhibited. But if He employeth an Angel for His minister towards this object, an Angel may work something in a man's mind, towards his taking in the light of God, and understanding through it; but he is said to give a man understanding, and as it were, so to speak, to intellectuate him; as any one is said to give light to a house, or to illuminate a house, for which he maketh a window; when he doth not penetrate and light it by a light of his own, but merely open an entrance whereby it may be penetrated and enlightened. But neither the sun who lighteneth a house through a window, hath himself created the same house, or the man who made the window in the house; nor hath he commanded him to make it, nor hath he aided the man in making it, or done any thing to open an entrance for the infusion of his beams: whereas God hath created man's mind rational and intellectual, whereby he may take in His light; and He made an Angel such as might work something whereby the human mind might be assisted to take in the light of God; and He so aideth the mind, as to fit it for the reception of angelic working; and He so enlighteneth it of Himself, that not only those things which are displayed by the truth, but even truth itself may be perceived by the mind's eye. But as we have treated with prolixity of these subjects; necessary however to be treated of, in my opinion; let us, putting off our discourse on the remaining verses of this Psalm, close this discourse here.

Discourse XIX

1. Ver. 73. Our Lord Jesus in this Psalm hath through His prophet sought that understanding be given by God to His Body, which is the Church, as if to Himself, to learn the commandments of God. For with Him the life of His Body, that is, of His people, is hid in God, and He Himself, in this very Body of His, suffereth want, and prayeth for that which is needful for His members. Thy hands, he saith, have made me and fashioned me; O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments. Since Thou, saith he, hast formed me, do Thou new form me; that that may be done in Christ's Body, which the Apostle speaks of, Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

2. Ver. 74. They that fear Thee, he saith, will see me, and be glad: or, as other copies have it, will be joyful: because I have hoped in Thy word: that is, in the things which Thou hast promised, that they may be the sons of promise, the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations are blessed. Who are they who fear God, and whom will they see and be glad, because he hath put his trust in the word of God? Whether it be the body of Christ, that is, the Church, whose words these are through Christ, or within it, and concerning it, these are as it were the words of Christ concerning Himself; are not they themselves among those who fear God? Who then is he whom they see, and are glad? Doth the people see itself, and rejoice; and is it thus written, They who fear Thee shall see me, and be glad, because I have hoped in Thy word; or, as others have more carefully rendered it, I have more hoped: as if he should say, They who fear Thee, shall see Thy Church, and be glad, because I have more hoped in Thy words; since the same persons, who see the Church and are glad, are the Church? But why said he not, They who fear Thee see me, and are glad: whereas he hath written, fear Thee, in the present tense; while the verbs shall see, and shall be glad, are futures? Is it because in the present state there is fear, as long as man's life is a temptation upon earth; but the gladness which he desired to be understood, will be then, when the righteous shall shine in the kingdom of their Father like the sun. For on this account we read thus in another Psalm also: O how plentiful is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee! Now, therefore, as long as they fear, they do not as yet see; but they will see, and will be glad: because it there also followeth, and that Thou hast perfected for them that hope in Thee; and here, because I have hoped, or have more hoped in Thy words: so that we may understand by the word so compounded, the full sense of which is thus given by the care of a very diligent translator, this, that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think; so that, because they are above all that we ask or think, it is not enough to hope these things, but we are bound to hope more.

3. Ver. 75, 76. Since then the Church who is in this life still feareth, and doth not as yet behold herself in that kingdom, where her gladness will be free from care, but still toileth among perilous temptations in this world, where she heareth the words, Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed

lest he fall; considering the misery of this mortal state, during which a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother's womb, till the day that they return in burial to the mother of all things; so that on account of the flesh lusting against the spirit, even the regenerate are compelled to groan beneath its heaviness; considering this then, (ver. 75.) I know, she saith, O Lord, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in Thy truth Thou hast humbled me. O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant. Mercy and truth are so spoken of in the Divine Word, that, while they are found in many passages, especially in the Psalms, it is also so read in one place, All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. And here indeed he hath placed truth first, whereby we are humbled unto death, by the judgment of Him Whose judgments are righteousness: next mercy, whereby we are renewed unto life, by the promise of Him Whose blessing is His grace. For this reason he saith, according to Thy word unto Thy servant: that is, according to that which Thou hast promised unto Thy servant. Whether therefore it be regeneration whereby we are here adopted among the sons of God, or faith and hope and charity, which three are built up in us, although they come from the mercy of God; nevertheless, in this stormy and troublesome life they are the consolations of the miserable, not the joys of the blessed: for this reason is it said, O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort.

4. Ver. 77. But since those things are destined to happen after and through these, he next saith, O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live. For then indeed I shall truly live, when I shall not be able to fear lest I die. This is styled life absolutely and without any addition; nor is any life save that which is everlasting and blessed understood, as though it alone were to be called life, compared with which that which we now lead ought rather to be called death than life: according to those words in the Gospel, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Did He add life eternal, or blessed? Again, when speaking of the resurrection of the flesh, He saith, They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: nor doth He here add everlasting or blessed. So also here: O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live: nor doth he here say, I shall live for ever, or, I shall live blissfully, as if it were no other thing to live than to live without any end and without any misery. But what is this a reward for? For Thy law,

he saith, is my meditation. Unless this meditation were in faith, which worketh by love, no man could arrive at that life on account of it. This I have thought it necessary to state, that no man when he hath committed to memory the whole law, and hath repeated it over and over again in constant recollection of it, not silent as to what it enjoineth, yet not living as it enjoineth, may imagine that he hath done what he readeth, Thy law is my meditation; and hence imagine that he shall gain, what in the words above the Psalmist hath prayed for on account of this merit, which he here mentioneth in these words; O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live. This meditation is the thought of one who loveth, and who loveth so fervently, that the love of this meditation of his groweth not cold, by howsoever great abundance of others' wickedness it be thronged around.

5. Ver. 78. He then goeth on as follows; Let the proud be confounded, for they have unrighteously practised iniquity against me: but I will be occupied in Thy commandments. Behold, what he saith, the meditation of the law of God, or rather, his meditation the law of God.

6. Ver. 79. Let such as fear Thee, he saith, and have known Thy testimonies, be turned unto me. In some copies, both Greek and Latin, we have found *convertantur mihi*, which I consider to mean just the same as if it were, *ad me*. But who is he who saith this? For no mortal will venture to say this, or if he say it, should be listened to. Indeed, it is He who above also hath interposed His own words, saying, I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee. Because He was made sharer in our mortal state, that we might also become partakers in His Divine Nature, we became sharers in One unto life, He a sharer in many unto death. He it is unto Whom they that fear God turn, and who know the testimonies of God, so long before predicted of Him through the Prophets, a little before displayed in His presence through miracles.

7. Ver. 80. O let my heart, he saith, be unspotted in Thy righteousnesses, that I be not ashamed. He returneth to the words of His body, that is, His holy people, and now prayeth that his heart may be made unspotted, that is, the heart of His members; in the righteousnesses of God, not in their own strength: for He hath prayed for this, not presumed upon it. In the words he hath added, that I be not ashamed, there is a resemblance to some of the

earlier verses of this Psalm, where he saith, O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy righteousnesses! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. Whereas there, in the words, O that, he signifieth a wish, he hath here expressed himself in the more open words of one praying: O let my heart be sound: so that in neither of these two sentences, each of which is one and the same, there is found the boldness of one who trusteth in his own free will against grace. While he saith there, so shall I not be confounded: he saith here, that I be not ashamed. The heart then of the members and the body of Christ is made unspotted, through the grace of God, by means of the very Head of that Body, that is, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by the laver of regeneration, wherein all our past sins have been blotted out; through the aid of the Spirit, whereby we lust against the flesh, that we be not overcome in our fight; through the efficacy of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we say, Forgive us our trespasses. Thus regeneration having been given to us, our conflict having been aided, prayer having been poured forth, our heart is made unspotted, so that we be not ashamed: since this also relateth to the statutes of God, it being enjoined among the rest of His commandments, Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you.

Discourse XX

1. Ver. 81. With the Lord's help, we have undertaken to consider and expound this part of this great Psalm, where it is said, My soul hath failed for Thy salvation: and I have hoped because of Thy word. It is not every failing that should be supposed to be blameable or deserving punishment: there is also a failing that is laudable or desirable. For as these two things, to advance (*proficere*), and to fail (*deficere*), are contrary to one another; succeeding is generally taken in a good sense, failing in a bad, when it is not added or understood wherein there is advance or failure: but when it is added, it may be at once a bad thing to advance, and a good thing to fail. For the Apostle saith openly, Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will advance unto more ungodliness: he saith also of some: They shall wax worse. So also failing from a good state towards a bad one, is bad, from a bad state towards a good one, is good. For it is said of a good failing: My soul hath a desire and failing to enter into the courts of the Lord. So also

here he saith not, faileth away from Thy salvation, but faileth for Thy salvation, that is, towards Thy salvation. This losing ground is therefore good: for it doth indicate a longing after good, not as yet indeed gained, but most eagerly and earnestly desired. But who saith this, save the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, longing for Christ from the origin of the human race even unto the end of this world, in the persons of those who, each in his own time, have lived, are living, or are to live here? Witness the most holy old man Simeon, who when he had taken Him up, an infant, in his arms, said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. For he had received a divine oracle, that he should not taste of death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Now we must believe that there was such a longing in all the saints of former times, as there was in this old man. Whence also our Lord Himself saith to His disciples, Many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them; so that their own words also are recognised in this passage, My soul hath failed for Thy salvation. Neither at that time, then, had this longing of the Saints found rest, nor is it now at rest in the body of Christ, which is the Church, until the end of the world, until the Desire of all nations come, as is promised through the Prophet. Wherefore the Apostle saith, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also which love His appearing. This desire then of which we are now speaking, ariseth from the love of His appearing; of which he also saith, When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. The first seasons of the Church, therefore, had Saints, before the Virgin's delivery, who desired the advent of His Incarnation: but these times, since He hath ascended into heaven, have Saints who desire His manifestation to judge the quick and the dead. Nor hath this desire of the Church had any rest from the beginning unto the end of the world, save during the short season when He was here in the flesh with His disciples, so that the voice of the whole Body of Christ groaning in this life maybe conveniently understood, My soul hath failed for thy salvation, and I have hoped because of Thy word: that is, of Thy promise; a hope which causeth us to await with patience that which is not seen by those who believe. Here

also the Greek hath the word ἐπήλπισα, which some of our translators have preferred rendering by, hoped-more; since beyond doubt it will be greater than can be described.

2. Ver. 82. Mine eyes, he saith, have failed for Thy word, saying, O when wilt Thou comfort me? Behold that praiseworthy and blessed failing, in the eyes again, but his inner eyes, not arising from infirmity of mind, but from the strength of his longing for the promise of God: for this he saith, for Thy word. But in what sense can such eyes say, When wilt Thou comfort me? save when we pray and groan with such earnestness and ardent expectation. For the tongue, not the eyes, is wont to speak: but in some sense the voice of the eyes is the longing of prayer. But in the words, When wilt thou comfort me? he sheweth that he endureth as it were delay. Whence is this also, How long, Lord, wilt Thou punish me? And this is done either that the happiness may be the sweeter when deferred, or this is the sentiment of those who long, since the space of time, which may be short to Him Who cometh to their aid, is tedious to the loving. But God knoweth what he doth and when, for He hath ordered all things in measure and number and weight.

3. Ver. 83. But when spiritual desires burn, carnal desires without doubt cool: on this account followeth, Since I am become like a bottle in the frost, I do not forget Thy righteousnesses. Truly he desireth this mortal flesh to be understood by the bottle, the heavenly blessing by the frost, whereby the lusts of the flesh as it were by the binding of the frost become sluggish; and hence it ariseth that the righteousnesses of God do not slip from the memory, as long as we do not meditate apart from them; since what the Apostle saith is brought to pass: Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Therefore when he had said, For I have become like a bottle in the frost, he added, and I do not forget Thy righteousnesses: that is, I forget them not, because I have become such. For the fervour of lust hath cooled, that the memory of love might glow.

4. Ver. 84. How many are the days of Thy servant? when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me? In the Apocalypse, these are the words of the Martyrs, and long-suffering is enjoined them until the number of their brethren be fulfilled. The body of Christ then is asking concerning its days, what they are to be in this world, and that no man might suppose that the Church would cease to exist here before the end of the world came, and that some time would elapse in this world, while the Church was now no more

on earth; therefore, when he had enquired concerning the days, he added also respecting the judgment, shewing indeed that the Church would exist on earth until the judgment, when vengeance shall fall upon Her persecutors. But if any one wonder why he should ask that question, to which when asked by the disciples, their Master replied, It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power; why should we not believe that in this passage of the Psalm it was prophesied that they should ask this very question, and that the words of the Church, which were so long before uttered here, were fulfilled in their question?

5. Ver. 85. In what followeth: The wicked have told me pleasant tales: but not like Thy law, O Lord: the Latin translators have endeavoured to render the Greek ἀδολεσχίας, which cannot be expressed in one Latin word, so that some have rendered it ‘delights,’ and others ‘fablings,’ so that we must understand to be meant some kind of compositions, but in discourse of a nature to give pleasure. Both secular literature, and the Jewish book entitled Deuterosis, containing besides the canon of divine Scripture thousands of tales, comprise these in their different sects and professions; the vain and wandering loquacity of heretics holds them also. All these he wished to be considered as wicked, by whom he saith that ἀδολεσχίαι were related to him, that is, compositions which gave pleasure solely in their style: But not, he addeth, as Thy law, O Lord; because truth, not words, pleases me therein.

6. Ver. 86. Lastly, he addeth, All Thy commandments are truth: they have persecuted me unjustly; O be Thou my help. And the whole sense dependeth upon the foregoing: How many are the days of Thy servant: when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me? For that they may persecute me, they have related to me these pleasant tales; but I have preferred Thy law to them, which on that account hath pleased me more, because all Thy commandments are true; not as in their discourses, where vanity aboundeth. And for this reason they have persecuted me falsely, because in me they have persecuted nothing save the truth. Therefore help Thou me, that I may struggle for the truth even unto death; because this is at once Thy commandment, and therefore it is also the truth.

7. Ver. 87. When the Church acted thus, She suffered what he hath added, They had almost made an end of me upon earth: a great slaughter of martyrs having been made, while they confess and preach the truth. But since it is not in vain said, O help Thou me; he addeth, But I forsook not Thy commandments.

8. Ver. 88. And that She might persevere unto the end, O quicken me, he saith, after Thy loving mercy: and so shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth; where the Greek hath Μαρτύρια. This was not to be passed over in silence, on account of that sweetest name of Martyrs, who beyond doubt when so great cruelty of the persecutors was raging, that the Church was almost made an end of upon earth, would never have kept the testimonies of God, unless that had been vouchsafed them which is here spoken of, O quicken me after Thy loving-kindness. For they were quickened, lest by loving life, they should deny the life, and by denying it, should lose it: and thus they who for life refused to forsake the truth, lived by dying for the truth.

Discourse XXI

1. Ver. 89. The man who speaketh in this Psalm, as if he were tired of human mutability, whence this life is full of temptations, among his tribulations, on account of which he had above said, The wicked have persecuted me; and, They have almost made an end of me upon earth; burning with longings for the heavenly Jerusalem; looked up to the realms above, and said, O Lord, Thy word endureth for ever in heaven: that is, among Thy Angels who serve everlastingly in Thine armies, without desertion.

2. Ver. 90. But the next verse, after heaven, pertaineth consequently to earth. For this is one verse of the eight which relate to this letter. For eight verses are appended to each of these Hebrew letters, (apices,) until this long Psalm be ended. Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to the other: Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth. Beholding therefore the earth next after heaven with the gaze of a faithful mind, he findeth in it generations which are not in heaven, and saith, Thy truth remaineth from one generation to the other: signifying all generations by

this expression, from which the Truth of God was never absent in His saints, at one time fewer, at one time more in number, according as the times happened or shall happen to vary; or wishing two particular generations to be understood, one pertaining to the Law and the Prophets, another to the Gospel. And as if opening the reason why truth is never wanting to these generations even, he addeth, Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth: meaning by the earth those that are on the earth. But other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. For no other than Christ was also the foundation of that generation which belonged to the Law and the Prophets, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Or are Moses and the Prophets to be counted as the sons of the bondwoman who bore sons unto slavery, not of the freewoman, who is the mother of us all; to whom a man shall say, Mother Sion; and He was born in her, and the Most High shall stablish her? For He is Himself Most High with His Father, and for our sake was born most humble of His mother; since He Who was God above her, became a man in her. On this foundation then, O Lord, hast Thou founded the earth, and it abideth, since, firmly grounded on such a foundation, it shall not move at any time; abiding most truly among them unto whom Thou wilt give eternal life. But those whom the bondwoman brought forth, belonging to the Old Testament, in the figures of which, nevertheless, the New lay hid, because they savoured of nothing save earthly promises, do not abide. For the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.

3. Ver. 91. Day continueth according to Thy ordinance. For all these things are day: and this is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it: and let us walk honestly as in the day. For all things serve Thee. He said all things of some: all which belong to this day, serve Thee. For the ungodly of whom it is said, I have compared thy mother unto the night, do not serve Thee.

4. Ver. 92. He then looketh back towards the source of this earth's deliverance, which caused it to abide when founded; and addeth, If my delight had not been in Thy law, I should perchance have perished in my humiliation. This is the law of faith, not a vain faith, but that which worketh through love. Through this grace is gained, which maketh men courageous

in temporal tribulation, that they may not perish in the humiliation of mortality.

5. Ver. 93. I will never forget, he saith, Thy righteousnesses, for with them Thou hast quickened me. Behold how it was that he did not perish in his humiliation. For, save God quickeneth, what is man, who can indeed kill, but cannot quicken himself?

6. Ver. 94. He next addeth: I am Thine: O save me, for I have sought Thy righteousnesses. We must not understand lightly the words, I am Thine. For what is not His? Because God is in heaven, are we to suppose that there is any thing on earth which is not His; when another Psalm saith, The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is: the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein. Why then is it that the Psalmist hath commended himself unto God somewhat in a more familiar sense, in these words, I am Thine: O save me; save because he wished it to be understood that he had desired to be his own only to his harm, which is the first and the greatest evil of disobedience? and as if he should say, I wished to be my own, and I lost myself: I am Thine, he saith, O save me, for I have sought Thy righteousnesses; not my own inclinations, whereby I was my own, but Thy righteousnesses, that I might now be Thine.

7. Ver. 95. The ungodly, he saith, have awaited me that they might destroy me; but I have understood Thy testimonies. What meaneth, have awaited me that they might destroy me? does it mean that they beset the road with an ambush, waiting that they might slay him when he passed? Did he then fear that he should perish altogether at the death of his body? God forbid! and what meaneth, have awaited me, save that he should consent with them unto iniquity? For then they would destroy him. And he hath said why he hath not perished: I understood Thy testimonies. The Greek word, Μαρτύρια, soundeth more familiarly to the ears of the Church. For though they should slay me not consenting unto them, yet while I confessed Thy testimonies (martyria) I should not perish; but they who, that they might destroy me, were waiting till I should consent unto them, tortured me even when I did confess them. Yet he did not leave that which he had understood, looking on it and seeing an end without end, if only he should persevere unto the end.

8. Ver. 96. Lastly, he next saith, I have seen an end of all consummation: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad. For he had entered into the sanctuary of God, and had understood the end. Now all consummation appeareth to me in this place to signify, the striving even unto death for the truth, and the endurance of every evil for the true and chief good: the end of which consummation is to excel in the kingdom of Christ, which hath no end; and there to have without death, without pain, and with great honour, life, acquired by the death of this life, and by sorrows and reproaches. But in what he hath added, Thy commandment is exceeding broad; I understand only love. For what would it have profited him, whatever death impended over him, in the midst of whatsoever torment, to confess those testimonies, if love were not in the confessor? Let us hear the Apostle: though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Now the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given us. In this shedding abroad there is breadth, in which we walk even in a strait path without straitness, by the gift of Him unto Whom it is said, Thou shalt make room enough under me for me to go, and my footsteps shall not slide. Broad therefore is the commandment of charity, that twofold commandment, whereby we are enjoined to love God and our neighbour. But what is broader than that, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets?

Discourse XXII

1. Ver. 97. We have frequently admonished you, that love was to be understood by that praiseworthy breadth, by means of which, while we do the commandments of God, we feel no straitness. On this account also after saying above in this great Psalm, Thy commandment is exceeding broad: in the following verse he sheweth wherefore it is broad: what love have I unto Thy law, O Lord! Love is therefore the breadth of the commandment. For how can it be that what God commandeth to be loved, be loved, and yet the commandment itself be not loved? For this itself is the law; in all the day, he saith, is my study in it. Behold how I have loved it, that in the whole day my study is in it; or rather, as the Greek hath it, all the day long, which more fully expresses the continuance of meditation. Now that is to be understood through all time; which is, for ever. By such love lust is driven out: lust, which repeatedly opposeth our performing the commandments of

the law, when the flesh lusteth against the spirit: against which the spirit lusting, ought so to love the law of God, that it be its study during the whole day. But the Apostle saith, Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. This is the faith which worketh by love; since it prayeth for the good Spirit by seeking, asking, knocking, through Whom love itself is shed abroad in our hearts. For all who are led by this Spirit of God, are the sons of God; who are received that they may sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, the servant being driven out, who doth not remain in the house for ever; that is, Israel according to the flesh, unto whom it is said, When ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. But the Gentiles, saith the Vessel of Election, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. Thus they became the enemies of Him who here speaketh in the prophecy.

2. Ver. 98. And he then addeth: Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies; for it is ever with me. For they have indeed a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish their own righteousness, not being subject to the righteousness of God. But the Psalmist, who understandeth the commandment of God above these his enemies, wishes to be found with the Apostle, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ, which is of God; not that the Law which his enemies read is not of God, but because they do not understand it, like him who understandeth it above his enemies, by clinging to the Stone upon which they stumbled. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that they may be justified freely through His grace; not like those who imagine that they obey the law of their own strength, and are therefore, though by God's law, yet still

endeavouring to set up their own righteousness; but as the son of promise, who hungering and athirst after it, by seeking, by asking, by knocking, as it were begs it of the Father, that being adopted he may receive it through His only-begotten Son. But when would he thus have understood the commandment of God, unless He Himself had caused him to understand it, unto Whom he saith, Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies? For those his enemies, born, as it were, of Agar, unto bondage, sought from the same commandment temporal rewards; and therefore it was not unto them for ever, as it was unto this man. For they who have translated for ever have rendered better than they who have written for an age, since at the end of time there can be no longer a commandment of the law. In this sense indeed there will be none, none written in visible tablets and books; but in the tablets of the heart, the love of God and of our neighbour will abide for ever; on which twofold commandment the whole Law and the Prophets hang; and He Who gave the commandment will Himself be the reward of the keeping of this commandment, and He Who is loved will be the reward of love, when God shall be all in all.

3. Ver. 99. But what meaneth the following verse, I have more understanding than my teachers? Who is he who had more understanding than all his teachers? Who, I ask, is he, who dareth to prefer himself in understanding above all the Prophets, who not only by speaking taught with so excellent authority those who lived with them, but also their posterity by writing? On Solomon indeed such wisdom was conferred, that he seemeth to have been preferred to all those who were before him; but it is not to be believed that he could here have been prophesied of by his father David; chiefly because what is here said, I have refrained my feet from every evil way, could not have been spoken in Solomon's person. Moreover if, and this is more probable, this prophet foretels Christ, at one time in the Head which is the Saviour Himself, at another in the Body which is the Church, uttering the words of prophecy, and making it seem as though one spake, on account of that great mystery, where it is said, And they two shall be one flesh; I recognise plainly Him Who had more understanding than His teachers, since when He was a boy of twelve years of age, Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, and was found by His parents after three days' space,

sitting in the temple among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions; when all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And justly, since He had already said through this prophecy, I have more understanding than my teachers. For He meaneth all men, not God the Father, to be understood; of Whom the Son Himself hath said, As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. It is very difficult to understand this of the Person of the Word; unless we can comprehend that it is the same thing for the Son to be taught as to be begotten of the Father. For to another it is one thing to be, another to have been taught, but to Him it is the same thing to be, and to have been taught; indeed from Whom He hath His Being, from the Same hath He therewith His teaching. But He is more easily understood to have learnt from the Father what He spoke, in the character of man, when He took upon Himself the form of a servant; for when He had assumed this form, men of more advanced age might think Him fit to be taught as a boy; but He Whom the Father taught, had more understanding than all His teachers. For Thy testimonies, He saith, are my study. For this reason He had more understanding than all His teachers, because He studied the testimonies of God, which, as concerning Himself, He knew better than they, when He spoke these words: Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in His light. But I have greater witness than that of John. Such testimonies He studied, when He had more understanding than all His teachers.

4. Ver. 100. But these teachers may be understood very reasonably to be those aged men, of whom he presently saith, I am wiser than mine elders. And this seemeth to me to be repeated here thus, that that age of His which is well known to us in the Gospel might be called to our remembrance; the age of boyhood, during which He was sitting among the aged, understanding more than all His teachers. For the smaller and the greater in age are wont to be termed younger and elder, although neither of them hath arrived at or approached old age; although if we are concerned to seek in the Gospel the express term, elders, more than whom He understood, we find it when the Scribes and Pharisees said unto Him, Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when

they eat bread. Behold the transgression of the tradition of the elders is objected to Him. But He who was wiser than His elders, let us hear what answer He made them. Why do ye also, He asked, transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Then a little after, that not only Himself Who is the Head of the Body, but also the Body itself and its members might be wiser than the elders, whose tradition was held concerning the washing of hands, calling the crowd together He said unto them, Hear and understand. As much as to say, Do ye also understand more than those elders, so that it may be clear that the prophecy was declared concerning yourselves also, in these words, I am wiser than mine elders: and that it might be adapted not to the Head alone, but to the Body also, and thus to the whole Christ. Not what entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but those things which proceed out of the mouth defile a man. This those elders who had handed down their commandments as if they were of great consequence, concerning the washing of hands, understood not. The very members also of that Head Who understood more than the elders, understood not as yet what He had said. Lastly, Peter, after a few sentences, answering, said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable. He still imagined that what the Lord had spoken without any figures, was a parable. But He replied: Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. Are ye yet without understanding, and are ye not wiser than those elders? But, certainly, when we have heard such a Master, our Head, each one of us may say, I am wiser than the elders. For what he proceedeth to add, suiteth the Body also: Because I have sought out Thy commandments. Thy commandments, not the commandments of men: Thy commandments, not the commandments of the elders, who wishing to be teachers of the law, understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. It is justly replied to those who preferred the authority of their commandments to the Truth, by a reference to those commandments, which must be carefully sought out, in order that they may be understood better than they were by those elders: Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God to establish your tradition?

5. Ver. 101. But what cometh next, doth not seem to apply to the Head, but to the Body: I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Thy words. For that Head of ours, the Saviour of the Body Himself, could not be borne by carnal lust into any evil way, so that it should be needful for Him to refrain His feet, as though they would go thither of their own accord; which we do, when we refrain our evil desires, which He had not, that they may not follow evil ways. For thus we are able to keep the word of God, if we go not after our evil lusts, so that they attain unto the evils desired; but rather curb them with the spirit which lusteth against the flesh, that they may not drag us away, seduced and overthrown, through evil ways.

6. Ver. 102. I have not shrunk, he saith, from Thy judgments: for Thou hast laid down a law for me. He hath stated what made him fear, so that he refrained his feet from every evil way. For what meaneth, I have not shrunk from Thy judgments; save what he saith in another place, I have been afraid of Thy judgments? I have believed them perseveringly: for Thou hast laid down a law for me. Thou, more inward than my inmost self, Thou hast laid down a law within my heart by Thy Spirit, as it were by Thy fingers, that I might not fear it as a slave without love, but might love it with a chaste fear as a son, and fear it with a chaste love.

7. Ver. 103. Consider then what followeth: O how sweet are Thy words unto my throat! or, as it is more literally rendered from the Greek, Thy utterances, above honey and the honeycomb unto my mouth. This is that sweetness which the Lord giveth, So that the earth yield her increase: that we do good truly in a good spirit, that is, not from the dread of carnal evil, but from the gladness of spiritual good. Some copies indeed do not read honeycomb: but the majority do. Now the open teaching of wisdom is like unto honey; but that is like the comb which is squeezed from the more recondite mysteries, as if from cells of wax, by the mouth of the teacher, as if he were chewing it: but it is sweet to the mouth of the heart, not to the mouth of the flesh.

8. Ver. 104. But what mean the words, Through Thy commandments I get understanding? For the expressions, I have understood Thy commandments: and, I get understanding through Thy commandments, are different.

Something else then he signifieth that he hath understood from the commandments of God: that is, as far as I can see, he saith, that by obeying God's commandments he hath arrived at the comprehension of those things which he had longed to know. On which account it is written, If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee: lest any one, inverting the natural order of things, before he hath the humility of obedience, may wish to arrive at the height of wisdom, which he cannot reach, save he hath approached it in regular order. Let him therefore hear these words: Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength, but what the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereon ever. Thus man reacheth the wisdom of hidden things through obedience to the commandments. But when he had said, What the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereon; he added, ever, because obedience must both be kept, that wisdom may be received, and when wisdom hath been received, obedience must not be given up. These then are the words of the spiritual members of Christ, Through Thy commandments I get understanding. For the body of Christ rightly saith these words in those, to whom, while they keep the commandments, a richer knowledge of wisdom is given on account of this very keeping of the commandments. Therefore, he addeth, I hate all evil ways. For it is needful that the love of righteousness should hate all iniquity: that love, which is so much the stronger, in proportion as the sweetness of a higher wisdom doth inspire it, a wisdom given unto him who obeyeth God, and getteth understanding from His commandments.

Discourse XXIII

1. Ver. 105. We undertake, according to the strength which the Lord giveth, to examine and treat of these verses of this Psalm, the first of which is, Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths. The word lantern appears in the word light; my feet are also repeated in my paths. What then meaneth Thy Word? Is it He who was in the beginning God with God, that is, the Word by Whom all things were made? It is not thus. For that Word is a light, but is not a lantern. For a lantern is a creature, not a creator; and it is lighted by participation of an unchangeable light. This was John, of whom God the Word saith, He was a burning and a shining lantern. But he is both

light and lantern; nevertheless compared with the Word, of Whom it is said, The Word was God, he was not the light; but was sent to give witness of the light. For that was the true light, which was not lighted as a man, but which lighteth every man. But unless a lantern also were a light, He would not say to His Apostles, Ye are the light of the world, when they had heard that they might not imagine themselves to be that, which He was Who had said this; for of Himself also He in a certain passage saith, I am the light of the world; He saith unto them of themselves, A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men; that they might know that they were, as it were, lanterns lit by that light which shineth without change. For no creature, howsoever rational and intellectual, is lighted by itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal Truth: although sometimes day is spoken of, not meaning the Lord, but that day which the Lord hath made, and on account of which it is said, Come unto Him, and be lightened. On account of which participation, inasmuch as the Mediator Himself became Man, He is styled lantern in the Apocalypse. But this sense is a solitary one; for it cannot be divinely spoken of any of the saints, nor in any wise lawfully said of any, The Word was made flesh, save of the one Mediator between God and men. Since therefore the only-begotten Word, coequal with the Father, is styled a light; and man when enlightened by the Word is also called a light, who is styled also a lantern, as John, as the Apostles; and since no man of these is the Word, and that Word by Whom they were enlightened is not a lantern; what is this word, which is thus called a light and a lantern at the same time, (for he saith, Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths,) save we understand the word which was sent unto the Prophets, or which was preached through the Apostles; not Christ the Word, but the word of Christ, of which it is written, Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. For the Apostle Peter also, comparing the prophetic word to a lantern, saith, We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lantern, that shineth in a dark place. What, therefore, he here saith, Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths, is the word which is contained in all the holy Scriptures.

2. Ver. 106. I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to keep Thy righteous judgments: as one who walked aright in the light of that lantern, and kept to straight paths. In the following word the preceding one is explained. For as if we asked what I have sworn, meant, he hath added, I am stedfastly purposed. For he calleth what he hath determined by a sacrament, an oath; because the mind ought to be so fixed in keeping the righteous judgments of God, that its determination should be in the place of an oath.

3. Now the righteous judgments of God are kept by faith; when, under the righteous judgment of God, neither any good work is believed to be fruitless, nor any sin unpunished; but, because the body of Christ hath suffered many most grievous evils for this faith, he saith, I was humbled above measure. He doth not say, I have humbled myself, so that we must needs understand that humiliation which is commanded; but he saith, I was humbled above measure; that is, suffered a very heavy persecution, because he swore and was stedfastly purposed to keep the righteous judgments of God. And, lest in such trouble faith herself might faint, he addeth, Quicken me, O Lord, according to Thy word: that is, according to Thy promise. For the word of the promises of God is a lantern to the feet, and a light to the paths. Thus also above, in the humiliation of persecution, he prayed that God would quicken him: They had almost made an end of me upon earth: but I forsook not Thy commandments. O quicken me after Thy loving-kindness: and so shall I keep the testimonies, that is the martyrdoms, of Thy mouth. Where it is meant, that if He quickened not by giving patience, on account of which it is written, In your patience shall ye possess your souls; and of which it was said, my patience is from Him; it is not the body which is done to death in persecution, but the soul, because it keepeth not the testimonies and righteous judgments of God.

4. Ver. 108. Make the freewill offerings of my mouth well pleasing, O Lord: that is, let them please Thee; do not reject, but approve them. By the freewill offerings of the mouth are well understood the sacrifices of praise, offered up in the confession of love, not from the fear of necessity; whence it is said, a freewill offering will I offer Thee. But what doth he add? and teach me Thy judgments? Had he not himself said above, From Thy judgments I have not swerved? How could he have done thus, if he knew

them not? Moreover, if he knew them, in what sense doth he here say, and teach me Thy judgments? Is it as in a former passage, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant: presently after which we find, teach me sweetness? This passage we explained as the words of one who was gaining in grace, and praying that he might receive in addition to what he had received.

5. Ver. 109. My soul is alway in Thy hand. Some copies read, in my hand: but most, in Thy hand; and this latter is indeed easy. For the souls of the righteous are in God's hand: in Whose hand are both we and our words. And I do not forget Thy law: as if his memory were aided to remember God's law by the hands of Him in Whose hands is his soul. But how the words, My soul is in my hands, can be understood, I know not. For these are the words of the righteous, not of the ungodly; of one who is returning to the Father, not departing from the Father. For that younger son may well seem to have wished to have had his soul in his own hands, when he said to his father, Give me my substance: but it is on this account that he was dead, that he was lost. Is it perhaps said, My soul is in my hands, in this sense, as if he offered it to God to be quickened? Whence in another passage it is said, Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. Since here too he had said above, Quicken Thou me.

6. Ver. 110. The ungodly, he saith, have laid a snare for me: but yet I swerved not from Thy commandments. Whence this, unless because his soul is in the hands of God, or in his own hands is offered to God to be quickened?

7. Ver. 111. Thy testimonies have I gained in heritage for ever. Some wishing to express in one word what is put in one word in the Greek, have translated it hereditavi. Which although it might be Latin, yet would rather signify one who gave an inheritance than one who received it, 'hereditavi' being like 'ditavi.' Better, therefore, the whole sense is conveyed in two words, whether we say, I have possessed in heritage, or, I have gotten in heritage: not gotten heritage, but gotten in heritage. If it be asked, what he gained in heritage, he replieth, Thy testimonies. What doth he wish to be understood, save that he might become a witness of God, and confess His testimonies, that is, that he might become a Martyr of God, and might

declare His testimonies, as the Martyrs do, was a gift bestowed upon him by the Father, of Whom he is heir? For many have wished, yet have not been able: yet none have been able, save they who have wished; because they would not have been able, if they had wished to deny the testimonies of God. But even their wish was prepared by the Lord. For this reason he saith he hath gained them in heritage, and this for ever; because they have not in them the temporal glory of men who seek vain things, but the eternal glory of those who suffer for a short season, and who reign without end. Whence the next words, Because they are the very joy of my heart: although the affliction of the body, yet the very joy of the heart.

8. Ver. 112. He then addeth: I have applied my heart to fulfil Thy righteousness for ever, for my reward. He who saith, I have applied my heart, had before said, Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies: so that we may understand that it is at once a divine gift, and an act of free will. But are we to fulfil the righteousnesses of God for ever? Those works which we perform in regard to the need of our neighbours, cannot be everlasting, any more than their need; but if we do not do them from love, there is no righteousness; if we do them from love, that love is everlasting, and an everlasting reward is in store for it; for the sake of which reward he saith he hath applied his heart to fulfil the righteousnesses of God, that by loving for ever, he may deserve to have for ever that which he loveth.

Discourse XXIV

1. Ver. 113. The passage of this Psalm, of which by the will of God we are about to treat, thus beginneth; I have hated the unrighteous; and Thy law have I loved. He saith not, I hate the wicked, and love the righteous; or, I hate iniquity, and love Thy law; but, after saying, I have hated the unrighteous, he explains why, by adding, and Thy law have I loved; to shew, that he did not hate human nature in unrighteous men, but their unrighteousness, whereby they are foes to the law, which he loveth.

2. Ver. 114. He next addeth: Thou art my helper and my taker up: my helper, to do good works: my taker up, to escape evil ones. In the next words, I have hoped more on Thy word, he speaketh as a son of promise.

3. Ver. 115. But what is the meaning of the following verse: Away from me, ye wicked, and I will search the commandments of my God? For he saith not, I will perform; but, I will search. In order, therefore, that he may diligently and perfectly learn that law, he bids the wicked depart from him, and even forcibly driveth them away from his company. For the wicked exercise us in the fulfilment of the commandments, but lead us away from searching into them; not only when they persecute, or wish to litigate with us; but even when they court us, and honour us, and yet expect us to occupy ourselves in aiding their own vicious and busy desire, and to bestow our time upon them; or at least harass the weak, and compel them to bring their causes before us: to whom we dare not say, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? For the Apostle instituted ecclesiastical judges of such causes, forbidding Christians to contend in the forum. Not even to those who do not carry off others' property, but avariciously reclaim their own, do we say, beware of all covetousness, placing before their eyes the man unto whom it was said, Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall be those things which thou hast provided? because even when we do say this, they do not leave us; but press upon us with urgency, entreaty, tumult, exigence, rather to occupy ourselves with their interests, than in revealing the commandments of God. O with what weariness of turbulent crowds, and what ardent longing after the divine word, is it said, Away from me, ye wicked! I will search the commandments of my God! I ask the pardon of those obedient faithful ones, who rarely apply to us in behalf of their secular affairs, and most readily acquiesce in our judgments; and do not wear us out with litigation, but rather console us by their obedience. Certainly, on account of those who carry on law suits pertinaciously with one another, and, when they harass the good, scorn our judgments, and cause us to lose the time that should be employed upon things divine; surely, I say, on account of these men we also may exclaim in these words of the Body of Christ, Away from me, ye wicked! and I will search the commandments of my God.

4. Ver. 116. Then, after he had driven away the flies which poured upon him, as it were, from the eyes of his heart, he returneth unto Him unto Whom he was saying, Thou art my helper, and my taker up: I have hoped in Thy word; and, continuing his prayer, saith, O stablish me according to Thy

word, and I shall live: and let me not be disappointed of my hope. He who had before said, Thou art my taker up, prayeth that he may be more and more borne up, and be led unto that, for the sake of which he endureth so many troubles; trusting that he may there live in a truer sense, than in these dreams of human affairs. For it is said of the future, and I shall live, as if we did not live in this dead body. For the body is dead because of sin: and, while we await the redemption of our body, we are saved by hope, and hoping for that we see not, we await with patience. But hope disappointeth not, if the love of God be spread abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us? To receive this in a more ample measure, he crieth unto the Father, And let me not be disappointed of my hope.

5. Ver. 117. And, as though it were answered him in silence, Thou dost not wish to be disappointed of thy hope? Cease not to meditate upon My righteousnesses: and, feeling that this meditation is usually hindered by the weaknesses of the soul, (ver. 117.) Help me, he saith, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always.

6. Ver. 118. Thou hast scorned all, or, as it seems more closely translated from the Greek, Thou hast brought to nought all them that depart from Thy righteousnesses: for their thought is unrighteous. For this reason he exclaimed, Help Thou me, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always: because God bringeth to nought all those who depart from His righteousnesses. But why do they depart? Because their thought is, he saith, unrighteous. They advance in that direction, while they depart from God. All deeds, good or bad, proceed from the thoughts: in his thoughts every man is innocent, in his thoughts every man is guilty. On this account it is written, Holy thoughts shall preserve thee: and elsewhere it is read, Inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly; and the Apostle saith, Their thoughts excusing or accusing one another. But how is he happy who is miserable in his thoughts? or how is he otherwise than wretched there, who hath been brought to nought? For iniquity is a mighty desolation. Justly is it said, confounded be the unrighteous who do vainly: that is, emptily, as they that are brought to nought.

7. Ver. 119. The next words in the Psalm are, I have counted, or thought, or esteemed, all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors. In the Latin version

many different renderings are given of the Greek ἐλογισάμην; but this passage hath a deep meaning, which we must endeavour to penetrate at greater length, if the Lord will aid us, in another discourse. For the following words, Therefore have I ever loved Thy testimonies: make it far more profound. For the Apostle saith, The law worketh wrath; and, explaining these words, he addeth, For where no law is, there is no transgression: thereby shewing that not all are transgressors. For all have not the law. That all have not the law, he declareth more explicitly in another passage, as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. What then meaneth, I have held all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors? But let it suffice here to have proposed the question, to be discussed in another exposition, if God grant, lest the length of this force it to be expounded in too narrow a space to admit of the explanation being clearly understood.

Discourse XXV

1. Ver. 119. We are seeking, if by the bounty of God we may discover, in what sense the words of this great Psalm are to be understood; I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressors; or rather transgressing, for the Greek saith, παραβαίνοντας, not παραβάτας. We ask therefore how we are to understand, I have held all the sinners of the earth to be transgressing, because the Apostle saith, Where no law is, there is no transgression. This he said, while he was distinguishing the promise from the law. For that the sense may be more fully gathered from what goes before, we will cite the preceding sentence: The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, he saith, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. Why doth the Apostle say this, save to shew that the law without the grace of the promise doth not only fail to remove sin, but actually increaseth it? Whence also he saith, The law entered that sin might abound. But since all sins are remitted through grace,

not only those which are committed without the law, but those also which are committed in the law; he addeth, But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. The Apostle therefore doth not hold all sinners as transgressing: but those only who transgress the law. For where law is not, he saith, there is no transgression. Thus, then, according to the Apostle, every transgressor indeed is a sinner, because he sinneth in the law: but not every sinner is a transgressor, because some sin without the law; and where no law is, there is no transgression. Moreover, if no man could sin without the law, the same Apostle would not say, As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. But according to this Psalm, if all the sinners of the earth are transgressors, there is no sin without transgression; but there is no transgression without the law; there is therefore no sin, save in the law. He therefore who saith, I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing, wishes it to be understood that there are altogether no sinners, save they who have transgressed the law; and herein is opposed to him who hath said, As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law. For according to the Apostle there are some sinners, although they be not transgressors, that is, men who have sinned without law; for where no law is, there is no transgression; but according to the former, there is no sinner without transgression; because he holdeth all the sinners of the earth as transgressing. No man, therefore, according to him hath sinned without the law; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Shall we say, that it is indeed true that there is no transgression where there is no law, but that it is not true that any have sinned without the law; or, that it is true indeed that some have sinned without the law, but that it is not true that transgression cannot exist, where there is no law? But both of these things the Apostle hath affirmed; both therefore are true; because Truth hath spoken both through the Apostle. How then can it be true that in this Psalm the same Truth hath spoken without doubt, I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing? For they answer us: Who then are they who according to the Apostle have sinned without law? For each of these is not to be held as transgressing, since, according to the same Apostle, transgression cannot exist where there is no law.

2. But, indeed, when the Apostle said, As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law, he was speaking of that law which God gave to

His people Israel through Moses His servant. The context shews this. For he was speaking of the Jews, and of the Greeks, that is, the Gentiles, who belong not to circumcision, but to uncircumcision; speaking of them as without the law, because they had not received the law which the Jews gloried in having received: whence he saith to them, Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God. We must now consider how he came to pronounce this sentence: As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law.—Indignation and wrath, he saith, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God. To these words he addeth those which are the source of the present question: For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. Wishing by the latter the Jews, by the former the Greeks, to be understood, since he was speaking of these; proving that both were subject unto sin, that each might confess themselves in need of grace: on which account he saith, For there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Who are they then, all of whom he declareth to have sinned, save the Jews and the Greeks, of whom he had said, For there is no difference? For of these he had a little before said, For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are under sin. And therefore, all who have sinned without law, that law, to wit, in which the Jews gloried, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, that is, the Jews themselves, shall be judged by the law. But we are not on this account to conclude that they will not perish, unless they believe in Him Who came to seek that which was lost.

3. For some even Catholic expositors, from a want of sufficient heedfulness, have pronounced contrary to the truth, that those who have sinned without the law perish; and that those who have sinned in the law, are only judged, and do not perish, as if they should be considered destined to be cleansed by means of transitory punishments, as he of whom it is said, he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. This is well understood to be owing to the merits of the Foundation, of Whom the Apostle was speaking

above in these terms: As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus: and so on to the verse where he stated, that he who had built upon this foundation, not gold, silver, or precious stones, but wood, hay, and stubble, should be saved so as by fire; yet such a man doth not refuse to receive, nor when received, doth he forsake, the foundation; and he preferreth it to all his carnal delights, wherein he is captivated and used to yield, when the alternative is set before him, either to choose these or Christ; in which case if Christ be not preferred, he hath not the foundation. For the foundation is preferred to all the subsequent parts of the building. Nor do I suppose that they who have thought that those of whom it is said, They shall be judged by the law, do not perish, have had any notion of their not having Christ for their foundation. They therefore have not sufficiently attended to what we have proved; and Scripture itself declareth that the Apostle saith this of the Jews, who have not the foundation of Christ. But what Christian would assert that a Jew perishes not, if he believeth not in Christ, but that he is only judged: when Christ Himself testifieth that He was sent to the same nation, for the sake of the sheep which had been lost therein; and declares that it shall be more tolerable for the men of Sodom in the day of judgment which perished without law, than for the Jewish state which did not believe in Him when He performed miracles with such mighty power?

4. If therefore the Apostle asserted that the other nations were without the law, in the sense of that law which God gave to the people of Israel through Moses, but gave not to the rest of the nations; what are we to understand to be meant in this Psalm, I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing, unless we understand some law not given by Moses, in respect of which the sinners of other nations were transgressing? For where the law is not, there is no transgression. What law is this, save that of which the same Apostle saith, When the Gentiles, having not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves? According then to these words, having not the law; they have sinned without the law, and will perish without the law; but according to these words, They are unto themselves a law; all the sinners of the earth are

justly esteemed transgressors. For there is no man who doeth another wrong, but who is unwilling the wrong should be done to himself: and herein he transgresseth the law of nature, which he is not allowed to be ignorant of, while he does that which he is unwilling to suffer. But had not the people of Israel this natural law? They had, surely, since they were themselves men: but they would have been without the law of nature, if they could have been beside the nature of the human race. In a much wider sense, then, were they transgressors by the divine law, whereby that natural law was either restored, or enlarged, or confirmed.

5. Now if infants even, on account of the chains of original sin, are not unfitly enumerated among all the sinners of the earth; even they in the similitude of Adam's transgression, are shewn to belong to that transgression, which, when the law had been given in Paradise, was the first ever committed; and on this account all the sinners of the earth, without a single exception, are held as transgressors. For all have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God. The Saviour's grace, therefore, found all transgressors, some more, some less. For in proportion as the knowledge of the law was greater in each, so much less was the excuse for sin; in proportion as the excuse for sin was less, so much clearer was the transgression. It remained, therefore, that not their own righteousness, but that of God, by which I mean that given them of God, should be their resource. Whence the Apostle saith, By the law is the knowledge of sin, not the taking away, but the knowledge. But now, he saith, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. For this reason the Psalmist also hath subjoined: Therefore I loved Thy testimonies. As if he should say: Since the law, whether given in paradise, or implanted by nature, or promulgated in writing, hath made all the sinners of the earth transgressors; Therefore I loved Thy testimonies, which are in Thy law, of Thy grace; so that not my but Thy righteousness is in me. For the law profiteth unto this end, that it send us forward unto grace. For not only because it testifieth towards the manifestation of the righteousness of God, which is without the law; but also in this very point that it rendereth men transgressors, so that the letter even slayeth, it driveth us to fly unto the quickening Spirit, through Whom the whole of our sins may be blotted out, and the love of righteous deeds be inspired: Therefore,

he saith, have I loved Thy testimonies. Some copies read, always, some do not. If it be correct, it must be understood to mean, during our present life on earth. For here testimonies are necessary, from the Law and the Prophets, attesting the righteousness of God, whereby we are freely justified: here even our testimonies are necessary, for which the Martyrs laid down that life which is here spent.

6. Ver. 120. The grace of God, then, being known, which alone freeth from transgression, which is committed through knowledge of the law, he saith, in prayer, Fix with nails my flesh in thy fear. For thus some Latin interpreters have literally rendered the Greek καθήλωσον, which that language has expressed in one word. Some have preferred to render this by the word confige, without adding clavis; and while they thus desire to construe one Latin by one Greek word, have failed to express the full meaning of the Greek καθήλωσον, because in confige nails are not mentioned, but καθήλωσον cannot be taken but of nails, nor can 'fix with nails' be expressed without using two words in Latin. What is here meant, save what the Apostle saith, God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world? And again: I am crucified, he saith, with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And what else is this than, My righteousness is not in me, which is from the law, whereby I was made a transgressor; but the righteousness of God, that is, which is of God unto me, not from me? Thus in me liveth, not I myself, but Christ, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. He also saith, They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. Since it is here said that they have themselves crucified their own flesh, in this Psalm God is entreated to do this, in these words, Fix my flesh with nails in Thy fear; that we may understand that even what we do well should be ascribed to God's grace, Who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

7. But Why, after saying, Fix my flesh with nails in Thy fear, hath he added, For I have feared Thy judgments? What meaneth, Fix me in Thy fear: for I have feared? If he had already feared, or if he was now fearing, why did he

still pray God to crucify his flesh in His fear? Did he wish so much additional fear imparted to him as would suffice for crucifying his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts and affections; as though he should say, Perfect in me the fear of Thee; for I have feared Thy judgments? But there is here even a higher sense, which must, as far as God alloweth, be derived from searching the recesses of this Scripture. Fix, he saith, my flesh with nails in the fear of Thee: for I have feared Thy judgments: that is, in the chaste fear of Thee, which abideth from age to age, let my carnal desires be quenched; For I have feared Thy judgments, when the law, which could not give me righteousness, threatened me punishment. But perfect love driveth away this fear, whereby punishment is dreaded; love, which freeth us not by fear of punishment, but by delight in righteousness. For that fear, whereby righteousness is not loved, but punishment dreaded, is servile, because it is carnal; and for this reason doth not crucify the flesh. For the inclination to sin liveth, and it then appeareth in deed, when impunity may be hoped for. But when punishment is considered sure to follow, it liveth latently: nevertheless it liveth. For it would rather it were lawful to sin, and it grieveth that what the law forbiddeth, is not lawful; because it is not spiritually delighted with the blessing of the law, but carnally feareth the evil which it threateneth. But that love, which casteth out this fear, feareth with a chaste fear to sin, although no punishment follow; because it doth not even judge that impunity will follow, since from love of righteousness it considereth the very sin itself a punishment. With such a fear the flesh is crucified; since carnal delights, which are forbidden rather than avoided by the letter of the law, are overcome by the delight in spiritual blessings, and also when the victory is perfected are destroyed. Fix, therefore, he saith, my flesh with nails in Thy fear, for I have feared Thy judgments: that is, give me a chaste fear, to seek which the fear of the law hath conducted me like a schoolmaster, that fear whereby I have feared Thy judgments.

Discourse XXVI

1. Ver. 121. We have now undertaken to consider and to treat of these verses of this great Psalm; I have dealt judgment and righteousness; O give me not over unto mine oppressors. It is not wonderful that he should have dealt judgment and righteousness, since he had above prayed for a chaste fear

from God, whereby to fix with nails his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts, which are wont to hinder our judgment from being right. But although in our customary speech judgment is either right or wrong, whence it is said unto men in the Gospel, Judge not according to the persons, but judge righteous judgment: nevertheless in this passage judgment is used as though, if it were not righteous, it ought not to be called judgment; otherwise it would not be enough to say, I have dealt judgment, but it would be said, I have dealt righteous judgment. In this sense our Lord Jesus hath spoken: Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. And here judgment is used in such a sense, as if it were not judgment, if it be perverse. And in many passages of the holy Scriptures it is so put, such as is this: My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord; and that in Isaiah, I looked that he should deal judgment, but he dealt iniquity. He saith not, I looked that he should deal righteous judgment, but he dealt unrighteous; but as if, because an act was judgment, it must be righteous; and what was unrighteous, could not be judgment. Now righteousness is not wont to be called good righteousness or evil righteousness, as judgment is occasionally called good or evil judgment; but it is already good from the very fact of its being righteousness. The common way of speaking then, which allows of the terms good and bad judgment, is like that which allows the words good and bad to be applied to a judge: but righteousness is not styled good or bad in the same sense, even as we do not speak of a good righteous man, or an evil righteous man, because a man must be good, if he be righteous. Righteousness therefore is a virtue of the mind, a great and most praiseworthy virtue, concerning which there is now no need of a more copious discussion. But judgment, since the more definite way of speaking useth it only of the righteous, is the operation of this virtue. For he who hath righteousness, judgeth rightly: yea, according to this way of speech, he who hath righteousness, judgeth; because he doth not judge at all, if he do not judge rightly. Under the name of righteousness in this passage, not the virtue itself, but its work, is signified. For who maketh righteousness in man, save He Who justifieth the ungodly, that is, through His grace rendereth him righteous instead of ungodly? Whence the Apostle saith, Justified freely through His grace. He therefore who hath within himself righteousness, that is, the work of grace, dealeth righteousness, that is, the work of righteousness.

2. I have dealt righteousness and judgment, O give me not over to mine oppressors: that is, I have dealt just judgment, O give me not over to them who on that account persecute me. For some copies read, to them that persecute me: the Greek words τοῖς ἀντισικοῦσι, being variously interpreted by the Latin nocentibus, persequentibus, and calumniantibus. I wonder, however, that I have never met with the version adversantibus in any of the copies which I have read, since there is no doubt, that the Greek ἀντίσικος is the same as the Latin adversarius. While he prays therefore that he may not be given up to his adversaries by the Lord, what doth he pray, save what we pray, when we say, Lead us not into temptation? For he is the adversary of whom the Apostle saith, Lest perchance the tempter tempt you. Unto him God giveth up whom He forsaketh. For the tempter deceiveth not him whom God forsaketh not, of His free will “giving strength to man’s beauty.” But He turned away His countenance from him who had said in his strength, I will not ever be moved; and he became confounded, and was displayed unto himself. Whoso therefore in the chaste fear of God hath his flesh crucified, and corrupted by no carnal allurements, dealeth judgment and the work of righteousness, ought to pray that he may not be given up to his adversaries; that is, that he may not, through his dread of suffering evils, yield unto his adversaries to do evil. For he receiveth power of endurance, which guardeth him from being overcome with pain, from Him from Whom he receiveth the victory over lust, which preventeth his being seduced by pleasure: since of whom it is said, The Lord shall shew lovingkindness, of Him it is also said, From Thee is my patience.

3. Ver. 122, 123. He next saith, Take off Thy servant to that which is good, that the proud calumniate me not. They drive me on, that I may fall into evil; do Thou take me off to that which is good. They who rendered these words by the Latin, calumniantur, have followed a Greek expression, not commonly used in Latin. Have the words, Let not the proud calumniate me, the same force, as, Let them not succeed in calumniating me?

4. But many calumnies of the proud, by whom Christian humility is spurned, may be understood; and this is the chief, if men are understood to be called proud in this passage, because they object to us that we worship one who died. For Christian humility is taught by the death of Christ itself,

and is thus divinely commended unto us. Now this scandal is common to both classes of infidels, I mean, Jews and Gentiles. Heretics have their scandals also, peculiar to their several heresies: schismatics have also, all of whom pride hath cast asunder from the communion of the members of Christ. But how great is the scandal of the devil himself, whereby he doth calumniate the righteous, saying, Doth Job fear God for nought? The calumnies of all these proud ones are overcome, like the poison of the serpents, when we fix our minds upon Christ crucified with a most earnest and watchful piety. To prefigure His Cross, Moses by the merciful command of God raised aloft on a pole the image of a serpent in the desert, that the likeness of sinful flesh which must be crucified in Christ might be prefigured. By gazing upon this healing Cross, we cast out all the poison of the scandals of the proud: the Cross, which the Psalmist intently looking upon, saith, (ver. 123.) My eyes have failed for Thy salvation, and for the words of Thy righteousness. For God made Christ Himself to be sin for us, on account of the likeness of sinful flesh, that we may be made the righteousness of God in Him. For His utterance of the righteousness of God he therefore saith that his eyes have failed, from gazing ardently and eagerly, while, remembering human infirmity, he longeth for divine grace in Christ.

5. Ver. 124. In connexion with this he goes on to say, O deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy; not according to my righteousness. And teach me, he saith, Thy righteousnesses; those beyond doubt, whereby God rendereth men righteous, not they themselves.

6. Ver. 125. I am Thy servant. For it was not well for me, when I wished to be free as my own, not Thy servant. O grant me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies. This petition must never be intermitted. For it sufficeth not to have received understanding, and to have learnt the testimonies of God, unless it be evermore received, and evermore in a manner quaffed from the fountain of eternal light. For the testimonies of God are the better and the better known, the more understanding a man attaineth to.

7. Ver. 126. It is time, he saith, for the Lord to lay to His hand. For this is the reading of most copies: not as some have, O Lord. What time then, and

for doing what, did he mean to be understood? What he had a little before said: Deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy: it is the time for the Lord to do this. Now what is this, save the grace which was revealed in Christ at its own time? Of which season the Apostle saith, But when the fulness of time was come, God sent His Son. In reference to this also, adding a prophetic testimony in another passage, he saith, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; lo, now is the accepted time: lo, now is the day of salvation. But wherefore is it that, seemingly anxious to shew the Lord that it was time to lay to His hand, he hath subjoined, They have scattered Thy law; as if it were the season for the Lord to act, because the proud scattered His law, who, not knowing the righteousness of God, and wishing to set up their own, are not subject unto the righteousness of God? For what meaneth, They have scattered Thy law, save this, In the wickedness of transgression, they have not guarded its integrity. It was needful therefore that the Law should be given to the proud and those presuming in the freedom of their own will, after a transgression of which whosoever were contrite and humbled, might run no longer by the Law, but by faith, to aiding grace. When the Law therefore was scattered, it was time that mercy should be sent through the only-begotten Son of God. For the Law entered that sin might abound; by which sin the Law was destroyed; and Christ came now in an opportune season, that where sin had abounded, grace might much more abound.

8. Ver. 127. Therefore, he saith, I love Thy commandments above gold and topaz. Grace hath this object, that the commandments, which could not be fulfilled by fear, may be fulfilled by love. For, by the grace of God, love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Which is given unto us. Thus our Lord Himself saith, I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it; and the same Apostle, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Therefore, they are above gold and topaz stones. For this is read in another Psalm also, Above gold and exceeding precious stones. For topaz is a stone considered very precious. But they not understanding the hidden grace which was in the Old Testament, skreened as it were by the veil, (this was signified when they were unable to gaze upon the face of Moses,) endeavoured to obey the commandments of God for the sake of an earthly and carnal reward, but

could not obey them; because they did not love them, but something else. Whence these were not the works of the willing, but rather the burdens of the unwilling. But when the commandments are loved for their own sake above gold and exceeding precious stones, all earthly reward compared with the commandments themselves is vile; nor are any other goods of man comparable in any respect with those goods whereby man himself is made good.

9. Ver. 128. Therefore, he saith, was I made straight unto all Thy commandments. I was made straight, doubtless, because I loved them; and I clung by love to them, which were straight, that I might also myself become straight. Then what he addeth, naturally follows; and every unrighteous way I utterly abhor. For how could it be that he who loved the straight could do aught save abhor an unrighteous way? For as, if he loved gold and precious stones, he would abhor all that might bring loss of such property: thus, since he loved the commandments of God, he abhorred the path of iniquity, as one of the most savage rocks in the sailor's track, whereon he must needs suffer shipwreck of things so precious. That this may not be his lot, he who saileth on the wood of the Cross with the divine commandments as his freight, steereth far from thence.

Discourse XXVII

1. Ver. 129. The following are the words of the Psalm, on which, by the Lord's help, we are about to discourse: Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore hath my soul searched them. Who counteth, even by their kinds, the testimonies of God? Heaven and earth, His visible and invisible works, declare in some manner the testimony of His goodness and greatness; and the very ordinary and accustomed course of nature, whereby the seasons are rapidly revolved, in all things after their kinds, however temporal and perishable, however held cheap through our constant experience of them, give, if a pious thinker give heed to them, a testimony to the Creator. But which of these is not wonderful, if we measure each not by its habitual presence, but by reason? But if we venture to bring all nature within the comprehensive view of one act of contemplation, doth not that take place in us which the prophet describeth, I considered Thy works, and trembled? Yet the Psalmist was not terrified in his wonder at creation, but rather said that

this was the reason that he ought to search it, because it was wonderful. For after saying, Thy testimonies are wonderful; he addeth, therefore hath my soul searched them; as if he had become more curious from the difficulty of thoroughly searching them. For the more abstruse are the causes of any thing, the more wonderful it is.

2. If therefore we were to meet such a man, as would say that he searched the testimonies of God for this reason, because they are wonderful, while the whole creation, both visible and invisible, is full of them; should we not restrain him, saying, Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength: but that which the Lord hath commanded thee, meditate thereupon always? But if he answer us, and say, These very commandments of the Lord, which ye enjoin me to meditate upon, are His wonderful testimonies; since they attest Him to be the Lord, because He commandeth, and to be good and great, because He commandeth such things; shall we venture to recall the man from searching into such things, and not rather exhort him carefully to continue doing so, and to devote as much attention as possible to so great a subject? Shall we confess that the commandments of God are testimonies of His goodness, and yet deny them to be wonderful? For what wonder is it, if a good Lord giveth good commandments? Yea, it is this which is to be wondered at, and should have its reasons carefully examined, that, while a good God hath commanded good things, yet He hath given a good law unto them, to whom that law could not give life, so that there was no righteousness to be gained from that good law. For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. Why then was one given which could not give life, and out of which there was no righteousness? We may well wonder, well feel astonished at this. These then are the wonderful testimonies of God: on this account this man's soul hath searched them, since concerning them it could not be said unto him, Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search that which is above thy strength; but that which is commanded thee, meditate thereupon always. These very things are the Lord's commandments; and for this reason they should ever be meditated upon. Let us therefore rather consider what this man's soul searched, what it discovered.

3. Ver. 130. When thy word goeth forth, he saith, it giveth light, and maketh His little ones to understand. What is the little one save the humble and weak? Be not proud therefore, presume not in thine own strength, which is nought; and thou wilt understand why a good law was given by a good God, though it cannot give life. For it was given for this end, that it might make thee a little one instead of great, that it might shew that thou hadst not strength to do the law of thine own power: and that thus, wanting aid and destitute, thou mightest fly unto grace, saying, Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak. By searching, then, this little one understood the same, that Paul, the least, that is, the simplest of the Apostles, sheweth, that the Law, which could not give life, was given because Scripture hath concluded all things under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to all that believe. Do thus, do thus, merciful Lord; command what cannot be fulfilled, yea, command what cannot, save through Thy grace, be fulfilled: that when men have proved incapable of fulfilling Thy commandments through their own strength, every mouth may be stopped, and no man may seem great unto himself. Let all be little ones, and let all the world be guilty before Thee: because by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in Thy sight; for by the Law is the knowledge of sin. But now Thy righteousness without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. These are Thy wonderful testimonies, which the soul of this little one hath searched; and hath therefore found, because he became humbled and a little one. For who doth Thy commandments as they ought to be done, that is, by faith which worketh through love, save love itself be shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit?

4. Ver. 131. This is confessed by this little one; I opened my mouth, he saith, and drew in the spirit: for I longed for Thy commandments. What did he long for, save to obey the divine commandments? But there was no possibility of the weak doing hard things, the little one great things: he opened his mouth, confessing that he could not do them of himself: and drew in power to do them: he opened his mouth, by seeking, asking, knocking: and athirst drank in the good Spirit, which enabled him to do what he could not do by himself, the commandment holy and just and good. For if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how

much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? For not they that are led by their own spirit, but as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God; not that they themselves do nothing; but that they may not do nothing good, they are moved to act by the good Spirit. For so much the more is every man made a good son, in proportion as the good Spirit is given unto Him by the Father in a greater measure.

5. Ver. 132. He still prayeth. He hath opened his mouth, and drawn in the Spirit; but he still knocketh in prayer unto the Father, and seeketh: he drinketh, but the more sweet he findeth it, the more eagerly doth he thirst. Hear the words of him in his thirst. O look Thou upon me, he saith, and be merciful unto me: according to the judgment of those that love Thy Name: that is, according to the judgment Thou hast dealt unto all who love Thy Name; since Thou hast first loved them, to cause them to love Thee. For thus saith the Apostle John, We love God, because He first loved us.

6. Ver. 133. See what the Psalmist next most openly saith: Order my steps after Thy word: and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me. Where what else doth he say than this, Make me upright and free according to Thy promise. But so much the more as the love of God reigneth in every man, so much the less hath wickedness dominion over him. What else then doth he seek than that by the gift of God he may love God? For by loving God he loveth himself, so that he may healthily love his neighbour also as himself; on which commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. What then doth he pray, save that God may cause the fulfilment by His help of those commandments which He imposeth by His bidding?

7. Ver. 134. But what meaneth this that he saith, O deliver me from, the calumnies of men: so shall I keep Thy commandments? If those men impute true charges against him, they do not calumniate: if false, what reason is there that he should long to be delivered from these calumnies, that is, from false charges, which cannot injure him? For a false charge, that is, a calumny, doth not make a man guilty, save before a human judge: but when God is Judge, no man is injured by a false accusation; because it is imputed not to him against whom it is preferred, but to him who chargeth it. Is the prayer of the Church here prefigured,—the prayer of the whole

Christian people,—which was delivered from the calumnies of men, whereby the Christians were harassed in every part of the world? But doth he on this account keep the commandments of God? Did not the holy people of God much the more gloriously keep the commandments among these very calumnies, when they were at their hottest in the midst of tribulations, when they yielded not to their persecutors to commit impieties? But, in truth, the meaning of these words, O deliver Thou me from the calumnies of men, so shall I keep Thy commandments, is this: Do Thou, by pouring upon me Thy Spirit, guard me from being overcome by the terrors of human calumny, and from being drawn over to their evil deeds away from Thy commandments. For if Thou hast thus dealt with me, that is, if Thou hast in this manner delivered me by the gift of patience from their calumnies, so that I fear not the false charges they prefer against me; among those very calumnies I will keep Thy commandments.

8. Ver. 135. Shew the light of Thy countenance on Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes: that is, manifest Thy presence, by succouring and aiding me. And teach me Thy righteousnesses. Teach me to work them: as it is more plainly expressed elsewhere, Teach me to do Thy will. For they who hear, although they retain in their memories what they hear, are by no means to be considered to have learnt, unless they do. For it is the word of Truth: Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. He therefore who obeyeth not in deed, that is, who cometh not, hath not learnt.

9. Ver. 136. The Psalmist, recalling to mind his sorrowful penitence for his transgression, saith, My eyes have descended streams of waters, because they have not kept Thy law: that is, my eyes. For in some copies there is this reading, Because I have not kept Thy law, streams of waters therefore descended, that is, floods of tears. And in the same form of speech as he might say, ‘My feet have descended mountains,’ without saying, ‘over mountains,’ or ‘on mountains;’ so we say, ‘he descended ladders,’ though one say not ‘by ladders;’ or ‘he went down the well,’ without saying, ‘into the well.’ And he rightly said, descended, marking the humility of his penitence. For his eyes ascended, when they were raised aloft and elate with contumacious pride. For they seemed to themselves to be raised on high,

when, not knowing the righteousness of God, they wished to set up their own; wherein being wearied and confused by their transgression of the law, they have descended from that elevation in tears, that they might rather gain the righteousness of God by repentance. There are copies which do not read descended, but, overpassed, meaning that he said hyperbolically, that in weeping he had overpast streams of waters, that is, by weeping more than the waters flow in their streams. But why doth he thus weep for not keeping of the law, save to obtain grace, which blotteth out the iniquity of the penitent, and aideth the will of the believer?

Discourse XXVIII

1. Ver. 137, 138. He who singeth this Psalm had said above, My eyes have descended streams of waters, since they have not kept Thy law: where he testifieth that he hath wept much for his transgression. Thus, then, as if giving a reason why he had cause to weep much, and to mourn deeply for his sin, he saith, Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true is Thy judgment. Thou hast commanded Thy testimonies, righteousness, and Thy truth exceedingly. This righteousness of God and righteous judgment and truth, is to be feared by every sinner: for thereby all who are condemned are condemned of God; nor is there one who can righteously complain against the righteous God of his own damnation. Therefore the tears of the penitent are needful; since if his impenitent heart were condemned, he would be most justly condemned. He indeed calleth the testimonies of God righteousness: for He proveth himself righteous by giving righteous commandments. And this is truth also, that God may become known by such testimonies.

2. Ver. 139. But what is it that followeth: My zeal hath caused me to pine; or, as other copies read, Thy zeal? Others have also, The zeal of Thy house: and, hath eaten me up, instead of, hath caused me to pine. This, as it seems to me, has been considered as an emendation to be introduced from another Psalm, where it is written, The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up: a text quoted also, as we know, in the Gospel. The two words, however, hath caused me to pine, and hath eaten me up, are somewhat like. But the words, my zeal, which most of the copies read, occasion no dispute: for what wonder is it if every man pineth away from his own zeal? The words read in

other copies, Thy zeal, signify a man zealous for God, not for himself: but there is no difficulty in using my in the same sense. For what else doth the Apostle say, I am jealous over you for God, with a godly jealousy? In saying, I am jealous over you, doth he not display a jealousy of his own? But as he said for God, that is, not for himself, but for God, he addeth, with a godly jealousy. For God inspireth this among His faithful by His own Spirit: for it is a sign of love, not of envy. For what induced the Apostle to say this? I have betrothed you, he saith, to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ. But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his cunning, so also your minds be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ. The zeal of the house of God devoured him, yet this jealousy he felt for Christ, not for himself. For the Bridegroom is jealous of the Bride for Himself, but the friend of the Bridegroom should not be jealous of her for himself, but for the Bridegroom. The Psalmist's jealousy is therefore also to be understood in a good sense: for he addeth the cause, and saith, Because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words. They then were returning evil for good, because he was jealous of them for God so vehemently and ardently, that he said he was wasted with that zeal; but they for this cause carried on hostilities against him: because in fact he wished those, of whom from love he was jealous, to love the Lord. For not being ungrateful to the grace of God, by which he, who was before an enemy, had been reconciled to God, he too loved his own enemies, and was jealous of them for God, grieving and pining away, because they had forgotten His word.

3. Ver. 140. Then considering with himself with what a flame of love he burned for the commandments of God: Fiery, saith he, is Thy word exceedingly, and Thy servant hath loved it. Justly jealous was he of the impenitent heart in His enemies, who had forgotten God's word: for he endeavoured to bring them unto that which he himself most ardently loved.

4. Ver. 141. I am young, and of no reputation: yet do I not forget Thy righteousnesses: not as my enemies, who have forgotten Thy words. The younger seems to grieve for those older than himself who had forgotten the righteousnesses of God, while he himself had not forgotten. For what meaneth, I am young, yet do I not forget? save this, Those older than me

have forgotten. For the Greek word is νεώτερος, the same as that used in the words above, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? This is a comparative, and is therefore well understood in its relation to some one older. Let us therefore here recognise the two nations, who were striving even in Rebecca's womb; when it was said to her, not from works, but of Him that calleth, The elder shall serve the younger. But the younger saith here that he is of no reputation: for this reason he hath become greater: since God hath chosen the base things of the world, and things that are despised, yea, and things that are not as though they were, to bring to nought things that are. And, behold, they that were first are last, and they that were last first.

5. Ver. 142. It is no wonder that they have forgotten the words of God, who have chosen to set up their own righteousness, ignorant of the righteousness of God; but he, the younger, hath not forgotten, for he hath not wished to have a righteousness of his own, but that of God, of which he now also saith, Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth. For how is not the law truth, through which came the knowledge of sin, and that which giveth testimony of the righteousness of God? For thus the Apostle saith: The righteousness of God is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.

6. Ver. 143. On account of this law the younger suffered persecution from the elder, so that the younger saith what followeth: Trouble and hardship have taken hold upon me: yet is my meditation in Thy commandments. Let them rage, let them persecute; as long as the commandments of God be not abandoned, and, after those commandments, let even those who rage be loved.

7. Ver. 144. Thy testimonies are righteousness unto everlasting: O grant me understanding, and I shall live. This younger one prayeth for understanding; which if he had not, he would not be wiser than the aged; but he prayeth for it in trouble and hardships, that he may thereby understand how contemptible is all that his persecuting enemies can take from him, by whom he saith he hath been despised. Therefore he hath said, and I shall live: because if trouble and heaviness reached such a pitch, that his life should be terminated by the hands of his persecuting enemies, he will live

for ever, who preferreth righteousness to temporal things, which remaineth for evermore. This righteousness in trouble and hardship are the Martyria Dei, that is, the testimonies of God, for which Martyrs have been crowned.

Discourse XXIX

1. Ver. 145. Who can doubt, that cries unto the Lord, made in prayer, if uttered only from the mouth of the body, and not with the heart fixed upon God, sound in vain? But if they proceed from the heart, though the voice of the body be silent, they may escape any other man whomsoever, but not God. Whether then we cry unto the Lord, when we pray, with our fleshly voices, when there is occasion for them, or in silence, we must cry from the heart. Now the cry of the heart is a solemn earnestness of thought; which when vented in prayer, doth express a deep longing and affection of him that prayeth, so that he despaireth not of success. Then also we cry with the whole heart, when we have no thoughts elsewhere. Such prayers are rare among the many, frequent among the few; whether all are such with any one person, I know not. He who singeth this Psalm, mentioneth such a prayer of his own: I have called with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord! For to what end his cry profiteth, he addeth: I will search out Thy righteousnesses. For this purpose then he hath called with his whole heart, and hath longed that this might be given him by the Lord listening unto him, that he may search out His righteousnesses. That therefore which we are commanded to do, we pray that we may search out. How far is he who seeketh from him that doeth? For it doth not follow that he who seeketh should find; or that he who findeth, should do: but he cannot do, unless he hath found; nor find, unless he hath sought. But our Lord Jesus inspired great hope by saying, Seek, and ye shall find. But again, Wisdom (and what is this, save Himself? saith, The wicked shall seek me, and shall not find me. It is not said, therefore, to the wicked, but to the good, Seek, and ye shall find. Nay, but it is said to those, to whom it is said a little after in the same passage, If then ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children. How then is it said to the wicked, Seek, and ye shall find; and again said, The wicked shall seek Me, and shall not find Me? Did the Lord wish them to seek any thing save wisdom, when He promised that they should find it if they would seek it? For in it are all things which are to be

sought by those who wish to be happy. The righteousnesses of God therefore are there also. It remaineth therefore for us to understand, not that all wicked men do not find wisdom, if they seek it; but those who are so far evil as to hate it. For thus He hath said: The wicked shall seek Me, and shall not find Me, for they hate wisdom. They fail to find it then, because they hate it. But again, if they hate it, why do they seek it; save because they do not seek it on its own account, but for the sake of something which the wicked love, and think they will more readily arrive at through Wisdom! For there are many who most studiously examine into the words of wisdom, and wish to have it in doctrine, not in life; not so that they may reach the light of God, which is wisdom herself, by means of the conduct which wisdom prescribes, but that by means of the discourses which she yieldeth, they may reach the praise of men, which is vain glory. They do not therefore seek wisdom even when they are seeking her; because they do not seek her for her own sake, otherwise they would live according to her: but they wish to be puffed up with her words; and the more they are puffed up, the further they are placed without her pale. Whereas the Psalmist, seeking this very thing of the Lord, which the Lord commandeth him to do, that He may work in him what He commandeth; for it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure; saith, I have called with my whole heart: hear me, O Lord: I will search out Thy righteousnesses: to do them, not merely to know them: that I may not become like that stiffnecked servant, who, although he understand, will not obey.

2. Ver. 146. I have called, save me; or as some copies, both Greek and Latin, have it, I have called to Thee. But what is, I have called to Thee, save that by calling I have invoked Thee? But when he had said, save me; what did he add? And I will keep Thy testimonies: that is, that I may not, through infirmity, deny Thee. For the health of the soul causeth that to be done which it is known to be our duty to do, and thus in striving even to the death of the body, if the extremity of temptation demand this in defence of the truth of the divine testimonies: but where there is not health of the soul, weakness yieldeth, and truth is deserted.

3. Ver. 147. But what follows contains something obscure, which must be explained at somewhat greater length. I have prevented in the night watches

(*intempestâ nocte*). Many copies have not, *intempestâ nocte*: but, *immaturitate* (at an unseasonable time): but hardly one is found which has the preposition doubled, in *immaturitate*. *Immaturitas* means in this passage a season at night, which is not mature, that is, opportune for any thing being done waking: just what is commonly called, an unseasonable hour. Night is also called *intempesta*, that is, midnight, when we ought to be at rest, because it is inopportune for the actions of men awake. For by *tempestivum* the ancients meant opportune: and by *intempestivum*, inopportune: the word being derived from *tempus*, time, not from that sense of *tempesta*, which, according to the custom of the Latin tongue, signifies a storm in the sky. Although historians willingly use this word, *eâ tempestate* for *eo tempore*: and in the words of a great master of expression,

——“*Unde hæc tam clara repente*

Tempesta.”

——*Whence on a sudden this so bright*

Tempesta.

A sky disturbed with clouds and winds is not meant, but one refulgent with a sudden and splendid serenity. What therefore is called in Greek, *ἐν ἁωρίᾳ*, not in one word, but in two, that is, a preposition and a noun; this some of our translators have rendered by *intempestâ nocte*: more by, *immaturitate*, not two words, but one, the nominative of which is *immaturitas*: some again, by two words, like the Greek, in *immaturitate*: for *ἁωρία* is *immaturitas*, *ἐν ἁωρίᾳ* is in *immaturitate*: as though he also who said, *intempestâ nocte*, wished to double the preposition, and say, in *intempestâ*; so that one preposition might signify in such a time, the other might belong to the composition of the word. It matters nothing to the sense, whether any one say he did something *galli cantu*, or, in *galli cantu*: and so it would matter nothing, whether he said that he cried forth *intempestâ*, or in *intempestâ nocte*, that is, in *nocte intempestâ*. Yet the Greek said in *nocte intempestâ*, which would mean the same if it were expressed by in *immaturitate*, that is, at an unseasonable time of night. So far we have discoursed on an obscure word: now let us see what the sense itself is.

4. I have prevented in midnight, he saith, and have cried: In Thy words have I trusted. If we refer this to each of the faithful, and to the literal character of the act; it oft happeneth that the love of God is awake in that hour of the night, and, the love of prayer strongly urging us, the time of prayer, which is wont to be after the crowing of the cock, is not awaited, but prevented. But if we understand night of the whole of this world's duration; we indeed cry unto God at midnight, and prevent the fulness of time in which He will restore us what He hath promised, as is elsewhere read, Let us prevent His presence with confession. Although if we choose to understand the unripe season of this night, before the fulness of time had come, that is, the ripe season when Christ should be manifested in the flesh; neither was the Church then silent, but preventing this fulness of time, in prophecy cried out, and trusted in the words of God, Who was able to do what He promised, that in the seed of Abraham all nations should be blessed.

5. Ver. 148. The Church saith also what followeth, Mine eyes have prevented the morning watch, that I might meditate on Thy words. Let us suppose the morning to mean the season when a light arose for them that sat in the shadow of death; did not the eyes of the Church prevent this morning watch, in those Saints who before were on earth, because they foresaw beforehand that this would come to pass, so that they meditated on the words of God, which then were, and announced these things to be destined in the Law and the Prophets?

6. Ver. 149. Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy loving-mercy; and quicken Thou me according to Thy judgment. For first God according to His loving-mercy taketh away punishment from sinners, and will give them life afterwards, when righteous, according to His judgment; for it is not without a meaning that it is said unto Him, My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord; in this order of the terms: although the season of mercy itself be not without judgment, whereof the Apostle saith, If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord: but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world: and his fellow Apostle, The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what

shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God? And the final season of judgment shall not be without mercy, since as the Psalm saith, He crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness. But judgment shall be without mercy, but unto those on the left, who have not dealt mercy.

7. Ver. 150. They draw nigh, that of malice persecute me: or, as some copies read, maliciously. Then they that persecute draw nigh, when they go the length of torturing and destroying the flesh: whence the twenty-first Psalm, wherein the Lord's Passion is prophesied, saith, O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand; where those things are spoken of which He suffered when His Passion was not imminent upon Him, but actually realised. But by trouble being nigh at hand, he meant that which took place in the flesh; for there is nothing nearer to the soul than the flesh which it weareth. The persecutors therefore drew near, by afflicting their flesh, whom they persecuted. But heed what followeth: and are far from Thy law. The nearer they drew to the persecuting the righteous, so much the farther were they from righteousness. But what harm did they do unto those, to whom they drew near by persecution; since the approach of their Lord is nearer unto their souls, by Whom they no wise are forsaken?

8. Ver. 151. Lastly, it followeth, Thou art nigh at hand, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth. Even in their troubles, it hath been a wonted confession of the saints, to ascribe truth unto God, because they suffer them not undeservedly. So did Queen Esther, so did holy Daniel, so did the three men in the furnace, so do other associates in their sanctity confess. But it may be asked, in what sense it is here said, All Thy ways are truth; since in another Psalm it is read, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. But towards the saints, All the ways of the Lord are at once mercy and truth: since He aideth them even in judgment, and thus mercy is not wanting; and in having mercy upon them, He performeth that which He hath promised, so that truth is not wanting. But towards all, both those whom He freeth, and those whom He condemneth, all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth; because where He doth not shew mercy, the truth of His vengeance is displayed. For He freeth many who have not deserved, but He condemneth none who hath not deserved it.

2. Ver. 152. From the beginning I have known, he saith, as concerning Thy testimonies, that Thou hast grounded them for ever. The Greek word καταρχὰς hath been variously rendered by the Latin translators by ab initio, initio, and in initiis. Those who rendered it in the plural, have followed the Greek phrase. But it is more usual in the Latin tongue to express the idea conveyed by καταρχὰς, which in Greek is used in the plural or adverbially, by the words ab initio, or initio; just as with us, when we say, Otherwise I do this (alias hoc facio), we seem to be using the plural of the feminine gender, whereas the word is an adverb, and signifies, at another time. What then meaneth, From the beginning have I known as concerning Thy testimonies, that Thou hast grounded them for ever? He saith that the testimonies of the Lord were grounded by Him for ever, and he testifieth that he knew this from the beginning, and knew it from no other source than from those very testimonies. What are these testimonies, save those wherein God hath declared that He will give an everlasting kingdom unto His sons? And since He hath declared that He will give this in His only-begotten Son, of Whom it is said, Of His kingdom there shall be no end; he said that the testimonies themselves were grounded for ever, since that which God hath promised through them, was everlasting. For the testimonies will not of themselves be needful, when the reality, for the sake of the belief in which, testimonies are now required, shall be displayed. And for this reason the words, Thou hast grounded them, are rightly thus understood, because they are shewn to be true in Christ. For no man can lay any other foundation than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Whence then did the Psalmist know this in the beginning, save because the Church speaketh, which was not wanting to the earth from the commencement of the human race, the first-fruits whereof was the holy Abel, himself sacrificed in testimony of the future blood of the Mediator that should be shed by a wicked brother? For this also was at the beginning, They two shall be one flesh: which great mystery the Apostle Paul expounding, saith, I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

Discourse XXX

1. Ver. 153. Let no man, set in Christ's body, imagine these words to be alien from himself, (since in truth it is the whole body of Christ placed in

this humble state that speaketh,) whence beginneth the reading of this Psalm, concerning which we have now undertaken to treat: O consider my humiliation, and deliver me: for I forget not Thy law. In this place we cannot understand any law of God so suitably, as that whereby it is immutably determined that every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and every one that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. The proud therefore is involved in evils, that he may be humbled; the humble is delivered from evils, that he may be exalted.

2. Ver. 154. Avenge Thou, he saith, my cause, and deliver me. The former sentence is here almost repeated. For the words, O consider mine humiliation; answer unto these, Avenge Thou my cause: and the words, deliver me, also occur above. And what is there said, For I do not forget Thy law, agreeth with what we read here, Quicken me, according to Thy word. For these words are the law of God, which he hath not forgot, so that he hath abased himself, and will therefore be exalted. But the words, Quicken me, pertain to this very exaltation; for the exaltation of the saints is everlasting life.

3. Ver. 155. Health, he saith, is far from the ungodly: for they regard not Thy righteousnesses. For who discerneth thee, O thou who hast said, Health is far from the ungodly: who separateth thee from the ungodly, so that health is not far from thee, but with thee? This separateth thee, that what they have not done, thou hast done, that is, thou hast regarded the righteousnesses of God. But what hast thou that thou hast not received? Art thou not he who a little before didst say, I call with my whole heart: Hear me, O Lord: I will keep Thy righteousnesses? Thou therefore hast received from Him, unto Whom thou didst call, the power to keep them. He therefore doth Himself separate thee from those from whom health is far, because they have not regarded the righteousnesses of God.

4. Ver. 156. This he saw himself also. For I should not see it, save I saw it in Him, save I were in Him. For these are the words of the Body of Christ, whose members we are. He saw this, I say, and at once added, Great are Thy mercies, O Lord. Even our seeking out Thy righteousnesses, then, cometh of Thy mercies. Quicken me according to Thy judgment. For I know that Thy judgments will not be upon me without Thy mercy.

5. Ver. 157. Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me; yet do I not swerve from Thy testimonies. This hath been realised: we know it, we recollect it, we acknowledge it. The whole earth hath been crimsoned by the blood of Martyrs; heaven is flowery with the crowns of Martyrs, the Churches are adorned with the memorials of Martyrs, seasons distinguished by the birthdays of Martyrs, cures more frequent by the merits of Martyrs. Whence this, save because that hath been fulfilled which was prophesied of that Man Who hath been spread abroad around the whole world, Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me: yet have I not swerved from Thy testimonies? We recognise this, and render thanks to the Lord our God. For thou, man, thou hast thyself said in another Psalm, If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, they would have swallowed us up quick. Behold the reason why thou hast not swerved from His testimonies, and hast won the palm of thy heavenly calling amid the hands of the many who persecuted and troubled thee.

6. Ver. 158. I have seen, he saith, the foolish, and I pined: or, as other copies read, I have seen them that keep not covenant: this is the reading of most. But who are they who have not kept covenant, save they who have swerved from the testimonies of God, not bearing the tribulation of their many persecutors? Now this is the covenant, that he who shall have conquered shall be crowned. They who, not bearing persecution, have by denial swerved from the testimonies of God, have not kept the covenant. These then the Psalmist saw, and pined, for he loved them. For that jealousy is good, springing from love, not from envy. He addeth in what respect they had failed to keep the covenant, Because they kept not Thy word. For this they denied in their tribulations.

7. Ver. 159. And he commendeth himself as differing from them, and saith, Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments. He saith not, I have not denied Thy words or testimonies, as the Martyrs were urged to do, and, when they refused, suffered intolerable torments: but he said this wherein is the fruit of all sufferings; for, if I give up my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. The Psalmist, praising this virtue, saith, Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments. Then he asketh his reward, O Lord, quicken me, according to Thy mercy. These put me to death, do

Thou quicken me. But if a reward be asked of mercy, which justice is bound to give; how much greater is that mercy, which enabled him to gain the victory, on account of which the reward was sought for?

8. Ver. 160. The beginning, he saith, of Thy words is truth; all the judgments of Thy righteousness endure for evermore. From truth, he saith, Thy words do proceed, and they are therefore truthful, and deceive no man, for in them life is announced to the righteous, punishment to the ungodly. These are the everlasting judgments of God's righteousness.

Discourse XXXI

1. Ver. 161. We know what persecutions the body of Christ, that is, the holy Church, suffered from the kings of the earth. Let us therefore here also recognise the words of the Church: Princes have persecuted me without a cause: and my heart hath stood in awe of Thee. For how had the Christians injured the kingdoms of the earth, although their King promised them the kingdom of heaven? How, I ask, had they injured the kingdoms of earth? Did their King forbid His soldiers to pay and to render due service to the kings of the earth? Saith He not to the Jews who were striving to calumniate Him, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's? Did he not even in His own Person pay tribute from the mouth of a fish? Did not His forerunner, when the soldiers of this kingdom were seeking what they ought to do for their everlasting salvation, instead of replying, Loose your belts, throw away your arms, desert your king, that ye may wage war for the Lord, answer, Do violence to no man: neither accuse any falsely: and be content with your wages? Did not one of His soldiers, His most beloved companion, say to his fellow soldiers, the provincials, so to speak, of Christ, Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers? and a little lower he addeth, Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due: custom to whom custom: fear to whom fear: honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another. Does he not enjoin the Church to pray for even kings themselves? How then have the Christians offended against them? What due have they not rendered? in what have not Christians obeyed the monarchs of earth? The kings of the earth therefore have persecuted the Christians without a cause. But heed what he hath subjoined: And my heart hath stood in awe of Thy word. They

too had their threatening words: I banish, I proscribe, I slay, I torture with claws, I burn with fires, I expose to beasts, I tear the limbs piecemeal: but rather of Thy word hath my heart stood in awe. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. My heart hath stood in awe of these words of Thine; and I have scorned man who persecuteth me, and have overcome the devil that would seduce me.

2. Ver. 162. Then follows, I am as glad of Thy word as one that findeth great spoils. By the same words he conquered, of which he stood in awe. For spoils are stripped from the conquered; as he was overcome and despoiled of whom it is said in the Gospel, No man entereth into the strong man's house to spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man. But many spoils were found, when, admiring the endurance of the Martyrs, even the persecutors believed; and they who had plotted to injure our King by the injury of His soldiers, were gained over by Him in addition. Whoever therefore standeth in awe of the words of God, fearing lest he be overcome in the contest, rejoiceth as conqueror in the same words.

3. Ver. 163. For lest we should imagine it possible that hatred of God's words might have crept in, in consequence of this fear, although he had already said, I am glad of Thy word, which he certainly would not say, if he hated it; nevertheless he added, As for iniquity, I hate and abhor it; but Thy law have I loved. That awe, therefore, of His word did not create hatred of those words, but maintained his love unimpaired. For the words of God are no other than the law of God. Far be it therefore that love perish through fear, where fear is chaste. Thus fathers are at once feared and loved by affectionate sons; thus doth the chaste wife at once fear her husband, lest she be forsaken by him, and loveth him, that she may enjoy his love. If then the human father and the human husband desire at once to be feared and loved; much more doth our Father Who is in heaven, and that Bridegroom, beautiful beyond the sons of men, not in the flesh, but in goodness. For by whom is the law of God loved, save by those by whom God is loved? And what that is severe hath the father's law to good sons? Is it hard that He chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth? But he who refuseth these judgments, receiveth not the promises. Let the

Father's judgments therefore be praised even in the scourge, if His promises be loved in the reward.

4. Ver. 164. Such was, assuredly, the conduct of the Psalmist, who saith, Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments. The words seven times a day, signify evermore. For this number is wont to be a symbol of universality; because after six days of the divine work of creation, a seventh of rest was added; and all times roll on through a revolving cycle of seven days. For no other reason it was said, a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: that is, the just man perisheth not, though brought low in every way, yet not induced to transgress, otherwise he will not be just. For the words, falleth seven times, are employed to express every kind of tribulation, whereby man is cast down in the sight of men: and the words, riseth up again, signify that he profiteth from all these tribulations. The following sentence in this passage sufficiently illustrates the foregoing words: for it follows, but the wicked shall fall into mischief. Not to be deprived of strength in any evils, is therefore the falling seven times, and the rising again of the just man. Justly hath the Church then praised God seven times in a day for His righteous judgments; because, when it was time that judgment should begin at the house of God, she did not faint in all her tribulations, but was glorified with the crowns of Martyrs.

5. Ver. 165. Great is the peace, he saith, that they have who love Thy law: and there is no offence to them. Doth this mean that the law itself is not an offence to them that love it, or that there is no offence from any source unto them that love the law? But both senses are rightly understood. For he who loveth the law of God, honoureth in it even what he doth not understand; and what seemeth to him to sound absurd, he judgeth rather that he doth not understand, and that there is some great meaning hidden: thus the law of God is not an offence to him. But that he may suffer no offence at all, let him not heed men of each holy profession to such a degree as to allow his faith to depend upon their conduct; lest, if some fall, whom he highly esteemed, he perish by an offence: but let him love the law of God itself, and he shall have much peace, and no offence. For he is safe in loving that, which, although many sin in it, doth not itself know sin.

6. Ver. 166. I have waited, he saith, for Thy saving health, O Lord, and have loved Thy commandments. For what would it have profited the righteous of old to have loved the commandments of God, save Christ, Who is the saving health of God, had freed them; by the gift of whose Spirit also they were able to love the commandments of God? If therefore they who loved God's commandments, waited for His saving health; how much more necessary was Jesus, that is, the saving Health of God, for the salvation of those that did not love His commandments? This prophecy may suit also the Saints of the period since the revelation of grace, and the preaching of the Gospel, for they that love God's commandments look for Christ, that when Christ, our life, shall appear, we may then appear with Him in glory.

7. Ver. 167, 168. My soul hath kept Thy testimonies, and I have loved them exceedingly: or, as some copies read, hath loved them, understanding, my soul. The testimonies of God are kept, while they are not denied. This is the office of Martyrs, for testimonies are called Martyria in Greek. But since it profiteth nothing, even to be burnt with flames without charity, he addeth, and I have loved them exceedingly. He had said above, I have loved Thy commandments; then in the following verse, I have kept and have loved Thy testimonies: further down, I have kept both Thy commandments and Thy testimonies; for he saith, I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies. For he who loveth, keepeth them in the Spirit of truth and faithfulness. But generally, while the commandments of God are kept, they against whose will they are kept become our foes: then, indeed, His testimonies also must be kept courageously, lest they be denied when the enemy persecuteth.

8. After the Psalmist, then, had declared that he had done both these things, he ascribeth unto God his having been enabled to do so, by adding, because all my ways are in Thy sight. He saith therefore, I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies; because all my ways are in Thy sight. As much as to say, Hadst Thou turned away Thy face from me, I should have been confounded, nor could I keep Thy commandments and testimonies. I have kept them, then, because all my ways are in Thy sight. With a look favouring and aiding man, he meant it to be understood that God seeth his ways: according to the prayer, O hide not Thou Thy face from

me. For, the face of the Lord is also over them that do evil, but so, that He may blot out the memory of them from the earth. Not in this sense indeed hath the Psalmist said that his ways are seen of Him, but as the Lord knoweth the ways of the righteous, and as He saith unto Moses, I know Thee above all. For if this did not aid him as he walked, that his ways are before God, he would not say that he had kept his commandments and testimonies, because all his ways were before the Lord. For he knew how to hear, Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with reverence. Take hold on discipline, lest the Lord be angry, and so ye perish from the right way: for, save he were in the sight of the Lord, his way would not be the right way. For the Apostle Paul enjoineth this fear and trembling upon those to whom he saith, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; and, explaining why he speaketh thus, For it is God, he addeth, Who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. For this end, then, the ways of the righteous are before the Lord, that He may direct their steps, since these are the ways of which it is said in Proverbs, The Lord knoweth the paths that are on the right: but they that are on the left are perverse: so that we may understand that the Lord knoweth them not, because He will say to the perverse, I know you not. Moreover, to shew the fruit of the Lord's knowing those paths which are on the right, that is, those of the righteous, he at once addeth, For He will make Thy paths straight, and will lead thy footsteps in peace. Behold then the reason why the Psalmist also saith, I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies. And, as though we asked how he was able to keep them, he answereth, Because all my ways are in Thy sight, O Lord.

Discourse XXXII

3. Ver. 169. Let us now hear the words of one praying: since we know who is praying, and we recognise ourselves, if we be not reprobate, among the members of this one praying. Let my prayer come near in Thy sight, O Lord: for, The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart. Give me understanding, according to Thy word. He claimeth a promise. For he saith, according to Thy word, which is to say, according to Thy promise. For the Lord promised this when He said, I will inform thee.

2. Ver. 170. Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord: deliver me, according to Thy word. He repeateth what he hath asked. For his former words, Let my prayer come near in Thy presence, O Lord: are like unto what he saith, Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord: and the words, Give me understanding according to Thy word, agree with these, Deliver me according to Thy word. For by receiving understanding he is delivered, who of himself through want of understanding is deceived.

3. Ver. 171. My lips shall burst forth praise: when Thou hast taught me Thy righteousnesses. We know how God teacheth those who are docile unto God. For every one who hath heard from the Father and hath learned, comes unto Him Who justifieth the ungodly: so that he may keep the righteousnesses of God not only by retaining them in his memory, but also by doing them. Thus doth he who glorieth, glory not in himself, but in the Lord, and burst forth praise.

4. Ver. 172. But as he hath now learned, and praised God his Teacher, he next wisheth to teach. Yea, my tongue shall declare Thy word: for all Thy commandments are righteousness. When he saith that he will declare these things, he becometh a minister of the word. For though God teach within, nevertheless faith cometh from hearing: and how do they hear without a preacher? For, because God giveth the increase, is no reason why we need not plant and water.

5. Ver. 173, 174. But he is aware what perils will follow from the adversaries and persecutors, when he shall become a declarer of God's words: wherefore he hath added, Let Thy hand be stretched forth (fiat, be made) to save me, for I have chosen Thy commandments. That I might not fear, and that not only might my heart hold fast, but my tongue also utter Thy words: I have chosen Thy commandments, and have stifled fear with love. Let Thy hand therefore be stretched forth, to save me from another's hand. Thus God saved the Martyrs, when He permitted them not to be slain in their souls: for rain is the safety of man in the flesh. The words, Let Thy hand be made, may also be taken to mean Christ the Hand of God: in the sense of those words of Isaiah, And unto Whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For the Only-Begotten was not created, since by Him were all things created; but He was made of the seed of David, that He might be

Jesus, that is the Saviour, Who was already the Creator. But as these are familiar Scriptural phrases, Let Thy hand be stretched forth (lit. made); and, the Hand of the Lord was made: I know not whether this sense can be found in all these passages. Certainly where we read the following words, (ver. 174.) I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord: even if all our foes be reluctant, let Christ the Salvation of God occur to us: the righteous men of old confess that they longed for Him, the Church longed for His destined coming from His mother's womb, the Church longeth for His coming at His Father's right hand. Subjoined to this sentence are the words, And Thy law is my meditation: for the Law giveth testimony unto Christ.

6. Ver. 175. But in this faith, while with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; though the heathen rage furiously, and the people imagine a vain thing: though the flesh be slain while it preacheth Thee: My soul shall live, and shall praise Thee: and Thy judgments shall help me. These are those judgments, which it was time should begin at the house of the Lord. But they will help me, he saith. And who cannot see how much the blood of the Church hath aided the Church? how great a harvest hath risen in the whole world from that sowing?

7. Ver. 176. At length he openeth himself completely, and sheweth what person was speaking throughout the whole Psalm. I have gone astray, he saith, like a sheep that is lost: O seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments. Some copies have not seek, but quicken. For there is a difference only of one syllable, between the corresponding Greek words ζῆσον and ζήτησον: whence the Greek copies themselves derive the variation. But whichever of these be right, let the lost sheep be sought, let the lost sheep be quickened, for whose sake its Shepherd left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and while seeking it, was torn by Jewish thorns. But it is still being sought, let it still be sought, partly found let it still be sought. For as to that company, among whom the Psalmist saith, I do not forget Thy commandments, it hath been found; but through those who choose the commandments of God, gather them together, love them, it is still sought, and by means of the blood of its Shepherd shed and sprinkled abroad, it is found in all nations.

8. As far as I have been able, as far as I have been aided by the Lord, I have treated throughout, and expounded, this great Psalm. A task which more able and learned expositors have performed or will perform better; nevertheless, my services were not to be withheld from it on that account, when my brethren earnestly required it of me, to whom I owed this office. That I have said nothing of the Hebrew alphabet, in which every eight verses are ranged under a particular letter, and the whole Psalm arranged in this manner, let no one wonder, since I found nothing that related especially to this Psalm: for it is not the only one which hath these letters. Let those who cannot find it in the Latin and Greek versions, since it is not adopted there, know that every set of eight verses in the Hebrew copies beginneth with that letter which is prefixed to them; as is indicated to us by those who are acquainted with the Hebrew tongue. This is done with much more care, than our writers have shewn in their Latin or Punic compositions of Psalms which they style abecedarii. For they do not begin all the verses down to the close of a period, but the first only with the same letter which they prefix to it.

PSALM 120

1. Ver. 1. The Psalm which we have just heard chanted, and have responded to with our voices, is short, and very profitable. Ye will not long toil in hearing, nor will ye toil fruitlessly in working. For it is, according to the title prefixed to it, A song of degrees. In Greek it is written, ἀναβαθμῶν. Degrees are either of ascent or of descent. But degrees, as they are used in this Psalm, are of ascending. Let us understand it therefore as men who are resolved to ascend: and let us not seek ascent with our bodily feet, but, as it is written in another Psalm, He hath set steps of ascent in his heart, in the vale of misery, towards the place that He hath ordered. He saith, steps of ascent: where? in the heart. Whence? from the vale of misery. Now whither we ascend, since human language faileth, we cannot unfold, nor even imagine. Ye heard but now, when the Apostle was being read, the words, Which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man. It hath not ascended into the heart of man: let man's heart ascend thither. Since therefore eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man; how can it be said whither we must ascend? Since therefore it was impossible to utter this, he said, unto the place which He hath ordered. What more shall I tell thee, saith he, through whom the Holy Spirit spoke? unto such or such a place? Whatever I should say, thou thinkest of some earthly spot, thou crawlest on the ground, thou bearest flesh: the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things. Unto whom shall I speak? Who will hear? Who will understand, where we shall be after this life, if we ascend in heart? Since then no one can conceive of this; hope for some ineffable realm of bliss, which He hath fixed for thee who set steps of ascent in thy heart. But where? In the vale of misery. A vale signifieth humility: a mountain signifieth loftiness. There is a mountain whither we may ascend, a kind of spiritual loftiness. And what is this mountain, whither we ascend, save our Lord Jesus Christ? He Himself

made for thee, by suffering, a vale of misery, Who made, by His abiding, a mountain of ascent. What is a vale of misery? The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. What is a vale of misery? He giveth His cheek to him that smiteth Him: He is filled full with reproach. What is a vale of misery? He was buffeted, spit upon, crowned with thorns, crucified. This is the vale of misery whence thou must ascend. But whither must thou ascend? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For the Word Himself was made flesh, and dwelt among us. He so descended unto thee, as still to abide in Himself: He descended unto thee, so as to become for thee a vale of misery: He abode in Himself, that He might be for thee a mountain of ascent. There will be, saith Isaiah, in the last days, the mountain of the Lord set forth on the top of the mountains. Behold, whither we must ascend. But conceive not any thing earthly, nor, because thou hast heard of a mountain, think of the high places of the earth: nor, when thou hearest a stone or a rock mentioned, understand hardness; nor, when thou hearest of a lion, imagine ferocity: nor, when thou hearest of a lamb, think of a brute animal. There is none of these in Him, and He became all these for thy sake. Hence therefore we must ascend, thitherward we must ascend; from His example, unto His Divinity. For He made Himself an example by humbling Himself. For they who refused to ascend from the vale of misery, were rebuked by Him. For they wished to ascend too rapidly, they thought of exalted honour, they thought not of the path of humility. Beloved brethren, understand ye what I mean: the two disciples wished to sit at their Lord's side, one at the right, the other at the left: the Lord saw that they were too hastily, and out of due order, thinking of honours, when they ought first to have learnt humiliation, that they might be exalted; and said unto them, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? For He was to drink the cup of His Passion in the vale of misery; while they, not heeding Christ's humiliation, wished to attain the loftiness of Christ. He recalled them unto the way, as wanderers; not meaning to deny them what they wished, but to shew them the path whereby to attain it.

2. Let us therefore, my brethren, chant this Psalm of ascension, ourselves resolved to ascend in heart; for He descended unto us that we might ascend. Jacob saw a ladder, and some appeared unto him ascending and descending; he saw both. We may conceive that those who were seen to ascend, were

those who were spiritually progressing; those who were seen to descend, those who were falling off; for we actually find this in the people of God: some progress, others fall back. This ladder might signify the latter: but perhaps it is better to understand all as good men on that ladder, both in those who were ascending and in those who were descending. For it is not without a meaning that the word descending is used instead of falling. There is a wide difference between these two words. For because Adam fell, therefore Christ descended: the one fell, the other descended: the one fell from pride, the other descended in mercy. But He did not alone descend: though indeed He alone descended from heaven: but many saints in imitation of Him descend unto us, and have descended unto us. For the Apostle was dwelling in a kind of loftiness of heart, when he said, Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. In his mental transport, he was transported unto God. Transported in his mind beyond all human frailty, all the temporal interests of the world, all the things which, in alternate birth and death, vanish away, all these transitory things; he dwelt in heart in a certain ineffable contemplation, as far as he was able, of which he saith, that he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. He could not reveal these words to thee: yet he could see those things in a degree, which he could not reveal to thee. If therefore he chose ever to remain in that which he saw, and could not describe, he could not raise thee where thou also couldest see. But what did he do? He descended. For he there saith, For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your sake. What meaneth, whether we be sober? Whether we speak so that you may understand. For Christ also made Himself so by His Birth and Passion, that men might speak of Him: for a man easily speaketh of a man. When can man so speak of God, as God Is? But man speaketh easily of man. That the great, therefore, might descend unto the humble, and yet might tell them nought save great things; He Who was great, became humble, that the great might speak of Him to the humble. Ye have just heard what I am speaking, whilst the Apostle was being read. If ye heeded, he said this; I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. To the spiritual therefore he speaketh in lofty terms; but, that he may speak to the carnal, he descendeth. And that ye may be sure that when he descendeth, he speaketh of Him Who descended; behold, John speaketh of Him abiding in Himself: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. Take this, if thou canst; take it eagerly, it is food. But thou wilt answer me, That indeed is meat, but I am an infant, I must be suckled with milk, that I may be fit to eat meat. Since thou then must be nourished with meat, and He is meat, this Meat hath been through the flesh brought unto thy mouth. As the mother, therefore, doth eat the meat, that she may through the flesh transmit it to her infant when it hath become milk; so the Lord, the Word, the Food of Angels, was made flesh, and became milk; and the Apostle saith, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, nor yet are ye able. By giving milk, then, he descended unto the infants: and in descending, gave Him Who descended. For he saith, Did I say that I knew any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? For if he said only, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is also after His Divine Nature, in that He was the Word with God, Jesus Christ the Son of God: but infants understand Him not thus, that is, spoken of in this character. How then do they who take milk, receive Him? Jesus Christ, he saith, and Him crucified. Suck thou that which He became for thee, and thou growest unto that which He Is. There are therefore both those who ascend and those who descend on that ladder. Who are they that ascend? They who progress towards the understanding of things spiritual. Who are they that descend? They who, although, as far as men may, they enjoy the comprehension of things spiritual: nevertheless, descend unto the infants, to say to them such things as they can receive, so that, after being nourished with milk, they may become fitted and strong enough to take spiritual meat. Isaiah, my brethren, himself was one of those who descend unto us: for the very steps of his descent are clearly traceable. For when he said of the Holy Spirit, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding shall rest upon him, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; he began with wisdom, and descended unto fear. As he who taught, descended from wisdom unto fear; thou who learnest, if thou art profiting, ascend from fear unto wisdom; for it is written, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Now therefore hear ye the Psalm. Let us place before our eyes a man who is about to ascend. To ascend wherein? in heart. Whence? From humility, that is, from the vale of misery. To ascend

whither? To that unspeakable bliss, which, since it could not be named, is described as the place that He hath fixed.

3. When therefore a man hath commenced thus to order his ascent; to speak more plainly, when a Christian hath begun to think of spiritual amendment, he beginneth to suffer the tongues of adversaries. Whoever hath not yet suffered from them, hath not yet made progress; whoever suffereth them not, doth not even endeavour to improve. Doth he wish to know what we mean? Let him at the same time experience what is reported of us. Let him begin to improve, let him begin to wish to ascend, to wish to despise earthly, fragile, temporal objects, to hold worldly happiness for nothing, to think of God alone, not to rejoice in gain, not to pine at losses, to wish even to sell all his substance, and distribute it among the poor, and to follow Christ; let us see how he suffereth the tongues of detractors and of constant opponents, and—a still greater peril—of pretended counsellors, who lead him astray from salvation. For whoever counselleth another, counselleth him with a view to his salvation, counselleth him for his own good; but the feigned adviser draweth him back from salvation. Because, therefore, he seemeth to be wrapped in the robe of a counsellor, and hath the poison of a murderer, he is styled the deceitful tongue. He then, who will ascend, first of all prayeth God against these very tongues: for he saith, When I was in trouble, I called on the Lord; and He heard me. Why did He hear him? That He might now place him at the steps of ascent.

4. Ver. 2. And since now that he is resolved to rise, he hath been heard: what doth he pray? Deliver my soul, O Lord, from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue. What is a deceitful tongue? A treacherous tongue, one that hath the semblance of counsel, and the bane of real mischief. Such are those who say, And wilt thou do this, that nobody doth? Wilt thou be the only Christian? And if he shall shew that others do this, and hath quoted the Gospel where the Lord hath enjoined it to be done, or read the Acts of the Apostles: what do they say with their deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips? “You will probably be unable to fulfil it: it is too much that you attempt.” Some deter by dissuasion, others discourage yet more by their praise. For since such is the life that hath for some time been diffused over the world, so great is the authority of Christ, that not even a pagan ventureth to blame

Christ. He Who cannot be censured is read. He Who said, Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow Me: they cannot contradict Christ, they cannot contradict the Gospel, Christ cannot be censured; the deceitful tongue turneth itself to praise as an hindrance. If thou praisest, exhort. Why dost thou discourage with thy praise? Thou wouldest better blame, than deceitfully praise. For what wouldest thou say if thou didst blame? God forbid! this is a foul life, an evil life! But as thou knowest that, if thou sayest this, thou mayest be pressed with the authority of the Gospel; thou turnest thyself to another mode of dissuasion, that by false praise, thou mayest turn me away from true praise; nay, that by praising Christ, thou mayest keep me away from Christ, saying, What is this? Behold these men have done this: thou, perhaps, wilt not be able: thou beginnest to ascend, thou fallest. It seemeth to warn thee: it is the serpent, it is the deceitful tongue, it hath poison. Pray against it, if thou wishest to ascend, and say unto thy God, Lord, deliver my soul from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

5. Ver. 3–4. And thy Lord saith unto thee, What shall be given thee, or what shall be set before thee, against the deceitful tongue? What shall be given thee, that is, as a weapon to oppose to the deceitful tongue, to guard thyself against the deceitful tongue? What shall be given thee, or what shall be set before thee? He asketh to try thee: for He will answer His own question. For He answers following up his own enquiry, even sharp arrows of the Mighty One, with coals that desolate, or that lay waste. They that desolate, or that lay waste, (for it is variously written in different copies,) are the same, because by laying waste, as ye may observe, they easily lead unto desolation. What are these coals? First, beloved brethren, understand what are arrows. The sharp arrows of the Mighty One, are the words of God. Lo, they are shot, and they transfix hearts: but when hearts have been tranfixed by the arrows of God's word, love is roused, not destruction brought about. The Lord knoweth how to shoot arrows of love: and no one more graciously shooteth arrows of love, than he who shooteth with the Word; yea, He shooteth the heart of him that loveth, that He may aid the loving; He shooteth, that He may make him loving. Arrows they are, when we plead with words. What then are the coals that lay waste? It is not enough to plead with words against a deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips: it is not enough

to plead with words; we must plead with examples also. The coals that lay waste are the examples. Wherefore they be styled coals, beloved brethren, briefly hear. First, consider, how we should deal with examples. The deceitful tongue, the more deceitful it is, knoweth nothing so well to allege, as this: “consider that thou mayest not be able to fulfil this duty; for it is a hard task for thee to attempt it.” Thou hast received the evangelical precept, thou hast the arrow; but thou hast not as yet the coals. It is to be feared lest the arrow alone may not avail to guard thee against the deceitful tongue; there are the hot coals also. For instance, suppose God beginneth to say unto thee, Thou canst not; wherefore can that man? Wherefore could the other? Art thou more delicate than that Senator? Art thou weaker than this man or that in health? Art thou weaker than women? Women have been able, are not men able? delicate wealthy men have been able, are poor men not able? But I, he replieth, have sinned greatly, and am a great sinner. They also who have greatly sinned are mentioned: and the more that hath been forgiven them, the more have they loved: as it is said in the Gospel, To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Since these things have been mentioned, and men have been named who have succeeded, he, when he hath received the arrow in his heart, with the hot coals that lay waste in addition, hath his earthly thoughts therein laid waste. What doth this word, ‘laid waste,’ mean? Is brought unto desolation. For there were many things in him which had bloomed with rank luxuriance, many carnal thoughts, many secular affections: these are burned with the coals that lay waste, that the place thus made desolate may be cleared, in whose clean space God may build His House; for the devil there hath come to ruin, and Christ is now built there: for as long as the devil abideth there, Christ cannot be built. The coals that lay waste come thither, and throw down what had been built for evil, and when the spot hath been made desolate, a structure of perpetual bliss is raised. Consider therefore why they are called hot coals. Because they who turn themselves unto the Lord, live again from the dead. They that are coals when they are set on fire, before they were set on fire, were extinguished. Extinguished coals are called dead; burning coals are called live. The word coals, then, is used to express the examples of many sinners converted to the Lord. Thou hearest men wonder, and say, I knew that man, how addicted he was to drinking, what a villain, what a lover of the circus, or of the amphitheatre, what a cheat: now how he serveth God, how

innocent he hath become! Wonder not; he is a live coal. Thou rejoicest that he is alive, whom thou wast mourning as dead. But when thou praisest the living, if thou knowest how to praise, apply him to the dead, that he may be inflamed; whosoever is still slow to follow God, apply to him the coal which was extinguished, and have the arrow of God's word, and the coal that layeth waste, that thou mayest meet the deceitful tongue and the lying lips.

6. What followeth? This man hath received the burning arrows, let him receive the coals that lay waste. He now repelleth the deceitful tongue and the unrighteous lips, he now ascendeth a step, he beginneth to improve: but he still liveth among wicked, unrighteous men: the floor hath not yet been winnowed: suppose he hath become wheat, yet is he in the barn? It is needful that he be crowded with much chaff; and the more he improveth, the greater offences doth he see in the people. For if he were not improving, he would not discern iniquities; if he be not a faithful Christian himself, he seeth not the hypocrites. The Lord, my brethren, teacheth us this lesson from that parable also, concerning the corn and the tares. But when the blade had sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also; that is, that the wicked appear unto no man, save he himself hath become good; for when the blade had sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. He therefore now beginneth to amend, and beginneth to see the wicked, and many evils which he had not known before, and crieth unto the Lord: (ver. 5.) Alas, that my sojourning is become far off! It hath departed far from Thee: my pilgrimage hath become a far one. I have not yet reached that country, where I shall live with no wicked person; I have not yet reached that company of Angels, where I shall not fear offences. But why am I not as yet there? Because my sojourning is become so far off. Sojourning is pilgrimage. He is called a sojourner who dwells in a foreign land, not in his own country. My sojourning, he saith, is become far off. And when is it far off? Sometimes, my brethren, when a man goeth abroad, he liveth among better persons, than he would perhaps live with in his own country: but it is not thus, when we go afar from that heavenly Jerusalem. For a man changeth his country, and this foreign sojourn is sometimes good for him; in travelling he findeth faithful friends, whom he could not find in his own country. He had

enemies, so that he was driven from his country; and when he travelled, he found what he had not in his country. Such is not that country Jerusalem, where all are good: whoever travelleth away from thence, is among the evil; nor can he depart from the wicked, save when he shall return to the company of Angels, so as to be where he was before he travelled. There all are righteous and holy, who enjoy the word of God without reading, without letters: for what is written to us through pages, they perceive there through the Face of God. What a country! A great country indeed, and wretched are the wanderers from that country.

7. But what he saith, My pilgrimage hath been made distant, are the words of those, that is, of the Church herself, who toileth on this earth. It is her voice, which crieth out from the ends of the earth in another Psalm, saying, From the ends of the earth have I cried unto Thee. Which of us crieth from the ends of the earth? Neither I, nor thou, nor he, but the whole body of the Church, the whole inheritance of Christ crieth; for the Church is His heritage, and it is said of the Church, Desire of Me, and I shall give the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. If therefore the possession of Christ extends to the utmost parts of the earth, and all the saints are the possession of Christ, and all the saints are one man in Christ, because holy unity is in Christ; this one man saith, From the ends of the earth have I called unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. The pilgrimage of this man, then, became distant among the wicked. And as if it were said unto him, With whom then dost thou dwell, that thou dost groan? My pilgrimage, he saith, is become far distant. But what, if it were with the good? If it were with the good, he would not say, Alas! Alas is an expression of misery, is an expression of calamity and unhappiness; but nevertheless in hope, since he hath already learnt even to groan. For many are wretched, and groan not, and wander afar, and yet are reluctant to return. This one now wishing to return, learneth the unhappiness of his wandering: since he hath recognised it, he returneth; and beginneth to ascend, for he beginneth to sing the ‘song of steps.’ Where then doth he groan, and among whom doth he dwell? I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar. Since this is a Hebrew word, beyond doubt ye have not understood it. What meaneth, I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar? Kedar, as far as we remember of the

interpretation of Hebrew words, signifieth darkness. Kedar rendered into Latin is called tenebræ. Now ye know that Abraham had two sons, whom indeed the Apostle mentioneth, and declareth them to have been types of the two covenants: one was the son of a bondwoman, the other of a freewoman. Ishmael was the son by the bondwoman; Isaac the son whom he received, after he had ceased to hope it, through faith, from Sarah the freewoman. Each was of the seed of Abraham: but each was not the heir of Abraham. One is born of Abraham, yet he doth not receive the heritage: the other is also the heir; not the son only, but the heir. In Ishmael are all they who carnally worship God. For unto them the old covenant also doth pertain: for the Apostle speaketh thus, Ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants. What are the two covenants? One is the old, the other is the new. The old covenant is from God, and the new covenant is from God; as both Ishmael and Isaac were sons of Abraham. But Ishmael belongeth to the earthly, Isaac to the heavenly, kingdom. Therefore the old covenant hath earthly promises, an earthly Jerusalem, an earthly Palestine, an earthly kingdom, an earthly salvation, the subjugation of enemies, abundance of sons, exuberance of fruits. All these things are earthly promises. They are understood spiritually as figurative, as the earthly Jerusalem was the shadow of the heavenly kingdom, and the earthly kingdom was the shadow of the kingdom of heaven. Ishmael was in the shadow, Isaac in the light. If then Ishmael was in the shadow, it is no wonder that there was darkness there. For darkness is only a deeper shadow. Ishmael therefore was in darkness, Isaac in light. Whoever here also seek earthly felicity in the Church, from God, shall belong to Ishmael. These are the very persons who gainsay the spiritual ones who are progressing, and detract from them, and have deceitful tongues and unrighteous lips. Against these the Psalmist, when ascending, prayed, and hot coals that lay waste, and swift and sharp arrows of the Mighty One, were given him for his defence. For among these he still liveth, until the whole floor be winnowed: he therefore said, I have dwelt among the tents of Kedar. The tents of Ishmael are called those of Kedar. Thus the book of Genesis hath it: thus it hath, that Kedar belongeth unto Ishmael. Isaac therefore is with Ishmael: that is, they who belong unto Isaac, live among those who belong unto

Ishmael. These wish to rise above, those wish to press them downwards: these wish to fly unto God, those endeavour to pluck their wings. For with the Apostle it is thus spoken: But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now. The spiritual then suffer persecution from the carnal. But what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. When will this word, ‘cast out,’ be fulfilled? When the floor shall begin to be winnowed. But at present, before he be cast out, Alas me! that my sojourning hath become far off. I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar. And he explaineth unto us, who are they who belong to the tents of Kedar.

8. Ver. 6. My soul hath wandered much. Lest thou shouldest understand bodily wandering, he hath said that the soul wandered. The body wandereth in places, the soul wandereth in its affections. If thou love the earth, thou wanderest from God: if thou lovest God, thou risest unto God. Let us be exercised in the love of God, and of our neighbour, that we may return unto charity. If we fall towards the earth, we wither and decay. But one descended unto this one who had fallen, in order that he might arise. Speaking of the time of his wandering, he said that he wandered in the tents of Kedar. Wherefore? Because my soul hath wandered much. He wandereth there where he ascendeth. He wandereth not in the body, he riseth not in the body. But wherein doth he ascend? The ascent, he saith, is in the heart. If therefore he ascendeth in heart, it is only the soul which wandered that ascendeth through the ascent of the heart. But until he arrive, My soul hath wandered much. Where? In the tents of Kedar.

9. Ver. 7. With them that hated peace, I was peaceful. But howsoever ye may hear, most beloved brethren, ye will not be able to test how truly ye sing, unless ye have begun to do that which ye sing. How much soever I say this, in whatsoever ways I may expound it, in whatsoever words I may turn it, it entereth not into the heart of him in whom its operation is not. Begin to act, and see what we speak. Then tears flow forth at each word, then the Psalm is sung, and the heart doeth what is sung in the Psalm. For how many sound in words, and are remote in heart? and how many are silent in their lips, and cry forth in their feelings! Because the ears of God are unto man’s

heart: even as the ears of the body unto the mouth of man, so is the heart of man to the ears of God. Many whose mouths are closed are heard, and many, though they cry loudly, are not heard. We ought to pray with our feelings, and to say, My soul hath wandered much: with them that hate peace, I was peaceful. For what else say we to these heretics, save, Learn peace, love peace? Ye call yourselves righteous. But if ye were righteous, ye would groan as wheat among chaff. For since there are ears of wheat in the Catholic Church, and they are true ears; therefore they endure the chaff, until the floor be threshed; because they cry among the chaff, Alas me! that my sojourning hath been made far off! I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar! I have dwelt, he saith, with chaff. But as much dust goeth out of the chaff, so darkness goeth forth from Kedar. I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar; my soul hath wandered much. These are the words of the ears of wheat, groaning among the chaff. This we say to them that hate peace: With those, we say, that hated peace, was I peaceful. Who are they who hate peace? They who tear asunder unity. For had they not hated peace, they would have abode in unity. But they separated themselves, forsooth on this account, that they might be righteous, that they might not have the ungodly mixed with them. These words are either ours or theirs: decide whose. The Catholic Church saith, Unity must not be lost, the Church of God must not be cut off. God will judge afterwards of the wicked and the good. If the evil cannot now be separated from the good, they must be endured for a season: the wicked may be with us on the floor, in the barn they cannot be. And perhaps they who to-day appear evil, to-morrow will be good; and they who to-day pride themselves in their goodness, will to-morrow be discovered to be evil. Whoever therefore beareth with the wicked for a season humbly, he shall reach everlasting repose. This is the Catholic voice. But what are the words of those, who understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm?—Touch no unclean thing: and, Whosoever hath touched an unclean thing, the same is unclean: let us separate ourselves, that we may not be mingled with the evil. And we say unto them, Love peace, love unity. Are ye ignorant from how many good men ye are separated, while ye slanderously call them wicked? They rage, and storm, when we speak thus: for they seek even to slay us. Their attempts, their snares, have often been disclosed. While therefore we live among their snares, and while they unto whom we say, Love ye peace, are our foes; are not these our words, With them that hated

peace, I was peaceful? When I spoke unto them, they made war upon me for nought. What meaneth, brethren, they made war upon me? It was not even enough, without he added, for nought. Unto whom we say, Love peace, love Christ: do we say, Love and honour us? But, Honour Christ, we wish not ourselves to be honoured, but Him. For what are we to the Apostle Paul? He nevertheless said to those babes, whom evil men and evil advisers wished to cut off from unity into schisms: Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? This we also say: Love ye peace, love ye Christ. For if they love peace, they love Christ. When therefore we say, Love ye peace, we say this, Love ye Christ. Wherefore? For the Apostle saith of Christ, He is our peace, Who hath made both one. If Christ is therefore peace, because He hath made both one: why have ye made two of one? How then are ye peacemakers, if, when Christ maketh one of two, ye make two of one? But since we say these things, we are peace-makers with them that hate peace; and yet they who hate peace, when we spake to them, made war on us for nought.

PSALM 121

Exposition

A Sermon to the people on the day of St. Crispina.

1. This is the second Psalm of those whose title is, A song of degrees. For there are many, which signify, as ye have already heard in the first of them, our ascent, which goeth on in the heart unto God, from the vale of misery, that is, from the humble state of tribulation. For our ascent cannot be profitable unto us, save being first humbled, we remember that we must ascend from the vale: (for a vale is a lowly spot of land: as mountains and hills are lofty places of the earth, so is a vale a lowly place,) lest while we seek in too much haste, and before the proper season, to be exalted, we may not ascend, but fall. Now our Lord Himself taught us that we must ascend from the vale of misery, when He deigned to be humbled for us unto the death of the Cross, and to suffer. Let us not abandon His example: the Martyrs understood this vale of misery. Whence did they understand it? Whence? Because they themselves also ascended from the vale of misery, that they might be crowned.

2. This Psalm, A song of degrees, suiteth this day also, for it is said of them, They went on their way weeping, sowing their seed. This is the vale of misery, where seeds are sown in tears. But what are these seeds? Good works wrought in this earthly tribulation. He who worketh well in the vale of misery, is like unto a man who soweth seed through the winter. Is he deterred from his work by the cold? Thus we ought not to be deterred from a good work by the tribulation of the world; for thou seest what followeth: They went on their way weeping, sowing their seed. Very miserable, if they always wept; very miserable, if they were never to be freed from tears. But consider what followeth: but they shall come again with joy, and bring their sheaves with them.

3. We are taught nothing else by these songs, brethren, than to ascend; but to ascend in heart, in good affections, in faith, in hope and charity, in the longing for perpetuity and for everlasting life. Thus we ascend. It is fitting for us to say in what manner we must ascend. How many more terrible words have ye heard, Beloved, read from the Gospel! Ye see, surely, that the hour of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. If the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his wall to be broken through. Do ye say now, Who then knoweth in what hour He will come, for the hour will be as a thief? Thou knowest not in what hour He will come, watch alway; that, since thou knowest not when He will come, He may find thee ready when He cometh. Perhaps, too, it is for this reason that thou knowest not when He will come, that thou mayest alway be prepared. For that hour will suddenly surprise that master of the house, who, by the term master of the house, is described as a proud man. Wish not to be a master of the house, and that hour will not come upon thee suddenly. And what shall I be, thou askest? Such as thou hast heard of in the Psalm, I am poor and in heaviness. For if thou art poor and in heaviness, thou wilt not be a master of a house, whom that hour will surprise, and suddenly crush. For the masters of houses are they that presume in their lusts, and swell with the abundance of this world's delights; and exalt themselves against the humble, and trample on the saints who understand the narrow way, which leadeth unto life. For to such that hour will come suddenly; for such were men in the days of Noah also, a description of which days ye have heard in the Gospel. As the days of Noe were, so, He saith, shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, they were planting, they were building, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away. What then? Shall all perish who do these things, who marry, who give in marriage, who plant vineyards, who build? No: but they who put their trust in these things, who prefer these things to God, who for the sake of these things are easily ready to offend God. But they who either use not these things at all, or who use them as though they used them not, trusting more in Him Who gave them, than in the things given, and understanding in them His consolation and loving-kindness, and not taken up with the gifts, lest they may fall away from the giver; they who

are such, that hour will not find them unprepared as a thief. To such the Apostle said, Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day. The Lord therefore when He declared that the hour was to be dreaded as a thief, spoke of night; and so the Apostle saith, for the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. Dost thou hope that it may not find thee? Be not in night. What meaneth, Be not in night? Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Who are the children of the night and of darkness? The wicked, the ungodly, the unbelieving.

4. Ver. 1. But let these also hear before the hour come, and let the Apostle say unto them, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. As this Psalm saith, let them awake. The hills are already lightened: why do they still sleep? Let them lift up their eyes to the hills, whence cometh their help. What meaneth, The hills have been lightened? The Sun of righteousness hath already risen, the Gospel hath been already preached by the Apostles, the Scriptures have been preached, all the mysteries have been laid open, the veil hath been rent, the secret place of the temple hath been revealed: let them now at length lift their eyes up to the hills, whence their help cometh. This the present Psalm—the second of those entitled, a song of degrees—enjoineth. But let them not again trust in the hills; for the hills themselves shine not of their own light, but of His of Whom it is said, That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. By hills may be understood, great or illustrious men. And who was greater than John the Baptist? What a hill was that, of whom the Lord Himself saith, Among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist? Ye now see this great hill shining: hear him now confessing. Confessing what? Of His fulness have all we received, he saith. Thy help therefore is from Him, of Whose fulness the hills received, not from the hills; towards which, nevertheless, save thou lift thine eyes through the Scriptures, thou wilt not approach, so as to be lighted by Him.

5. Ver. 3. Sing therefore what followeth; if thou wish to hear how thou mayest most securely set thy feet on the steps, so that thou mayest not be fatigued in that ascent, nor stumble and fall: pray in these words: Suffer not

my foot to be moved! Whereby are feet moved; whereby was the foot of him who was in Paradise moved? But first consider whereby the feet of him who was among the Angels were moved: who when his feet were moved fell, and from an Angel became a devil: for when his feet were moved he fell. Seek whereby he fell: he fell through pride. Nothing then moveth the feet, save pride: nothing moveth the feet to a fall, save pride. Charity moveth them to walk and to improve and to ascend; pride moveth them to fall. What then doth he say in the Psalm? The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. If beneath the shadow, they are ever humble, ever trusting in God, ever not presuming on themselves. Under the shadow of Thy wings shall they put their trust: for they are not sufficient for their own bliss. But what followeth? They shall be inebriated with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures as out of a river. Behold them thirsty, behold them satisfied: behold, they thirst, behold, they drink: but they do not drink of themselves: they are not a well unto themselves. But whereof do they drink? Under the shadow of Thy wings shall they put their trust. If beneath Thy wings, they are humble. Why? Because with Thee, he saith, is the well of life. The hills therefore are not watered by themselves, even as the hills are not lighted by themselves. For see what followeth: In Thy light shall we see light. If then we shall see light in His light, who falleth from that light, save he unto whom He is not a light? And he who wisheth to be a light unto himself, himself falleth away from the light whereby he is lighted. Knowing therefore that none falleth save he who wisheth to shine unto himself, since he is by himself darkness; he addeth, Let not the foot of pride come unto me: and let not the hand of the ungodly move me: that is, let not the imitation of their sins move me, so that I fall from Thee. Wherefore hast thou feared, and hast said, Let not the foot of pride come against me? The next words answer: There are they fallen, all that work wickedness. Those whom thou but now sawest working wickedness, have been already condemned: the cause of their condemnation was their having fallen when the foot of pride came unto them. Rightly therefore the Psalmist, hearing how he may ascend and may not fall, prayeth unto God that he may profit from the vale of misery, and may not fail in the swelling of pride, in these words, Suffer not my feet to be moved! And He replieth unto him, Let him that keepeth thee not sleep. Attend, my beloved. It is as if one thought were

expressed in two sentences; the man while ascending and singing the song of degrees, saith, Suffer not my foot to be moved: and it is as if God answered, Thou sayest unto Me, Let not my feet be moved: say also, Let Him that keepeth thee not sleep, and thy foot shall not be moved.

6. Ver. 4. But suppose he hath replied: Is it in my power that he who keepeth me may not slumber? I wish he may not sleep, or slumber. Therefore choose for thyself Him, who will neither sleep nor slumber, and thy foot shall not be moved. God is never asleep: if thou dost wish to have a keeper who never sleepeth, choose God for thy keeper. Suffer not my feet to be moved, thou sayest: well, very well: but He also saith unto thee, Let not him that keepeth thee slumber. Thou perhaps wast about to turn thyself unto men as thy keepers, and to say, whom shall I find who will not sleep? what man will not slumber? whom do I find? whither shall I go? whither shall I return? The Psalmist telleth thee: He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep. Dost thou wish to have a keeper who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth? Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep: for Christ keepeth Israel. Be thou then Israel. What meaneth Israel? It is interpreted, Seeing God. And how is God seen? First by faith: afterwards by sight. If thou canst not as yet see Him by sight, see Him by faith. If thou canst not see His face, since that is sight, see His back parts. This was said unto Moses by the Lord: Thou canst not see My face, but thou shalt see My back parts, when I pass by. Thou perhaps art waiting His passing by: He hath already passed: do thou see His back parts. Where hath He passed? Hear John: When the hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath already kept the Passover: for the meaning of the word Pascha is Passing Over. For it is a Hebrew word: though men imagine it to be a Greek word, signifying Passion: but it is not so. By the more diligent and learned, it hath been discovered that Pascha is a Hebrew word; and they do not interpret it as Suffering, but as Passing over. For by His Passion our Lord passed from death unto life; and made a way for us who believe in His resurrection, that we also may pass from death unto life. It is not a great thing to believe that Christ died: this the Pagans also, and the Jews, and all the wicked believe. This all believe, that He died: the resurrection of Christ is the faith of Christians: this we hold a great thing, that we believe that He rose from the dead. Therefore He

wished Himself to be seen then, when He was passing away, that is, when He had risen from the dead. He wished us to believe on Him, when He was passing: because He was delivered up for our sins, and was raised again for our justification. The Apostle also hath chiefly enjoined this very faith in Christ's resurrection: If thou believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. He said not, If thou hast believed that Christ died, which the Pagans, Jews, and all His enemies believe: but, if thou believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. To believe this, is to be Israel, this is to see God: although thou as yet seest only His back parts, yet, when thou believest in His back parts, thou wilt come to the sight of His face. What meaneth this? When thou hast believed in that which Christ became afterwards for thee; when thou hast believed in that which Christ took upon Him afterwards. For what is His Countenance in the beginning? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. What are His back parts? and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. When therefore thou believest in this, that the Word was made flesh for thy sake, and that the Word rose again in the Flesh, that thou mightest not despair of thy flesh, thou art made Israel. But when thou hast been made Israel, He that keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep; because thou art now Israel, and hast heard in the Psalm, He that keepeth Israel shall not slumber nor sleep. For Christ Himself slept, but He rose again. For what saith He Himself in the Psalm? I laid me down and slept. Did He continue in sleep? I rose again, He saith, for the Lord shall take me up. If then He hath already risen, He hath already passed over; if He hath already passed over, see His back parts. What meaneth, see His back parts? Believe in His resurrection. And since the Apostle saith, For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God: and again saith, Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion, over Him: he justly singeth unto thee, Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. Perhaps thou still seekest in thy carnal sense, Who is there, who will neither slumber nor sleep? and when thou seekest among men, thou art deceived; thou wilt never find one. Trust not then in any man: every man slumbereth, and will sleep. When doth he slumber? When he beareth the flesh of weakness. When will he sleep? When he is dead. Trust not then in man. A mortal may slumber, he sleepeth in death. Seek not a keeper among men.

7. Ver. 5. And who, thou askest, shall help me, save He Who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth? Hear what followeth: The Lord Himself is thy keeper. It is not therefore man, that slumbereth and sleepeth, but the Lord, that keepeth thee. How doth He keep thee? The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand. Let us, my brethren, with the Lord's help, understand what is the meaning of, The Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand. For it seemeth to me to have a hidden sense: otherwise he would have simply said, without qualification, The Lord will keep thee, without adding, on thy right hand. For how? Doth God keep our right hand, and not our left? Did He not create the whole of us? Did not He Who made our right hand, make our left hand also? Finally, if it pleased Him to speak of the right hand alone, why said He, on the hand of thy right hand, and not at once upon thy right hand? Why should He say this, unless He were keeping somewhat here hidden for us to arrive at by knocking? For He would either say, The Lord shall keep thee, and add no more; or if He would add the right hand, The Lord shall keep thee upon thy right hand; or at least, as He added hand, He would say, The Lord shall keep thee upon thy hand, even thy right hand, not upon the hand of thy right hand. What the Lord Himself deigneth to suggest, I will lay before you; He who dwelleth in you, without doubt causeth you to approve of that which I say, as true. For ye know not what I am about to say; but when we shall have said it, we shall not shew of ourselves that what we say is true, but ye yourselves shall recognise the truth of what we say. But whence shall ye recognise it, save He sheweth Who dwelleth in you, as far as ye are of that number, who say, Suffer not my feet to be moved; and unto whom it is said, Let not Him that keepeth thee slumber. For Christ must not sleep in you, and ye will presently understand that what we say is true. How, thou wilt ask? Because if your faith sleep, Christ sleepeth in you. For Christ in your heart is the faith of Christ. The Apostle saith, That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. In whom faith sleepeth not, in him Christ watcheth. And if perchance thy faith slept, and thou didst therefore waver when thou didst ask that question, as that vessel that encountered the tempest, when Christ slept; arouse Christ, and the tempests will be appeased.

8. I ask therefore your faith, most beloved; since ye are sons of the Church, and have profited in the Church, and ye who have not as yet profited in the

Church will profit in the Church, and ye who have already profited have to profit further in the Church; I ask you, how ye interpret what is said in the Gospel, Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth? For if ye understand this, ye will discover what is your right hand, and what is your left: at the same time ye will also understand that God made both hands, the left and the right; yet the left ought not to know what the right doeth. By our left hand is meant all that we have in a temporal way; by our right hand is meant, whatever our Lord promiseth us that is immutable and eternal. But if He Who will give everlasting life, Himself also consoleth our present life by these temporal blessings, He hath Himself made our right hand and our left. The Psalm speaks of some, Whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. He therefore found some whom he blamed, who held their true right hand for their left, and their real left hand for their right: he explaineth in order who these are. Every man who doth not think that happiness is man's, except only in these temporal resources and delights, and in the affluence and abundance of this world: he is a foolish and perverse man, who maketh his left hand his right: such were they of whom the Psalm speaketh; not that they had not received from God what they possessed temporally, but because they supposed this alone to be a happy life, and sought for nought else. Hear what he presently after saith of them: Whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. He goeth on thus: Whose sons grow up as the young plants, and whose daughters are adorned after the likeness of a temple: whose garners are full and bursting with store: whose sheep bring forth abundantly, multiplying in their streets: their oxen are strong to labour; there is no fall of their fence, nor of their way; nor any complaining in their streets. He hath described the great prosperity of some man; yet any righteous man might enjoy the same prosperity: as did Job: but Job held it for his left hand, not for his right; for he had no other right hand than his perpetual and everlasting happiness with God. His left hand therefore was given up to be stricken: and his right sufficed for him. In what manner was his left hand stricken? By the temptations of the devil. The devil suddenly robbed him of all things, by God's permission indeed, that the righteous might be approved, the ungodly punished; he took away all: but Job, who knew that his left hand was his left hand, and that his right was indeed his right hand; how did he hold unto his right hand? He rejoiced in the Lord, he was

consoled for his losses, for he had not suffered loss of his inner riches; he had a heart full of God. The Lord, he said, hath given, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. This was his right hand, the Lord Himself; eternal life itself, that possession of light, the well of life; the light in light. They shall be filled with the plenteousness of Thy house: this was his right hand. But his left was as an aid of consolation: not as the foundation of his happiness. For God was his true and genuine happiness. But those of whom David saith, that their mouth talked vanity, and their right hand was a right hand of iniquity; he doth not blame them on the ground that they abounded with all these things, but because their mouth talked vanity. For what followeth? After he had mentioned their abundance, he addeth, Happy they have called the people who are in such a case. This is the vanity which their mouth has spoken, when they declared the people happy who are in such a case. What sayest thou, who knowest what is the left hand, and what is the right? He goeth on to say: Blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.

9. Attend then, beloved. We have seen the left hand, we have seen also the right. Hear this confirmed in the Song of Songs: His left hand, it is said, is beneath my head. The spouse saith this of her husband, the Church saith it of Christ in the embrace of piety and love. What doth she say? His left hand is beneath my head, and His right hand doth embrace me. But how, because His right hand was above, His left hand below, and thus the Husband embraced the Spouse, supporting her with the consolation of His left hand, and laying upon her His right hand for her protection? His left hand, she saith, is beneath my head. God giveth that left hand: therefore it is His left hand, because God giveth all these temporal blessings. How vain they are, how impious, who seek these things from idols, from devils! How many seek these things from devils, and have them not? and again, they who seek them not from devils, have them; but they are not given by devils. Also many seek them of God, and have them not. For He knoweth how to dispense the left hand, who calleth unto the right. If therefore it be the left hand, be it so: but let it be beneath thy head: let thy head be above it, that is, let thy faith be above it, where Christ dwelleth. Prefer not temporal things to thy faith; and the left hand will not be above thy head: but place all temporal things beneath thy faith, and prefer thy faith to all temporal things;

and the left hand will be beneath thy head, and His right hand will rightly embrace thee.

10. Hear this very thing expounded in the Proverbs: what is the left hand, what is the right: when he saith of Wisdom, Length of days and years of life are in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour. That length of days is eternity. For Scripture calleth that long which is eternal, with much propriety: for whatever hath an end, is short. In another passage it is said, With long life will I satisfy him. And would it otherwise be said as a great thing, Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land? In what land, save that whereof he saith, Thou art my hope and my portion in the land of the living. What meaneth length of days there, save to live there for ever? For what meaneth length of days here, save to reach old age? Although age seem long, when it hath passed, it is proved to be short, in that it cometh to an end. And many who curse their parents, grow old in this world; while many who obey their parents, soon go to the Lord. Is this therefore fulfilled by length of days in this world? No: length of days is there used for eternity. Length of days is in His right hand: but riches and honour, that is, the sufficiency of this life, what are considered good things by men, are in His left hand. Somebody cometh, and wisheth to strike thee on the right, that is, to rob thee of thy faith: thou hast received a blow on the right, offer him the left, that is, let him take that which is temporal, and not thy everlasting possessions. Hear the Apostle Paul doing this. Men persecuted him for being a Christian: his right is smitten, he offered the left, saying, I am a Roman. They scorned his right hand, and he affrighted them with his left: for they could not fear his right hand; as they had not yet believed in Christ. What then, if the right hand embrace, the left is under thy head; what meaneth, Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth? That is, after thou doest a good work, do it for eternal life. For if thou doest a good work on earth, that earthly things may abound to thee; thy left hand knoweth what thy right hand doeth, thou hast mingled thy right hand with thy left. Act not, save for everlasting life. Act for this reason, and thou wilt work without fear: for this God hath commanded. If thou doest what thou doest for human interest alone and this life alone, thy left hand alone worketh: but if thou work for life eternal, thy right hand alone worketh; but if thou hast earnest hope for eternal life, but still the lusts of

this temporal life creep upon thee, so that thou heedest this even when thou doest a good work, hoping thou mayest have some reward here, thy left hand mingleth itself with the works of thy right hand: this God forbiddeth.

11. Let us now come to this verse of the Psalm: The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand. By hand he meaneth power. How do we prove this? Because the power of God also is styled the hand of God. For the devil who tempted Job, saith this to God; Put forth Thy Hand now, and touch all that he hath; and see if he will not curse Thee to Thy face. What meaneth, Put forth Thine Hand, save, give Thy power? Hear this more clearly proved, my brother, that thou mayest not in thy carnal sense still think God hath distinct members: hear more clearly in what sense hand is called power. Scripture saith in one passage, Death and life are in the hands of the tongue. We know tongues as certain slices of flesh; they move in the mouth, and by striking the palate and the teeth, make distinct the sounds by which we speak: let the hands of the tongue be shewn me. The tongue therefore hath not hands, and yet it hath hands. What are the hands of the tongue? The power of the tongue. What meaneth, "Death and life are in the hands of the tongue?" By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. If therefore the hand is power, what meaneth the hand of the right hand? I think no more consistent sense can be put upon the meaning, than that hand signifieth the power which God hath given thee, that if thou art willing, thou mayest be, by God's gift, on the right hand. For all the ungodly will be on the left hand; but all the good sons will be on the right, unto whom shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. But thou hast received power to be on the right hand, that is, to be a son of God. What power? That whereof John saith, He gave unto them power to become the sons of God. Whence hast thou received this power? To them, he saith, that believe in His Name. If then thou believest, this very power is given thee, to be among the sons of God. But to be among the sons of God, is to belong to the right hand. Thy faith therefore is the hand of thy right hand: that is, the power that is given thee, to be among the sons of God, is the hand of thy right hand. But what availeth this very power which man hath received, save the Lord protect him? Behold, he hath believed: he now walketh in faith: he is weak, he is buffeted amidst temptations, among

troubles, amid carnal corruptions, amid the suggestions of lust, and amid the cunning and the snares of a foe. What availeth it then, that he hath power, and hath believed in Christ, that he may be among the sons of God? Woe unto that man, except the Lord shield his faith also: that is, suffer thee not to be tempted beyond thy power to resist; as the Apostle saith, God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. He, therefore, Who suffereth us not to be tempted above that we are able, although we are already faithful, although we have already the hand of our right hand, shieldeth us upon the hand of our right hand. It sufficeth us not to have the hand of the right hand, unless He also defend the hand of the right hand.

12. Ver. 6. Behold, this I have said concerning temptations: listen to what followeth. May the Lord shield thee upon the hand of thy right hand. I have said, and I believe ye have recognised it. For had ye not recognised it, and that from the Scriptures, ye would not signify your understanding of it by your voices. Since then ye have understood, brethren, consider what followeth; wherefore the Lord shieldeth thee upon the hand of thy right hand, that is, in thy faith, wherein we have received power to become the sons of God, and to be on His right hand: wherefore should God shield us? On account of offences. Whence come offences? Offences are to be feared from two quarters, for there are two precepts upon which the whole Law hangeth and the Prophets, the love of God and of our neighbour. The Church is loved for the sake of our neighbour, but God for the sake of God. Of God, is understood the sun figuratively: of the Church, is understood the moon figuratively. Whoever can err, so as to think otherwise of God than he ought, believing not the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to be of one Substance, has been deceived by the cunning of heretics, chiefly of the Arians. If he hath believed any thing less in the Son or in the Holy Spirit than in the Father, he hath suffered an offence in God; he is scorched by the sun. Whoever again believeth that the Church existeth in one province only, and not that she is diffused over the whole world, and whoso believeth them that say, Lo here, and Lo there, is Christ, as ye but now heard when the Gospel was being read; since He Who gave so great a price, purchased the whole world: he is offended, so to speak, in his neighbour, and is burnt by the moon. Whoever therefore erreth in the very Substance of Truth, is burnt

by the sun, and is burnt through the day; because he erreth in Wisdom itself, of which it is said, One day telleth another: whence also the Apostle saith, Comparing spiritual with spiritual things.—One day telleth another:—comparing spiritual things with spiritual.—One day telleth another: we speak wisdom among them that are perfect. What meaneth, and one night certifieth another? The humility of Christ is preached unto infants, and the flesh of Christ, and the crucifixion of Christ; for this is the milk which sufficeth infants, and therefore infants are not forsaken during the night, since the moon shineth during the night; that is, the Church is preached through the Flesh of Christ, for the Flesh of Christ itself is the Head of the Church. Whoever therefore is not offended there, in the Church and flesh of Christ itself, is not burnt by the moon. Whosoever shall not have been offended in that immutable and uncontaminable Truth, is not burnt by the sun: it is not by that sun that he is not burnt, which flies and cattle see as well as we; but by that Sun of which the ungodly say in the end, What hath pride profited us? or what hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things have passed over like a shadow. And after they had said these things: Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and the sun rose not upon us. Doth not this sun rise upon all the ungodly, by the institution of Him of Whom it hath been said, He causeth His sun to rise upon the good and the evil? God therefore hath made one sun, which riseth upon the good and the evil, that sun which the good and the evil see; but that Sun is another one, not created, not born, through Whom all things were made, where is the intelligence of the Immutable Truth: of this the ungodly say, the Sun rose not upon us. Whosoever erreth not in Wisdom itself, is not burnt by the sun. Whosoever erreth not in the Church, and in the Lord's Flesh, and in those things which were done for us in time, is not burnt by the moon. But every man although he believeth in Christ, erreth either in this or that respect, unless what is here prayed for, The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand, is realized in him. For when he had said, The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand: as if he had enquired and replied, Lo, here is the hand of my right hand, I have already chosen to believe in Christ, I have received power to be among the sons of God, why is it that God is still my defence upon the hand of my right hand? he goeth on to say, (ver. 6.) So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night.

Thy defence, therefore is upon the hand of thy right hand for this reason, that the sun may not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night. Understand hence, brethren, that it is spoken figuratively. For, in truth, if we think of the visible sun, it burneth by day: doth the moon burn by night? But what is burning? Offence. Hear the Apostle's words: Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

13. Ver. 7. By day, then, the sun shall not burn thee: nor the moon by night. Wherefore? For the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. From offences in the sun, from offences in the moon, from all evil shall He preserve thee, Who is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand, who will not sleep nor slumber. And for what reason? Because we are amid temptations: The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. The Lord preserve thy soul: even thy very soul. The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore. Not thy body; for the Martyrs were consumed in the body; but the Lord preserve thy soul; for the Martyrs yielded not up their souls. The persecutors raged against Crispina, whose birthday we are to-day celebrating; they were raging against a rich and delicate woman: but she was strong, for the Lord was her defence upon the hand of her right hand, He Who kept her. Is there any one in Africa, my brethren, who knoweth her not? For she was most illustrious, noble in birth, abounding in wealth: but all these things were in her left hand, beneath her head. An enemy advanced to strike her head, and the left hand was presented to him, which was under her head. Her head was above, the right hand embraced her from above. What could the persecutor do, although to a delicate woman? She was indeed weak by sex, and perhaps feebler still through her riches, and the habits of her life; but what was this against such a defence? What to that Husband Who placed His left hand beneath her head, and embraced her with His right? When could the enemy strike her thus defended? Yet he did strike her, but her body. But what saith the Psalm? The Lord preserve thy soul. Her soul yielded not, her body was smitten. And her body was smitten but for a season: for it will rise again in the end. For He also, Who deigned to be the Head of the Church, gave up His body to be smitten for a season; but He quickened His flesh again in three days; He will quicken our flesh in the end. The Head was raised again, that the Body might heed its resurrection, and thus might not faint. The Lord preserve thy soul. Let it not

yield, let it not be broken down by offences; let it not yield by giving way in persecutions and in tribulations: even as the Lord saith: Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. This soul of thine then the Lord shall keep, that thou yield not to the evil persuader, that thou yield not to him that promiseth falsely, that thou yield not to him that threateneth temporal harm, and the Lord shall keep thy soul.

14. Ver. 8. The Lord preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore. Heed thy coming in for a season. The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this time forth for evermore. May He preserve thy going out also. What mean, coming in, and, going out? When we are tempted, we come in: when we overcome temptation, we go out. Listen to, the coming in: listen to, the going out. furnace proveth the potter's vessels, saith Scripture, and the trial of tribulation the righteous man. If righteous men are like a potter's vessels, the potter's vessels must needs enter the furnace, and the potter is not free from anxiety when they enter in, but when they have come out. But the Lord is without care, for He knoweth who are His, and He knoweth who do not crack in the furnace. They crack not, who have not the wind of pride. Humility therefore is our guardian in every temptation: for we rise from the vale of misery, chaunting the song of degrees; and the Lord preserveth our coming in, that we may come in safe. Let us be of sound faith when temptation happeneth; and He preserveth our going out from now for evermore. For when we have gone out from all temptation, henceforth for evermore no temptation will alarm us, no lust will even solicit us. Hear the Apostle declaring what I have but just declared: God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. Behold, thy coming in is guarded; when God suffereth not a temptation which thou canst not bear to befall thee, He preserveth thy coming in: see whether He also preserve thy going out. But will make, he addeth, with the temptation a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Can we, my brethren, interpret otherwise than the Apostle's very words have taught? Preserve yourselves then, but not by yourselves, for the Lord is your defence, Who preserveth you, Who will neither slumber nor sleep. Once hath He slept for us; He hath risen again; He will never more. Let no man presume in Himself. We are going up from the vale of misery; let us

not tarry in the way. Steps in the road remain: we ought not to remain loitering, we ought not through pride to fall: let us say unto God, Let not our foot be moved. He who keepeth us will not sleep. It is in our power, by God's gift, if we make Him our keeper, Who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth, Who keepeth Israel. What Israel? Him that seeth God. Thus will thy aid be from the Lord, thus will thy defence be upon the hand of thy right hand; thus is thy coming in and thy going out preserved from now for evermore. For if thou trust in thyself, thy foot hath been moved; if thy foot hath been moved, thou already thinkest thyself to be on some advanced step; thence thou fallest, if thou art proud; for the humble one in the vale of misery saith, Suffer not my foot to be moved.

15. Although the Psalm is short, yet our exposition and discourse on it hath been long. Imagine, my brethren, that owing to the birthday of the blessed Crispina I have invited you, and have been immoderate in protracting the banquet. Might not this have happened to you, if any military officer were to invite you, and compel you to drink at his table without measure? May it be lawful for us to do this in a sacred exposition, that ye may be inebriated and satisfied to the full, even as the Lord hath deigned to water the earth with His temporal rain, that He might suffer us to go to the abode of the Martyrs with the greater joy, as we had promised yesterday! For those Martyrs are here with us without toil.

PSALM 122

Exposition

A Discourse to the common People.

1. As impure love inflames the mind, and summons the soul destined to perish to lust for earthly things, and to follow what is perishable, and precipitates it into the lowest places, and sinks it into the abyss; so holy love raiseth us to heavenly things, and inflames us to what is eternal, and excites the soul to those things which do not pass away nor die, and from the abyss of hell raiseth it to heaven. Yet all love hath a power of its own, nor can love in the soul of the lover be idle; it must needs draw it on. But dost thou wish to know of what sort love is? See whither it leadeth. We warn you not then to love nothing; but that ye love not the world, that ye may freely love Him Who made the world. For the soul when bound by the love of earth, hath as it were birdlime on its wings; it cannot fly. But when purged from the sordid affections of the world, extending as it were its pair of wings, and freeing them from every obstacle, it flieth upon them, that is, upon the two commandments of love unto God and our neighbour. Whither, save rising by flight unto God? for it riseth by loving. Before it can do this, it groaneth on earth, if it hath in it now the desire for flight; and saith, O that I had wings as a dove, for then would I flee away, and be at rest! But whither will it fly, save from the midst of offences, where he also, whose cry I have here quoted, was groaning? From the midst of offences, then, from the medley of evil men, from the chaff mingled with the wheat, it longeth to fly, where it may not endure the society of any wicked one, but may live in the holy company of angels, the citizens of the everlasting Jerusalem.

2. Ver. 1. Therefore this Psalm, which we have this day undertaken to expound to you, holy brethren, longeth for Jerusalem herself; that is, he who ascendeth in this Psalm: for it is a Song of degrees; as we have often

said to you, for these degrees are not of descent, but of ascent. He therefore longeth to ascend. And whither doth he wish to ascend, save into heaven? What meaneth, into heaven? Doth he wish to ascend that he may be with the sun, moon, and stars? Far be it! But there is in heaven the eternal Jerusalem, where are our fellow-citizens, the Angels: we are wanderers on earth from these our fellow-citizens. We sigh in our pilgrimage; we shall rejoice in the city. But we find companions in this pilgrimage, who have already seen this city herself, and summon us to run towards her. At these he also rejoiceth, who saith, I rejoiced in them who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord. Brethren, recall to mind, that when any festival of the Martyrs, or any holy spot is named, that on a certain day crowds may flock unto it to celebrate an anniversary; how those crowds encourage one another, how they exhort one another, and say, Let us go, let us go. People ask, whither are we to go? They reply, to that place, to the consecrated spot. They speak with one another by turns, and as it were set on fire one by one, make one flame; and this one flame, kindled from the conversation of those who take fire from one another, hurrieth them to the holy place, and holy thoughts sanctify them. If therefore holy love thus hurrieth them to a temporal spot; what love should that be which hurrieth men unanimously toward heaven, saying to each other, Let us go into the house of the Lord? Let us therefore run, let us run, for we will go into the Lord's house. Let us run, and not be wearied; for we shall arrive there, where we shall not be wearied. Let us run into the house of the Lord, let our soul be rejoiced in those who say these words unto us. For they who speak thus unto us, have seen before us that country, crying from a distant age unto their posterity, We will go into the house of the Lord: walk, run. The Apostles have seen it, and have said unto us, Run, walk, follow; we will go into the Lord's house. And what doth each of us reply? I am rejoiced in those who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord. I am rejoiced in the Prophets, I am rejoiced in the Apostles. For they all said unto us, We will go into the house of the Lord.

3. Ver. 2. Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. Behold, thou hast the Lord's house, if thou seekest it. In that house of the Lord, He Who built the house is praised; He is the delight of all who dwell in the house; He is their only hope here, and reality there. They that run thither, what

should they think? Even as if they were already there, and already stood there. For it is a great thing to stand there among the Angels, and not to fail. For he who fell thence, abode not in the truth. But all who have not fallen, abide in the truth: and he standeth, who enjoyeth God; but he who wisheth to enjoy himself, falleth. But who wisheth to enjoy himself? He who is proud. He therefore who wished alway to stand in the courts of Jerusalem, saith, In Thy light shall we see light; not in any light; and, With Thee is the well of life; not with me. And what did he add? O let not the foot of pride come unto me: and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down. There fell all that work wickedness; they are cast down, and were not able to stand. If then they were not able to stand, because they were proud; do thou ascend humbly, that thou mayest be able to say, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. Consider what thou wilt be there; and although thou art as yet on the road, place this before thine eyes, as if thou wert already standing, as if thou wert already rejoicing without ceasing among the Angels, and that which is written were realised in thee: “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee.”—Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem. What Jerusalem? This earthly Jerusalem also is wont to be called by the name: though this Jerusalem is but the shadow of that. And what great thing is it to stand in this Jerusalem, since this Jerusalem hath not been able to stand, but hath been turned into a ruin? Doth then the Holy Spirit pronounce this, out of the kindled heart of the loving Psalmist, as a great thing, when he saith, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem? Is not it that Jerusalem, unto whom the Lord said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee? What great thing then did he desire, to stand among those who slew the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them? God forbid that he should think of that Jerusalem, who so loveth, who so burneth, who so longeth to reach that Jerusalem, our Mother, of which the Apostle saith, that She is eternal in the Heavens.

4. Ver. 3. Hear for thyself: trust not me; hear what followeth, and what Jerusalem he is pointing out to our minds. For after saying, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem; as if he were asked, Of what Jerusalem speakest thou? he at once addeth, Jerusalem that is being built as a city. Brethren, when David was uttering these words, that city had been finished,

it was not being built. It is some city he speaketh of, therefore, which is now being built, unto which living stones run in faith, of whom Peter saith, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house; that is, the holy temple of God. What meaneth, ye are built up as lively stones? Thou livest, if thou believest: but if thou believest, thou art made a temple of God; for the Apostle Paul saith, The temple of God is holy, which temple are ye. This city is therefore now in building; stones are cut down from the hills by the hands of those who preach truth, they are squared that they may enter into an everlasting structure. There are still many stones in the hands of the Builder: let them not fall from His hands, that they may be built perfect into the structure of the temple. This, then, is the Jerusalem that is being built as a city: Christ is its foundation. The Apostle Paul saith, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. When a foundation is laid on earth, the walls are built above, and the weight of the walls tends towards the lowest parts, because the foundation is laid at the bottom. But if our foundation be in heaven, let us be built towards heaven. Bodies have built the edifice of this basilica, the ample size of which ye see; and since bodies have built it, they placed the foundation lowest: but since we are spiritually built, our foundation is placed at the highest point. Let us therefore run thither, where we may be built; for it is said of Jerusalem herself, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. But of what Jerusalem? Of Jerusalem which is being built as a city. He hath not said enough to describe Jerusalem, in saying, it is built as a city: that bodily Jerusalem may still be understood. For what if any one were to stand up and say, Even then, when these verses were being written and sung, in David's time, that city was finished; but he saw in the spirit that it would be destroyed, and would have to be built up a second time. For that city was stormed, and the captive people compelled to migrate to Babylon; an event called in Scripture, the transmigration to Babylon. And Jeremiah prophesied, that after seventy years of captivity that city might be rebuilt, which had been destroyed by the conquering host. Perhaps some one saith: David saw this in the Spirit, that the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed by its besiegers, and that it might again be rebuilt after seventy years: and he therefore said, Jerusalem which is being built as a city: think not then that that city is here mentioned which consisteth of Saints, as of living stones. What followeth, to remove all doubt? Why, he saith, our feet were

standing in the courts of Jerusalem. But what Jerusalem do I speak of? Is it that, he asketh, which ye see standing, raised on the structure of its walls? No; but the Jerusalem which is being built as a city. Why not, a city, instead of, as a city; save because those walls, so built in Jerusalem, were a visible city, as it is by all called a city, literally; but this is being built as a city, for they who enter it, are like living stones; for they are not literally stones? Just as they are called stones, and yet are not so: so the city styled as a city, is not a city; for he said, is being built. For by the word building, he meant to be understood the structure, and cohesion of bodies and walls. For a city is properly understood of the men that inhabit there. But in saying 'is building,' he shewed us that he meant a town. And since a spiritual building hath some resemblance to a bodily building, therefore it is building as a city.

5. But let the following words remove all doubt that we ought not to understand carnally the words, Jerusalem that is building as a city, whose partaking is in the same. Now, therefore, brethren, let every one who raiseth the eye of his mind, who layeth aside the mist of the flesh, who cleanseth the eye of the heart, lift up his mind to contemplate, the same. What meaneth, the same? How am I to say, save by repeating the word, the same? Brethren, if ye can, understand the same. For whatever else I shall say, I shall not say, the same. Let us, however, endeavour by some neighbouring phrases and senses to lead the weakness of the mind to consider this word, the same. What meaneth, the same? What is ever in the same state; not what is now in one state, now in another. What then is, the same, save that which is? What is that which is? That which is everlasting. For what is always different at different times, is not, because it abideth not: not altogether is not, but is not in the highest sense. And what is, that which is, save He Who when He sent Moses, said unto him, I Am That I Am? What is this, save He, Who, when His servant said, Behold, Thou sendest me, and if the people shall say unto me, Who sent thee? what shall I say unto them? would not give His Name any otherwise than this, I Am That I Am; and replied, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. Behold The Same: I Am That I Am, I AM hath sent me unto you. Thou canst not understand; it is much to understand, it is much to apprehend. Remember what He, Whom thou canst not comprehend, became for thee.

Remember the flesh of Christ, towards which thou wast raised when sick, and when left half dead from the wounds of robbers, that thou mightest be brought to the Inn, and there mightest be cured. Let us therefore run unto the Lord's house, and reach the city where our feet may stand; the city that is building as a city: whose partaking is in The Same. For what oughtest thou to hold? That which Christ became for thee, for He is Christ; and Christ Himself is rightly understood in the words, I Am That I Am, as He is in the form of God, where He hath not thought it robbery to be equal with God, there He is The Same. But that thou mayest be a partaker in The Same, He first partook of thy nature; and the Word became flesh, that the flesh might partake of the Word. But in that the Word became Flesh, and dwelt among us, He came from the seed of Abraham; but it was promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that in their seed all nations should be blessed; and we find in consequence that the Church hath been spread over the whole world: God speaketh to the weak. He sought for firmness of heart, when He said, I Am That I Am: He sought for firmness of heart, and an elevated gaze of contemplation, when He said, I AM sent me unto you. But perhaps thou hast not as yet this power of contemplation: faint not, despair not. I AM willed to be a man as thou art: and therefore presently telleth Moses, when as it were terrified, His Name. What Name? That Is, Is. And the Lord said unto Moses, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: this is My Name for ever. Despair not of thyself, because He hath said, I Am That I Am, and, I AM hath sent me unto you: because thou at present waverest, and through the mutability of things, and the variety of mortal affairs, canst not perceive the meaning of The Same. I come down, because thou canst not come. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. In the seed of Abraham hope somewhat, that thou mayest be strengthened to see Him Who came unto thee in the seed of Abraham.

6. This then is The Same, of Whom it is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Behold The Same, Whose years shall not fail. Brethren, do not our years daily fail, and abide not at all? For those which have come, already are not; and they that are to come, are not: those have already failed, and others, destined to fail, are to come. In this one day, brethren, behold what we are

now saying is at one moment of time. Past hours have gone by, future hours have not as yet come; and when they shall have come, they also will themselves go by and fail. What are those years that will not fail, save they that abide? If therefore the years stand there, the very years also that stand are one year, and the very year which standeth is one day; for this one day hath neither rise or setting, nor is it commenced from a yesterday, nor closed by a tomorrow, but that day abideth for ever: and thou callest that day what thou pleasest; if thou choose, they are years; if thou choose, it is a day; whatever light thou regardest it in, it nevertheless standeth: that city which partaketh in the same, partaketh in its stability: justly therefore, since he is made a sharer in its stability, saith he who runneth thither, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. For all things there stand where nought passeth by. Dost thou too wish to stand there and not to pass by? Run thither. Nobody hath the same from himself. Attend, brethren. The body that he hath is not the same; for it standeth not in itself. It is changed through seasons, it is changed through changes of places and times, it is changed through diseases and wastings of flesh: it standeth not therefore in itself. Celestial bodies stand not in themselves, they have certain changes of their own, although hidden ones; they are certainly changed from place to place, they ascend from the east to the west, and again go round unto the east; they therefore stand not, they are not the same. Even the human soul standeth not. For with how many changes and imaginations is it altered? by how many pleasures is it changed? by what powerful lusts is it lacerated and torn asunder? Man's mind itself, which is called rational, is changeable, it is not the same. At one time, it wisheth, at another it wisheth not; at one time it knoweth, at another it knoweth not; at one time it remembereth, at another it forgetteth: therefore no one hath the same from himself. He who wished to have the same from himself, so that he might in some sort be the same unto himself, fell: the angel hath fallen, and hath become a devil. The devil hath pledged the man in the cup of pride, he hath, in envy, thrown down together with himself him who was standing. These have wished to be the same unto themselves: they have wished to be princes and lords over themselves; they have been unwilling to recognise the true Lord, who truly is The Same, unto Whom it is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art ever the same. Let therefore the humbled soul,

after so much weariness, so many diseases, difficulties, toils, return unto itself; and let it be in that city whose partaking is in the same.

7. Ver. 4. For thither the tribes went up. We were asking whither he ascendeth who hath fallen; for we said, it is the voice of a man who is ascending, of the Church rising. Can we tell whither it ascendeth? whither it goeth? whither it is raised? Thither, he saith, the tribes went up. Whither did the tribes go up? To a city whose partaking is the same. Therefore they ascend to Jerusalem. But the man who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among robbers. If he did not descend, he would not fall among robbers. But since by descending he fell among robbers, let him by ascending come unto Angels. Let him therefore ascend, because the tribes have ascended. But what are the tribes? Many know, many know not. But let us who know, descend unto them that know not the tribes, that they may ascend with us whither the tribes have ascended. The tribes may be termed 'curies' under another name, but not in the primary sense of the word. What are called tribes under one name cannot be called in the same sense by another: but they are called 'curies' in a kindred sense. For if we use the word 'curies' in its proper sense, we understand nothing, save the 'curies' which exist in each particular city, whence the terms 'curiales' and 'decuriones,' that is, the citizens of a curia or a decuria; and ye know that each city hath such curies. But there are, or were at one time, curies of the people in those cities, and one city hath many curies, as Rome hath thirty-five curies of the people. These are called tribes. The people of Israel had twelve of these, according to the sons of Jacob.

8. There were twelve tribes of the people of Israel: but there were good, and there were bad among them. For how evil were those tribes which crucified our Lord! How good those who recognised the Lord! Those tribes then who crucified the Lord, were tribes of the devil. When therefore he here said, For thither the tribes go up; that thou mightest not understand all the tribes, he added, even the tribes of the Lord. What meaneth, tribes of the Lord? They which knew the Lord. For out of those twelve evil tribes, there were good men there, of the good tribes, who recognised the Builder of the City; and these were the grains of wheat among those tribes, mingled with the chaff. For they went up, not with the chaff, but tribes winnowed, chosen, as

the tribes of the Lord. Thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord. What are the tribes of the Lord? A testimony unto Israel. Hear, brethren, what this meaneth. A testimony to Israel: that is, whereby it may be known that it is truly Israel. For what meaneth Israel? The meaning of this word has already often been declared, and let it often be declared; for perchance, though it hath recently been declared, it hath slipped from you. In repeating it, let us effect that it may not slip even from those who know not, or refuse, to read: let us be their dictionary. Israel is interpreted to mean, ‘Seeing God:’ indeed, if more carefully rendered, Israel will be found to mean, ‘is seeing God:’ both meanings; is, and, seeing God. For man is not in himself; for he is changed and altered, if he share not in Him Who is The Same. Then he is, when he seeth God. For then he is, when he seeth Him Who is; and by seeing Him Who is, he also according to his measure beginneth to be. He is then Israel, and Israel is seeing God. The proud man therefore is not Israel; for he hath no share in The Same; because he chooseth to be the same unto himself. He who wisheth to be the beginning to himself is not Israel. Every false one therefore is not Israel, for every proud man must needs be a false one. This I say, brethren: it needs must be that every proud man wish to seem what he is not; otherwise, my brethren, it cannot be. And I wish the proud man wished to seem what he is not in the same way as, for example’s sake, to seem a fluteplayer, when not really a fluteplayer. For it would soon be tested: it would be said to him, Play; let us see if thou art a fluteplayer. He would not be able; he would be discovered to have wished falsely to seem what he was not. If he called himself eloquent, it would be said to him, Speak: and prove thyself. If he should speak, he would be found not to be that which he had professed. The proud man (and this is worse) wishes himself to appear righteous, though he be not so; and as it is difficult to comprehend righteousness, it is difficult to detect the proud. The proud therefore wish to appear what they are not: for this reason, they have no share in The Same; they belong not to Israel, which meaneth, Seeing God. Who then belongeth to Israel? He who shareth in The Same. Who is he? He who confesses that he is not what God is, and that he hath from Him all the good he is capable of having; and that there is nought save sin flowing from himself, that righteousness cometh unto him from God? He is such in whom there is no guile. And what did the Lord say, when He saw Nathanael? Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. If therefore he

is a true Israelite, in whom there is no guile, those tribes go up to Jerusalem, in whom there is no guile. And these are the testimony of Israel: that is, owing to these it is acknowledged that there were grains among that chaff, since when the floor was looked upon, all was thought to be chaff. There were therefore grains there: but when they have ascended into that glory above, when the floor shall have been winnowed, then will there be a testimony of Israel; then will all the wicked say, Truly there were here righteous men among the wicked, when all seemed to us wicked, and when we thought all such as we ourselves were, a testimony of Israel. Whither do they go up? Wherefore do they go up? To confess unto Thy Name, O Lord. It could not be more nobly expressed. As pride presumeth, so doth humility confess. As he is a presumer, who wishes to appear what he is not, so is he a confessor, who does not wish that to be seen which himself is, and loves That which He is. To this therefore do Israelites go up, in whom is no guile, because they are truly Israelites, because in them is the testimony of Israel. To this do they go up, to confess unto Thy Name, O Lord.

9. Ver. 5. For there were seated seats for judgment. This is a wonderful riddle, a wonderful question, if it be not understood. He calleth those seats, which the Greeks call thrones. The Greeks call chairs thrones, as a term of honour. Therefore, my brethren, it is not wonderful if even we should sit on seats, or chairs; but that these seats themselves should sit, when shall we be able to understand this? As if some one should say: let stools or chairs sit here. We sit on chairs, we sit on seats, we sit on stools; the seats themselves sit not. What then meaneth this, For there were seated seats for judgment? Ye are indeed wont to hear these words of God, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. But in Latin the whole is expressed thus, The heaven is My seat. Who are these, save the righteous? Who are the heavens, save the righteous? They who are heaven, are heavens themselves: for they which are the Church, are themselves Churches; they are many in such a way as to be one: so therefore are the righteous also; the righteous are heaven in such a way as that they are heavens. Now God sitteth in them, and judgeth from them: nor is it said without a deep meaning, that The heavens declare the glory of God. For the Apostles have become a heaven. Whence have they become heaven? Because they have been justified. As the sinner hath become earth, for unto him it is said, Dust thou art, and unto

dust shalt thou return; so have the justified become heaven. They bore God: and from them God lightened forth His wonders, thundered terrors, rained consolations. They were therefore, they were heaven, and they declared the glory of God. For that ye may know that they were called heaven, he saith in the same Psalm, Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Thou askest, whose? and thou wilt find, of these heavens. If therefore heaven be the seat of God, and the Apostles are heaven; they themselves are become the seat of God, the throne of God. It is said in another passage: The soul of the righteous is the throne of wisdom. A great truth, a great truth, is declared; the throne of wisdom is the soul of the righteous; that is, wisdom sitteth in the soul of the righteous as it were in her chair, in her throne, and thence judgeth whatsoever she judgeth. There were therefore thrones of wisdom, and therefore the Lord said unto them, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So they also shall sit upon twelve seats, and they are themselves the seats of God; for of them it is said, For there were seated seats. Who sat? Seats. And who are the seats? They of whom it is said, The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom. Who are the seats? The heavens. Who are the heavens? Heaven. What is heaven? That of which the Lord saith, Heaven is My seat. The righteous then themselves are the seats; and have seats; and seats shall be seated in that Jerusalem. For what purpose? For judgment. Ye shall sit, He saith, on twelve thrones, O ye thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Judging whom? Those who are below on earth. Who will judge? They who have become heaven. But they who shall be judged, will be divided into two bodies: one will be on the right hand, the other on the left. For the Lord will come to judgment with the ancients of His people, saith Isaiah. There are then some who will judge with Him; others who will be judged by Him, and by those who will judge with Him. These therefore will be divided into two parts: one will he set on the right, to whom will be enumerated the merciful deeds they have wrought; the other will be set on the left, unto whom will be enumerated their cruelty and barrenness of mercy. And to those placed on the right it will be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Wherefore? I was an hungred, He replieth, and ye gave me meat. They answer: Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred? He answereth: Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye

have done it unto Me. What, then, my brethren? They shall judge, of whom it is said that men should make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they also, He saith, may receive you into everlasting habitations. The Saints will sit with the Lord to mark those who have wrought mercy, and will bring them, set apart on the right, into the kingdom of heaven: and this is the peace of Jerusalem. What is the peace of Jerusalem? That bodily works of mercy may be joined with spiritual works of preaching, and that peace may result from giving and receiving. For the Apostle, who hath declared that this almsgiving is a balance of giving and receiving, saith, If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? And concerning the same thing he elsewhere saith: He that had gathered much, had nothing over: and he that had gathered little, had no lack. Why had he nothing over, who had gathered much? Because what he had over, he gave to the needy. And what meaneth, he that had gathered little, had no lack? Because he received from the other's abundance, that there might be equality, as he saith. This is the peace, whereof it is said, Peace be in thy strength.

10. Ver. 6. For after saying, For there were seated seats for judgment, seats over the house of David, that is, over the family of Christ, to whom they gave meat in season; he at once addeth, as unto the seats themselves, Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. O ye seats, who now sit unto judgment, and are made the seats of the Lord Who judgeth, (since they who judge, enquire; they who are judged, are enquired of,) Enquire ye, he saith, the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. What will they find by asking? That some have done deeds of charity, that others have not. Those whom they shall find to have done deeds of charity, they will summon them unto Jerusalem; for these deeds are for the peace of Jerusalem. Love is a powerful thing, my brethren, love is a powerful thing. Do ye wish to see how powerful a thing love is? Whosoever through some insurmountable obstacle can not fulfil what God commandeth, let him love him who fulfilleth it, and he fulfilleth it in him. I pray your attention, my brethren. For example's sake, he hath a wife, whom he may not divorce; he must obey the Apostle who saith, Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and, Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. It cometh into his mind that that life is better, whereof the Apostle saith, I

would that all men were even as myself. He observeth those who have done this; he loveth them, and fulfilleth in them what he cannot in himself. Love is a powerful thing. This is our strength; for if we be not in it, whatever else we have profiteth nothing. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, saith the Apostle, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. He addeth yet another great thing: and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. But if charity be destitute of means, so that it cannot find what to bestow upon the poor, let it love: let it give one cup of cold water; as much shall be laid to its account, as to Zaccheus who gave half his patrimony to the poor. Wherefore this? The one gave so little, the other so much, and shall so much be imputed to the former? Just so much. For though his resources are unequal, his charity is not unequal.

11. They therefore enquire: do ye reflect upon what ye are. It hath been already said unto us, We will go into the house of the Lord. We took delight in those who said unto us, We will go into the house of the Lord. Consider therefore whether we really go. For we go not with our feet, but with our affections. Consider if we go, let each of you ask himself what he is towards a poor saint, towards an indigent brother, what he is towards an indigent beggar, let him see whether his bowels are not narrow. For the Seats which will sit for judgment will have to enquire of thee, and ought to discover things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. And how do they enquire? As the seats of God. God asketh. If any thing escape God, something may escape those seats also who enquire. Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. But what are for the peace of Jerusalem? And plenteousness, he addeth, for them that love thee. He addresses Jerusalem herself, They have plenteousness who love her. Plenteousness after want: here they are destitute, there they are affluent; here they are weak, there they are strong; here they want, there they are rich. How have they become rich? Because they gave here what they received from God for a season, and received there what God will afterwards pay back for evermore. Here, my brethren, even rich men are poor. It is a good thing for a rich man to acknowledge himself poor: for if he think himself full, that is mere puffing, not plenteousness. Let him own himself empty, that he may be filled. What hath

he? Gold. What hath he not yet? Everlasting life. Let him consider what he hath, and see what he hath not. Brethren, of that which he hath, let him give, that he may receive what he hath not; let him purchase out of that which he hath, that which he hath not, and plenteousness for them that love thee.

12. Ver. 7. Peace be in thy strength. O Jerusalem, O city, who art being built as a city, whose partaking is in The Same: Peace be in thy strength: peace be in thy love; for thy strength is thy love. Hear the Song of songs: Love is strong as death. A great saying that, brethren, Love is strong as death. The strength of charity could not be expressed in grander terms than these, Love is strong as death. For who resisteth death, my brethren? Consider, my brethren. Fire, waves, the sword, are resisted: we resist principalities, we resist kings; death cometh alone, who resisteth it? There is nought more powerful than it. Charity therefore is compared with its strength, in the words, Love is strong as death. And since this love slayeth what we have been, that we may be what we were not; love createth a sort of death in us. This death he had died who said, The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world: this death they had died unto whom he said, Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Love is strong as death. If therefore it is strong, it is courageous, and of great power, and is strength itself, and through it the weak are ruled by the firm, earth by heaven, peoples by the seats; therefore, Peace be in thy strength, meaneth, Peace be in thy love. And through this strength, through this love, through this peace, let there be plenteousness in thy towers: that is, in thy exalted ones. For few will sit in judgment, but many set on the right hand will constitute the people of that city. For many will belong severally to each exalted one, by whom they will be received into their everlasting habitations; and there will be plenteousness in his towers. But God Himself is the fulness of delight, and the sufficiency of riches, Himself The Same, Himself in Whom the partaking of the city is in 'The Same:' this will be our plenteousness also. But whence? Through charity, that is, through strength. But in whom is charity, my brethren? In him who seeketh not his own in this life. Hear the Apostle's charity: Give none offence, he saith, even as I please all men in all things. Where then is what thou hast said: If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ? and dost thou at one time say that thou

pleasest, at another, exhort them also to please? But he did not lay down as the end, that any man should please on his own account, and not for the sake of charity. He who seeketh his own glory, seeketh not the salvation of others. For he saith, Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

13. Ver. 8. Thus as he was here speaking of charity, he addeth, For my brethren and companions' sake, I spoke peace of thee. O Jerusalem, thou city whose partaking is in The Same, I in this life and on this earth, I poor, he saith, I a stranger and groaning, not as yet enjoying to the full thy peace, and preaching thy peace; preach it not for my own sake, as the heretics, who seeking their own glory, say, Peace be with you: and have not the peace which they preach to the people. For if they had peace, they would not tear asunder unity. I, he saith, spoke peace of thee. But wherefore? For my brethren and companions' sake: not for my own honour, not for my own money, not for my life; for, To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But, I spoke peace of thee, for my brethren and companions' sakes. For he wished to depart, and to be with Christ: but, since he must preach these things to his companions and his brethren, to abide in the flesh, he addeth, is more needful for you. For my brethren and companions' sakes I spoke peace of thee.

14. Ver. 9. Because of the house of the Lord my God, I have sought good things for thee. Not on my own account have sought good things, for then I should not seek for thee, but for myself; and so should I not have them, because I should not seek them for thee; but, Because of the house of the Lord my God, because of the Church, because of the Saints, because of the pilgrims; because of the poor, that they may go up; because we say to them, we will go into the house of the Lord: because of the house of the Lord my God itself, I have sought good things for Thee. These long and needful words gather ye, brethren, eat them, drink them, and grow strong, run, and seize.

PSALM 123

Exposition

1. I have undertaken to treat of the songs of him who ascendeth in order with you, holy brethren; of one who ascendeth and loveth, and ascendeth because he loveth. All love either ascends or descends. For we are lifted up unto God by a good desire, and by an evil desire we are precipitated to the lowest depths. But since we have already fallen, through evil desire; it remaineth for us, if we know Who fell not, but descended unto us, to ascend by clinging to Him; for we cannot do so of our own strength. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven. He seemeth to have spoken of Himself alone. Did then the rest remain below, because He Who alone came down, alone ascended? What ought the rest to do? To be united with His Body, that Christ, Who came down and ascended, may be One. The Head came down, and ascended with the Body; clothed with His Church, which He presented to Himself, not having spot or wrinkle. He therefore alone ascended. But we also when we are so with Him, that we are His members in Him, and He with us is alone, and therefore One, and evermore One, unity bindeth us unto One; and they alone ascend not with Him, who have not chosen to be one with Him. Now since He Who was set in heaven, and immortal, since He had raised up the flesh, owing to which He was for a season mortal, and suffering no persecutions in heaven, no malice or reproaches, as on this earth when He deigned to bear all things for our sakes; yet, sympathising with His Body suffering on earth, said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Though no one touched Him Himself, He yet cried from heaven that He was suffering persecution: we ought not to exclude the hope, nay, we ought rather confidently to trust, that, if through love He is Himself with us on earth, we also are with Him in heaven through the same love. But we have said in

what sense He is Himself with us on earth; we have said it was His Voice which sounded from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? when Saul touched Him not at all, nor even saw Him; but how is it shewn that we are also with Him in heaven? By the words of the same Paul, If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. He therefore is still below, and we are now above: He is below through the compassion of love, we are above through the hope of love. For we are saved by hope. But because our hope is sure; although it be to come, yet we are so spoken of as if it had already come to pass.

2. Ver. 1. Let therefore this singer ascend; and let this man sing from the heart of each of you, and let each of you be this man, for when each of you saith this, since ye are all one in Christ, one man saith this; and saith not, Unto Thee, O Lord, have we lift up our eyes; but, Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up mine eyes. Ye ought indeed to imagine that every one of you is speaking; but that One in an especial sense speaketh, Who is also spread abroad over the whole world. That One speaketh, Who elsewhere saith, From the ends of the earth did I cry unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. Who is it who crieth from the ends of the earth? Who is the one man spread abroad even unto the ends of the earth? Each man may cry forth in his own district; can he from the ends of the earth? But the inheritance of Christ, whereof it is said, I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession, itself crieth, From the ends of the earth did I cry unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. Suppose our heart to be in heaviness, and let us cry. Whence should our heart be in heaviness? Not in consequence of those things which even the wicked suffer here; for example's sake, if they suffer a loss: for if the heart is in heaviness on this account, it is ashes. Thou hast perhaps lost some one of thy relations by the will of God: if thine heart be in heaviness on this account, what great thing is this? The hearts of infidels also are in heaviness from this cause; those who have not as yet believed in Christ, suffer these things also. What maketh the heart of a Christian heavy? Because he is a pilgrim, and longeth for his country. If thy heart be heavy on this score, although thou hast been prosperous in the world, still thou dost groan: and

if all things combine to render thee prosperous, and this world smile upon thee on every side, thou nevertheless groanest, because thou seest that thou art set in a pilgrimage; and feelest that thou hast indeed happiness in the eyes of fools, but not as yet after the promise of Christ: this thou seekest with groans, this thou seekest with longings, and by longing ascendest, and while thou ascendest dost sing the Song of Degrees, saying, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven.

3. While ascending, whither was he to raise his eyes, save towards that heaven whereunto he was bound, and longed to ascend? For he ascendeth from earth to heaven. Behold the earth is below, which we tread with our feet; behold also the heaven above, which we see with our eyes; and as we ascend sing, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven! Where then are the ladders? For we behold so great an interval between heaven and earth, there is so wide a separation, and so great a space of regions between: we wish to climb thither, we see no ladder; do we deceive ourselves, because we sing the Song of Degrees, that is, the Song of ascent? We ascend unto heaven, if we think of God, Who hath made ascending steps in the heart. What is to ascend in heart? To advance towards God. As every man who faileth, doth not descend, but falleth: so every one who profiteth, doth ascend: but if he so profit, as to avoid pride: if he so ascend as not to fall: but if while he profiteth he become proud, in ascending he again falleth. But that he may not be proud, what ought he to do? Let him lift up his eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven, let him not heed himself. For every proud man heedeth himself, and he who pleaseth himself seemeth to himself to be great. But he who pleaseth himself, pleaseth a fool; for he is himself a fool, when he pleaseth himself. He alone pleaseth without danger, who pleaseth God. And who is he who pleaseth God? He Whom God hath pleased. God cannot displease Himself; may He please thee also, that thou mayest please Him. But He cannot please thee, save thou hast displeased thyself. But if thou displeasest thyself, remove thine eyes from thyself. For why dost thou regard thyself? For if thou sincerely regard thyself, thou findest in thee what will displease thee; and thou sayest unto God, My sin is ever before me. Let thy sin be before thee, that it may not be before God; and refuse to be before thyself, that thou mayest be before God. For as we wish that God may not turn away His face

from us, so do we wish that He may turn His face from our sins: for both these prayers are found in the Psalms. O hide not Thou Thy face from me, are the words of the Psalm: and ours also; and see what he, who saith, O hide not Thou Thy face from me, saith elsewhere: Turn Thy face from my sins. If thou wouldest have Him turn His face from thy sins, do thou turn thy face from thyself, and turn not thy face from thy sins. For if thou turn not thy face from them, thou art thyself incensed with thy sins; but if thou turn not away thy face from thy sins, thou dost recognise them, and He forgetteth them.

4. But raise thine eyes from thyself unto Him, and say, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven. If, my brethren, we understand by heaven the firmament which we see with our bodily eyes, we shall indeed so err, as to imagine that we cannot ascend thither without ladders, or some scaling machines: but if we ascend spiritually, we ought to understand heaven spiritually: if the ascent be in affection, heaven is in righteousness. What is then the heaven of God? All holy souls, all righteous souls. For the Apostles also, although they were on earth in the flesh, were heaven; for the Lord, enthroned in them, traversed the whole world. He then dwelleth in heaven. How? In what sense doth he say in another Psalm, But Thou dwellest in holiness, O Thou praise of Israel. He who dwelleth in heaven, dwelleth in holiness: what is holiness, save His temple? For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. But all who are as yet weak, and walking according to faith, are according to faith the temple of God, and will be at one time in sight also the temple of God. How long are they the temple according to faith? As long as Christ dwelleth in them through faith; as the Apostle saith, That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. But they are already heaven in whom God already dwelleth visibly, who see Him face to face; all the holy Apostles, all the holy Virtues, Powers, Thrones, Lordships, that heavenly Jerusalem, wanderers from whence we groan, and for which we pray with longing; and there God dwelleth. Thither hath the Psalmist lifted up his faith, thither he riseth in affection, with longing hopes: and this very longing causeth the soul to purge off the filth of sins, and to be cleansed from every stain, that itself also may become heaven; because it hath lifted up its eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven. For if we have determined that that heaven which we

see with our bodily eyes is the dwelling of God, the dwelling of God will pass away; for heaven and earth will pass away. Then, before God created heaven and earth, where did He dwell? But some one saith: and before God made the Saints, where did He dwell? God dwelt in Himself, He dwelt with Himself, and God is with Himself. And when He deigneth to dwell in the Saints, the Saints are not the house of God in such wise, as that God should fall when it is withdrawn. For we dwell in a house in one way, in another way God dwelleth in the Saints. Thou dwellest in a house: if it be withdrawn, thou fallest: but God so dwelleth in the Saints, that if He should Himself depart, they fall. Whosoever then so beareth God as to be a temple of God, let him not think that God is so borne of him, that he may make God afraid if he withdraw himself. Woe to him if God withdraw Himself, for he falleth; since God abideth ever in Himself. The houses in which we live, themselves contain us: those in which God dwelleth, are themselves upheld by Him. Now consider how wide a difference there is between our dwelling and that of God: and let the soul thus speak, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven: that it may understand that God wanteth not even heaven to dwell in; but heaven is in need of Him, that it may be inhabited by Him.

5. Ver. 2–4. What then followeth, since he hath said, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in Heaven? How hast thou lifted up thine eyes? Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress: even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us. We are both servants, and a handmaiden: He is both our Master and our Mistress. What do these words mean? What do these similitudes mean? Listen to me for a time, beloved brethren. It is not wonderful if we are servants, and He our Master; but it is wonderful if we are a maiden, and He our Mistress. But not even our being a maiden is wonderful; for we are the Church; nor is it wonderful that He is our Mistress; for He is the Power and the Wisdom of God. Hear the Apostle speaking: We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God: so that now both the people may be a servant and the Church a handmaid, thou hast heard both: Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom

of God. When therefore thou hearest Christ, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Master; when thou hearest the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Mistress; for thou art both servant and handmaiden; servant, for thou art a people; handmaiden, for thou art the Church. But this maiden hath found great dignity with God; she hath been made a wife. But until she come unto those spiritual embraces, where she may without apprehension enjoy Him Whom she hath loved, and for whom she hath sighed in this tedious pilgrimage, she is betrothed: and hath received a mighty pledge, the blood of the Spouse for Whom she sigheth without fear. Nor is it said unto her, Do not love; as it is sometimes said to any betrothed virgin, not as yet married: and is justly said, Do not love; when thou hast become a wife, then love: it is rightly said, because it is a precipitate and preposterous thing, and not a chaste desire, to love one whom she knoweth not whether she shall marry. For it may happen that one man may be betrothed to her, and another man marry her. But as there is no one else who can be preferred to Christ, let her love without apprehension: and before she is joined unto Him, let her love, and sigh from a distance and from her far pilgrimage. He will alone marry her, for he alone hath given such a pledge. For who can so marry as to die for her whom he wishes to marry? For if he chooseth to die for her, he will be no more there to marry her. But He Who when He rose again was to marry His betrothed, died without apprehension for her. Nevertheless, brethren, let us in the meanwhile be as servants and handmaiden. It is said indeed, I call you not servants, but friends: but perhaps our Lord said this to His disciples alone? Hear the Apostle Paul, saying, Thou art no more a servant, but a son: and if a son, then an heir through God. He was speaking to the people, he was speaking to the faithful. Now therefore being redeemed in the Name of the Lord by His own blood, being washed in His laver, we are sons, we are a son; because we are so many, as that we are one in Him. What then is the reason that we still speak as servants? Can we deserve as much in the Church, although we are already made sons instead of servants, as the Apostle Paul? And yet what saith he in his Epistle? Paul, servant of Jesus Christ. If he, through whom the Gospel hath been preached unto us, still calleth himself a servant; how much more ought we to acknowledge our condition, in order that His grace may be greater in us? For He first made those whom He redeemed, servants. For His blood was a price for servants,

a pledge for His spouse. Acknowledging therefore our condition, although even now sons through grace, yet as servants by creation, for the whole creation serveth God, let us say, As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress; even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us.

6. He hath also stated the reason, why our eyes should wait upon the Lord our God, even as the eyes of a servant look unto the hands of his master, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress. And as though thou shouldest ask, Why? Until, he saith, He have mercy upon us. What sort of servants then, brethren, did he wish to be understood, whose eyes look unto the hands of their masters; and what sort of maidens, whose eyes look unto the hands of their mistress, until their mistress have mercy upon them? Who are these servants and handmaidens, whose eyes thus look unto the hands of their masters, save those who are ordered to be beaten? Our eyes look unto the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us. How? As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress. Both servants and maidens then look thus, until their master or mistress have mercy upon them. Suppose then that some master hath commanded his servant to be beaten. The servant is beaten: he feels the pain of the strokes; he looketh upon the hands of his master, until he say, Enough. For by the hand is meant the master's power. What then shall we say, brethren? Our Lord hath commanded us to be beaten, and our mistress the wisdom of God hath ordered us to be beaten; and in this life we are beaten, and the whole of this mortal life is a chastisement. Listen to the words of the Psalm: Thou hast chastened man for sin, and hast made my soul to consume away like as it were a spider. Remember, brethren, how frail a spider is, and that with a slight touch it is shattered and dieth. And, that we might not imagine that we have a flesh alone which consumeth easily from the weakness of our mortal nature, he said not, Thou hast made me to consume away; lest we should understand it of the flesh; but, Thou hast made my soul to consume away like as it were a spider. For there is nothing weaker than our soul placed among the temptations of the world, in the midst of groans and travailing of sorrows; there is nothing weaker than it, until it clings to the firmness of heaven, and is in the temple of God, whence it may no longer fall: since it was made

weak as a spider at first, so that it came into this weakness and perishable nature, and was expelled from Paradise. Then was the servant ordered to be beaten. My brethren, consider, from what point of time we have been beaten. In all who have been born from the origin of the human race, in all who are now, in all who will hereafter be born, Adam is beaten. Adam is beaten, that is, the human race; and many have grown so hardened that they feel not their own bruises. But they who out of this race have been made sons, have received back the sense of pain: they feel that they are beaten, and they know Who commanded them to be beaten; and they have lifted up their eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven; and thus their eyes are looking unto the hands of their Lord, until He have mercy upon them, even as the eyes of servants unto the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of the maiden unto the hands of her mistress. Thou seest some fortunate men smiling in this world, boasting themselves; they are not beaten; nay, they are worse beaten; in this very point they are the worse beaten, in that they have lost feeling. Let them awake, and be beaten; let them feel that they are beaten, let them know that they are beaten, and let them grieve that they are beaten. For he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow, as Scripture saith. So also the Lord in the Gospel: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

7. Let us hear the words of the man who is beaten, and let these be the words of each of us, even when it is well with us. For who cannot understand that he is beaten when he is sick, when he is in prison, when perchance in bonds, when perchance he suffereth robbery? When troubles are inflicted upon him by any wicked men, he feeleth that he is beaten. This is an excellent sensibility, to perceive that he is beaten even when it is well with him. For the Scripture saith not in Job, Human life is full of temptations, but it saith, What is the life of man upon earth, save a temptation? He hath pronounced the whole of this life a temptation. The whole therefore of thy life on earth, is thy stripes. Mourn as long as thou livest upon earth: whether thou livest happily, or whether thou art placed in any trouble, cry, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in Heaven. Look unto the hands of the Lord, Who ordered thee to be beaten, unto Whom thou sayest in another Psalm, Thou hast chastened man for sin, and hast made my soul to consume away like as a spider; cry unto the hands

of Him Who beateth thee, and say, Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us. Are not these the words of one who is being beaten, Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us?

8. Ver. 3, 4. For we have been much filled with contempt. Our soul hath been filled to the utmost, a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud. All that will live piously according to Christ, must needs suffer reproof, must needs be despised by those who do not choose to live piously, all whose happiness is earthly. They are derided who call that happiness which they cannot see with their eyes, and it is said to them, What believest thou, madman? Dost thou see what thou believest? Hath any one returned from the world below, and reported to thee what is going on there? Behold I see and enjoy what I love. Thou art scorned, because thou dost hope for what thou seest not; and he who seemeth to hold what he seeth, scorneth thee. Consider well if he doth really hold it: be not disturbed; see whether he holdeth it himself, and let him not mock thee; lest, when thou thinkest him happy in the present, thou mayest lose true happiness in future: be not, I say, disturbed: consider whether he holdeth it. What he holdeth slippeth from his hands, or he slippeth away from what he holdeth; either he must needs pass through his property, or it through him. Through whom do his possessions pass? Through him who is ruined while living. Who passeth through his property? He who dieth in his riches; for when he dieth, he carrieth them not away with him to the world below. I have my house, he hath boasted himself. Thou askest, what house of his own? That which my father left me. And whence did he derive this house? My grandfather left it him. Go back even to his great grandfather, then to his great grandfather's father, and he can no longer tell their names. Art thou not rather terrified by this thought, that thou seest many have passed through this house, and that none of them hath carried it away with him to his everlasting home? Thy father left it: he passed through it: thus thou also wilt pass by. If therefore thou hast a mere passing stay in thy house, it is an inn for passing guests, not an habitation for permanent abode. Yet since we hope for those things which are to come, and sigh for future happiness, and since it hath not yet appeared what we shall be, although we are already "sons of God;" for "our life is hidden with Christ in God: we are utterly despised, by those who seek or enjoy happiness in this world.

9. Our soul is filled exceedingly; a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud. We were asking who were the wealthy: he hath expounded to thee, in that he hath said, the proud. Reproach and contempt are the same: and wealthy is the same with proud. It is a repetition of the sentence, a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud. Why are the proud wealthy? Because they wish to be happy here. Why? since they themselves too are miserable, are they wealthy? But perhaps when they are miserable, they do not mock us. Listen, my beloved. Then perchance they mock when they are happy, when they boast themselves in the pomp of their riches! when they boast themselves in the inflated state of false honours: then they mock us, and seem to say, Behold, it is well with me: I enjoy the good things before me: let those who promise what they cannot shew depart from me: what I see, I hold; what I see, I enjoy; may I fare well in this life. Be thou more secure; for Christ hath risen again, and hath taught thee what He will give in another life: be assured that He giveth it. But that man mocketh thee, because he holdeth what he hath. Bear with his mockeries, and thou wilt laugh at his groans: for afterwards there will come a season when these very persons will say, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision. These are the words of the Book of Wisdom; for the Scripture hath handed down to us what they shall say who now scorn us, and who laugh at us, and by whom we are filled with reproach and contempt: what words they will then utter, when they shall be despised by the Truth. For they shall see those, whom they had scorned when mingled with themselves, shine on the right hand, when that which the Apostle hath described hath been fulfilled in them: when Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory; and they shall say, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a byword of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints! And they pursue this discourse, and add, Therefore we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness shone not unto us, and the sun rose not on us. What hath pride profited us? and what have riches with our vaunting brought us? There thou dost not mock them, for they mock themselves. Until this come to pass, brethren, let us raise our eyes unto Him that dwelleth in heaven: and let us not take away our eyes from Him, until He have mercy upon us, and free us from all temptation and reproach and contempt.

10. To this we must add, that sometimes those also who are beneath the scourge of temporal unhappiness, mock us. Thou findest some one, after the deserving of his iniquities, whether by the hidden judgment of God, or by an open condemnation, sent to prison, dragging a chain: and even he mocketh thee. And when he is addressed, Why didst thou not live well? behold to what thou hast come by living evilly: he answereth, Wherefore do they who live well, suffer these things? But they suffer for this reason, that they may be proved, that they may be exercised by temptations, that they may profit by scourging: for God scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And if He scourged His only Son without sin, and delivered Him up for us all, how ought we to be scourged, who have done things on account of which we are scourged? When we speak thus, they still pride themselves even in their woe, and afflicted, not humbled, they reply, These are the words of idle Christians, who believe what they see not. If even these mock us, why should we imagine, brethren, that they are not mentioned in this Psalm, in the words, A reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud; since even they who are not wealthy mock at Christians: and when in want and troubles, do not even then cease to mock? Surely then, we are a reproach unto the wealthy: or is no one found to mock us even when vexed with some calamity? Did not the robber mock, who was crucified with our crucified Lord? If therefore they who are not wealthy mock us, why doth the Psalm say, A reproach to the wealthy? If we carefully sift the matter, even these (the unfortunate) are wealthy. How are they wealthy? Yea; for if they were not wealthy, they would not be proud. For one man is wealthy in money, and proud on that score: another is wealthy in honours, and is proud on that account: another imagines himself wealthy in righteousness, and hence his pride, which is worse. They who seem not to be wealthy in money, seem to themselves to be wealthy in righteousness towards God; and when calamity overtakes them, they justify themselves, accuse God, and say, What wrong have I been guilty of, or, what have I done? Thou repliest: Look back, call to mind thy sins, see if thou hast done nothing. He is somewhat touched in conscience, and returneth to himself, and thinketh of his evil deeds; and when he hath thought of his evil deeds, not even then doth he choose to confess that he deserves his sufferings; but saith, Behold, I have clearly done many things; but I see that many have done worse, and suffer no evil. He is righteous against God. He also therefore is wealthy: he

hath his breast puffed out with righteousness; since God seemeth to him to do ill, and he seemeth to himself to suffer unjustly. And if thou gavest him a vessel to pilot, he would be shipwrecked with it: yet he wishes to deprive God of the government of this world, and himself to hold the helm of Creation, and to distribute among all men pains and pleasures, punishments and rewards. Miserable soul! yet why do ye wonder? He is wealthy, but wealthy in iniquity, wealthy in malignity; but is more wealthy in iniquity, in proportion as he seemeth to himself to be wealthy in righteousness.

11. But a Christian ought not to be wealthy, but ought to acknowledge himself poor; and if he hath riches, he ought to know that they are not true riches, so that he may desire others. For he who desireth false riches, seeketh not the true riches: while he who seeketh the true riches, is as yet poor; and justly doth he say, I am poor and in heaviness. Again, in what sense is he, who is both poor and full of iniquity, said to be wealthy? Because it displeaseth him that he is poor, and in righteousness itself he seemeth wealthy in his own heart against the righteousness of God. And what is the wealth of our righteousness? How much soever righteousness there may be in us, it is a sort of dew compared to that fountain: compared to that plenteousness it is as a few drops, which may soften our life, and relax our hard iniquity. Let us only desire to be filled with the full fountain of righteousness, let us long to be filled with that abundant richness, of which it is said in the Psalm, They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink out of the torrent of Thy pleasure. But while we are here, let us understand ourselves to be destitute and in want; not only in respect of those riches which are not the true riches, but of salvation itself. And when we are whole, let us understand that we are weak. For as long as this body hungers and thirsts, as long as this body is weary with watching, weary with standing, weary with walking, weary with sitting, weary with eating; whithersoever it turneth itself for a relief from weariness, there it discovereth another source of fatigue: there is therefore no perfect soundness, not even in the body itself. Those riches are then not riches, but beggary; for the more they abound, the more doth destitution and avarice increase. This is not the health of the body, but weakness. We are every day refreshed with cordials from God, in that we eat and drink: these things which are set before us, are medicines.

Brethren, if ye wish to see what sort of a disease is upon us; he who fasts for seven days, dieth of hunger. That hunger therefore is here; but thou feelest it not, because every day thou givest it medicine: not even health then is to us perfect.

12. Consider, my brethren, in what sense we should understand ourselves to be poor, that we may rejoice in Him, and may lift up our eyes towards Him Who dwelleth in heaven. These are not true riches; they increase in a greater degree the coveting of those who possess them. This is not true health of body; because we carry about with us weakness that faileth every way: wherever it may turn, it faileth. In the very relief, thou wilt not find permanence: he is tired with standing: he wishes to sit: will he even in sitting last? What he hath adopted as a remedy against fatigue, in that he findeth failing. He is tired with watching: he is about to sleep; doth he never grow weary again, because he hath slept? He is tired with fasting: he is about to refresh himself: if he exceed in refreshment, thence he becometh weak. This our weakness cannot persevere in any thing. What is our righteousness? How much righteousness is there among so great temptations? We are able to refrain from homicide, from adultery, from thefts, from perjuries, from frauds; but are we able to refrain from unrighteous thoughts? are we able to refrain from the suggestions of evil desires? What then is our righteousness? Let then our whole hunger, our whole thirst, be for true riches, and true health, and true righteousness. What are true riches? That heavenly abode in Jerusalem. For who is called rich on this earth? When a rich man is praised, what is meant? He is very rich: nothing is wanting to him. That surely is the praise of him that praiseth the other: for it is not this, when it is said, He wants nothing. Consider if he really want nothing. If he desires nothing, he wants nothing: but if he still desires more than what he hath, his riches have increased in such wise, that his wants have increased also. But in that City there will be true riches, because there will be nothing wanting to us there; for we shall not be in need of any thing, and there will be true health. What is true health? when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then there will be true health, then there will be true and perfect righteousness, so that we shall not only be incapable of doing, but

even of thinking any thing evil. But at present, destitute, poor, wanting, in heaviness we sigh, we groan, we pray, we lift up our eyes unto God: since they who are happy in this world, scorn us; for they are wealthy: and they who are unhappy in this world, despise us; for they too are wealthy: and there is a righteousness in their hearts, but a false one. For this reason they do not arrive at a true righteousness, because they are filled with a false one. But do thou, that thou mayest arrive at the true righteousness, be poor and a beggar as to righteousness itself; and hear the Gospel, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

PSALM 124

Exposition

A Sermon to the people.

1. Ver. 1–5. Ye already well know, dearest brethren, that a Song of Degrees, is a song of our ascent: and that this ascent is not effected by the feet of the body, but by the affections of the heart. This we have repeatedly reminded you of: and we need not repeat it too often, that there may be room for saying what hath not yet been said. This Psalm, therefore, which ye have now heard sung unto you, is inscribed, A Song of Degrees. This is its title. They sing therefore while ascending: and sometimes as it were one man singeth, sometimes as it were many; because many are one, since Christ is One, and in Christ the members of Christ constitute one with Christ, and the Head of all these members is in heaven. But although the body toileth on earth, it is not cut off from its Head; for the Head looketh down from above, and regardeth the body. For if it did not regard the body, it would not say to the persecutor Saul, not as yet Paul, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? These things ye know very well, and they are familiar to you. But let not the mention of them disgust those who have not forgotten them, that through their patience they may return to the hearts of those from whom they have escaped; for they are edifying, and worthy of frequent repetition. Whether therefore one or many sing; many men are one man, because it is unity; and Christ, as we have said, is One, and all Christians are members of Christ.

2. What then do they sing? These members of Christ, what do they sing? For they love, and through their love sing, through their longing they sing. Sometimes they sing with tribulation, and sometimes they sing with exultation, when they sing in hope. For our tribulation is in the present world; but our hope is in the next world: and save the hope of a future world console us in the tribulation of the present world, we perish. Our joy

therefore, brethren, is not as yet in reality, but in hope; but it is as perfect, as though it were already realized: for we do not fear, when Truth promiseth. For Truth can neither deceive, nor be deceived: it is good for us to cling unto It; It freeth us, but if we have remained in His Word. For we now believe, we shall then see: when we believe, it is hope, in this world; when we shall see, it will be reality, in a future world. But we shall see face to face: but we shall then see face to face, when our hearts shall have been cleansed: for blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. But by what means are hearts purified, save through faith, as Peter saith in the Acts of the Apostles, Purifying their hearts by faith? Now our hearts are purified by faith, in order that they may be capable of enjoying the sight of God. For we walk now by faith, not as yet by sight; even as the Apostle saith, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. And what means, We are absent? For we walk by faith, he saith, not by sight. He therefore who is absent, and who walketh by faith, is not yet in his country, but is still on his way; but he who believeth not, is neither in his country, nor on the way. Let us therefore so walk as if we were on the way; for the King of our country Himself hath made Himself the way. The King of our country, our Lord Jesus Christ; and there He is the Truth, but here He is the Way. Whither do we go? Unto the Truth. By what path do we go? By faith. Whither do we go? Unto Christ. By what path do we go? Through Christ. For He hath Himself said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. For He had once said to those that believed on Him, If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed: and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free. And ye shall know the Truth, He saith, but, if ye continue in My Word. In what word? As the Apostle saith, The word of faith, which we preach. First therefore is the word of faith; in which word of faith if we continue, we shall know the Truth, and the Truth will make us free. Truth is immortal, Truth is immutable: Truth is that Word of which it is said, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And who seeth this, save his heart be purified? How are hearts purified? And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. In that therefore the Word continueth in Itself, it is Truth unto which we are coming, and which maketh us free: but inasmuch as the word of faith is preached, in which the Lord wisheth us to continue, that we may know the truth: it is this: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Thou

believest in Christ born in the flesh, and thou wilt come unto Christ born of God, God with God.

3. They whom we read sing these verses in joyous exultation; these members of Christ sing with exultation this Psalm. And who exulteth here, save in hope, as I have said? Let this hope of ours be a certain one, and let us sing with exultation. For they who sing are not foreign to us, or the words in this Psalm other than ours. So hear, as if ye were hearing yourselves; so hear, as though in the mirror of Scripture we were observing ourselves. For when thou lookest upon the Scriptures as upon a mirror, thy countenance is gladdened: when in the exultation of hope thou shalt find thyself like to certain members of Christ, which members have sung these words: thou also wilt thyself be among those members, and wilt sing these words. Why therefore do these men sing these words with exultation? Because they have escaped. It is hope, therefore, wherewith they sing. For whilst we are here, and are absent from our home, we have not as yet escaped. Certain members indeed of that body of which we also are, which can sing in truth, have gone before us. And this the holy Martyrs have sung: for they have already escaped, and are with Christ in joy about to receive at last incorruptible bodies, the very same which were at first corruptible, wherein they have suffered pains; of the same there will be made for them ornaments of righteousness. Therefore whether they in reality, or we in hope, joining our affections with their crowns, and longing for such a life as we have not here, and shall never gain unless we have longed for it here, let us all sing together, and say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. For they looked back upon certain tribulations which they had suffered, and considered when they were at length safe in the bliss and security of those realms, the path by which they had passed, whither they had come; and, because it was difficult to be set free from thence, unless the hand of the liberator were present, they said in joy, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. Thus they begin to sing: they have not yet said whence they have escaped; so great is their exultation, If the Lord had not been in us.

4. Now may Israel say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. Now may Israel say, because it hath escaped; for this Psalm places before our eyes those who have already escaped. Let us place them in our hearts also, now

triumphant: and as if we also were there, as it is said above, Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem. They were not yet there, but were on the way: but there was so much rejoicing while they hastened, such hope of arriving, that, while yet on the way and toiling, they already seemed to themselves to be placed at the journey's end. So let us also set ourselves in that triumph which will be in a future world, when we shall trample on death, which will then have been destroyed, when we shall say, O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Then united with angels, and rejoicing in our King, Who willed first to rise from the dead, although He willed not to be the first to die; for many died before Him, but no man rose again for evermore; let us then, rejoicing with Him, already there in hope and in heart, because we have escaped, reflect on what we have escaped, what offences, what tribulations of the world, what persecutions of all Pagans, what deceits of all heretics, what suggestions of the devil, what struggles of our desires. Who could escape all these trials, save the Lord Himself were on our side? Now Israel may say, for Israel saith it securely, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. When? When men rose up against us. Marvel not: they have been subdued: for they were men; but the Lord was in us, man was not in us: for men rose up against us. Nevertheless men would crush other men, unless in those men who could not be crushed, there were not man, but the Lord.

5. Therefore, If the Lord Himself had not been in us, when men rose up against us. For what could men do to you, while ye rejoiced, and sang, and securely held everlasting bliss? what could men do to you when they rose against you, if the Lord had not been on your side? what could they do? Perchance they had swallowed us up quick.—Swallowed us up quick: they would not first have slain us, and so have swallowed us up. O inhuman, O cruel men! The Church swalloweth not thus. To Peter it was said, Kill and eat: not, Swallow quick. How then doth Peter, that is, the Church, kill and eat? and how would they who have risen up against us, perchance have swallowed us up quick, if the Lord Himself had not been on our side? Because no man entereth into the body of the Church, save he be slain first. What he was dieth, that he may be what he was not. Otherwise, he who is not slain, and is not eaten by the Church, may be in the visible number of the people: but he cannot be in the number of the people which is known to

God, whereof the Apostle saith, The Lord knoweth who are His, save he be eaten; and eaten he cannot be, save he first be slain. The Pagan cometh, still in him idolatry liveth; he must be grafted among the members of Christ: that he may be engrafted, he must needs be eaten; but he cannot be eaten by the Church, save first he be slain. Let him renounce the world, then is he slain; let him believe in God, then is he eaten. And then would they have swallowed us up quick, if the Lord Himself had not been on our side. For many persecutors at times arose, and now they are not wanting. They rise singly, and sometimes swallow men quick, but men in whom the Lord is not. These are they who are swallowed quick, who know that it is evil, and consent with their tongue. For some persecutors have arisen, and have said unto men, Burn incense: if ye obey not, we slay you. They loved this life: and the sweetness of this life enthralled them. They did not love in a greater degree what God promised them, than what they saw on earth. For they were ordered to believe those things which they saw not yet, but they loved what they saw before them. Holding faster unto those things which they saw, they shut out the Lord from their hearts; and because the Lord was not in them, were swallowed up quick. What meaneth, were swallowed up quick? By offering incense to idols, when they knew that an idol is nothing. For if they thought an idol was any thing, they would be swallowed up dead: but when they think an idol nothing, and know that all these inventions of the Gentiles are vain, they live; and yet when they do what their persecutors will, they are swallowed up quick. But they are swallowed up quick on this account, that the Lord is not in them. But they in whom the Lord is, are slain and die not. But they who consent and live, are swallowed quick, when swallowed up they die. But they who have suffered, and have not yielded to tribulations, rejoice and say, Now may Israel say, say rejoicing, say securely, If the Lord had not been in us, when men rose up against us, perchance they had swallowed us up quick.

6. When their fury was enraged upon us. Ye are aware, brethren, that in one of the former Psalms, at the very commencement of the Songs of Degrees, one, who was beginning to ascend, sought aid against a deceitful tongue; and said, Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and a deceitful tongue. For when a man first beginneth to ascend, and to make progress, in the very outset of his ascent, he suffereth deceitful tongues, flattering to his ruin,

flattering in their evil persuasions. What art thou doing? Why dost thou this? What? Canst thou not live otherwise? Canst not thou serve God without doing this? Thou then art the only one who wishest to be what others are not! and if thou findest some who are with thee in thy deeds, what saith that flattering and deceitful tongue? Behold, they have succeeded: perhaps thou wilt fail. Thou art attempting, thou wilt fail: and it would have been better not to have begun, than to have begun and to have failed. The deceitful tongue still flattereth. If thou hast persevered, the deceitful and flattering tongue is overcome, it beginneth to rage openly; and the tongue which flattered that it might seduce, threatens that it may terrify. But if the Lord be within thee, and thou hast not abandoned Christ in thy heart; as thou didst overcome the deceitful tongue through the sharp arrows and the hot burning coals, that is, through the word of God, whereby thy heart was transfixed, and through the examples of the righteous who have been quickened from the dead, have been made righteous from sinners, as coals revive after death: as therefore thou didst conquer them by arrows and hot burning coals, when they were deceitfully flattering and seducing by flattery; thus thou wilt conquer these who now wrathfully threaten, because they have failed to seduce by flattery. They were overcome when they flattered, let them be overcome also when they threaten. They are overcome: but how, save the Lord Himself had been in us? It is clear that thou hast not conquered, but that He hath conquered Who is in thee. Dost thou bear within thee such a general, and art thou overcome? Is not He whom thou bearest He who said, I have overcome the world? Did He not by His death before thee overcome the devil, since He was evermore above every creature, because the Word is God with God? Why did He conquer, save that He might shew thee how to fight with the devil? Yet although thou art now taught, save He be in thee Who conquered for thee first, thou art overcome. If the Lord Himself had not been in us, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick; when their fury was enraged upon us. They are now in anger, they now openly rage: perchance the water had drowned us. By water he meaneth ungodly nations: and we shall see what sort of water in the following verses. Whoever had consented unto them, water would have overwhelmed him. For he would die by the death of the Egyptians, he would not pass through after the example of the Israelites. For ye know, brethren, that the people of Israel passed through

the water, by which the Egyptians were overwhelmed. The water, he saith, had drowned us.

7. But what sort of water is this? It is a torrent, it flows with violence, but it will pass by. For by torrents are meant rivers which swell with sudden showers: they have a powerful current; whoever attempts to ford them is carried away, but he in whom the Lord is not; while he in whom the Lord is, his soul passeth over the torrent. The torrent still floweth, but the soul of the Martyrs hath already passed over. Still while this world runneth on in alternate births and deaths, the torrent lasteth: hence come persecutions, from this torrent. Hence He, our Head, first drinketh, of Whom it is said in the Psalms, He shall drink of the torrent in the way. From the torrent, that stream which signifieth a persecuting people, He drank Who said to His disciples, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? He drinketh of the torrent by the way. What means, He drinketh by the way? He drank as He passed, He stayed not there. He drank by the way, for it is said of Him, He stood not in the way of sinners. He drank as He passed. And what is said in consequence? Therefore shall He lift up His head. He shall drink, he saith, of the torrent by the way: therefore shall He lift up His head. For our Head is already exalted, because He drank of the torrent by the way; for our Lord hath suffered. If therefore our Head hath been already raised up, why doth the body fear the torrent? Without doubt, because the Head hath been raised, the body also will say hereafter, Our soul hath passed over the torrent. Perhaps our soul hath passed over the water without substance. Behold, what sort of water he was speaking of, The water perchance had overwhelmed us. But what is the water without substance? What meaneth, without substance?

8. In the first place, what meaneth, Perchance our soul hath passed over? The Latin interpreters have thus rendered as far as they were able the Greek word ἄρα. For thus the Greek copies have it; ἄρα: and as it is an expression of doubt, it is rendered by an expression of doubt, the word perchance (fortasse); but this is not the exact sense. We may express this Greek word by one not so Latin in its use, but adapted to your comprehension. The Punic word, iar, I mean not that which signifieth a wood, but the expression of doubt, is the Greek ἄρα. This the Latins may or usually do express by

Putas: as in this instance, Dost thou think (putas) I have escaped this? If we say, Perchance I have escaped, ye see that it hath not this meaning: but the word, Thinkest thou, is commonly used: but not in Latin in this sense. Although I may use it, when expounding to you; for I often use words that are not Latin, that ye may understand. But in Scripture this could not be used, because it was not Latin; and as Latin failed, that was used for it which had not this meaning. Understand however the meaning to be this: Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance? and why do they say, Thinkest thou? Because the greatness of the danger maketh it hardly credible that he hath escaped. They have endured a great death: they have been in great dangers; they have been so much oppressed, that they almost gave consent while alive, and were all but swallowed up alive: now therefore that they have escaped, now that they are secure, but still remember the danger, the great danger, say, Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance?

9. What is the water without substance, save the water of sins without substance? For sins have not substance: they have destitution, not substance; they have want, not substance. In that water without substance, the younger son lost the whole of his substance. For ye know that the younger son went into a far country, and said unto his father, Give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. What meanest thou? It is better preserved in thy father's hands: it is thine: thy wish is to waste it; thou wishest to go afar. Give it me, he saith; give it me. He gave it him. Setting out into a distant country, where he lived riotously with harlots, he lost the whole of his substance: he remained in want, he fed swine; in his destitution he called to mind his father's wealth. Had not destitution driven him, he would not have desired that fulness. Let therefore all consider their sins, let them see if their sins have substance. For what hath the sinner provoked God? If thou seest not thy sin before thou committest it, consider it even when thou hast committed it. The sweetness of this life sweeteneth thy mouth for a time; it will afterwards be turned into great bitterness. Behold, thou hast sinned, and hast made gain: what is thy having made gain? That thou mightest make gain, thou hast offended God; that thou mightest increase thy money, thy good faith hath been lessened, and thy gold hath increased. What hast thou lost, and what hast thou acquired? What thou hast

acquired, is called gold; what thou hast lost, is called good faith: compare good faith with gold; if good faith were saleable in the market, it would have its price. Dost thou think of thy gains, thinkest thou not of thy losses? Thou rejoicest in thy coffer: mournest thou not for thy heart? There is abundance of I know not what in thy coffer; but see what hath been lessened in thy heart. When thou hast opened thy coffer, thou wilt find shillings which were not there before: it is well, that thou rejoicest that there is there what was not there. Consider the coffer of thy heart; there was good faith there, and there is not. If thou rejoicest in the gain, why mournest thou not over the loss? Thou hast lost more than thou hast gained. Dost thou wish to see what thou hast lost. Not even by a shipwreck could it have been taken from thee. For men sometimes lose all things in the sea, they go out of it destitute. Many were shipwrecked with Paul: the lovers of this world suffered shipwreck, and all of them went forth destitute; they both lost what they had out of doors, and found the house of their heart empty: but Paul carried in his heart the patrimony of his faith; it could not be taken away by any waves, nor by any tempests; he went forth destitute, and he went forth rich. Such riches we ought to seek. But, thou repliest, I see them not. Foolish soul, thou seest them not with the eyes of thy flesh; have an eye of thy heart, and thou seest them. But thou seest not faith. Wherefore seest thou it in another? Why criest thou out when good faith is broken with thee, if thou seest it not? Suppose any one break faith with thee: thou criest out. Thou wishest therefore good faith to be shewn towards thyself: when it is demanded of thee to shew it, then dost thou not see it? Mourn that thou hast not towards another, what thou complainest that another hath lost towards thee, and consider that the sin thou committest is without substance. For what is acquired by sin, seemeth to be substance. But this also is not acquired. For he who knoweth how to use gold, hath gold: but he that knoweth not how to use gold, hath not the gold, but is held by it; he is not the possessor of it, but is possessed by it. Be ye the masters of your gold, not the slaves of gold: for God both made gold, and Himself also made thee over gold; gold He made for thy aid, thee He made in His own image. See what is above thee, and thou tramplest on what is below thee. What then hast thou acquired? Dost thou wish to see how the water is without substance? Take away with thee to the world below what thou hast acquired: what wilt thou do? Thou hast acquired gold: thou hast lost thy

faith: after a few days thou leavest this life; thou canst not take away with thee the gold thou hast acquired by the loss of thy good faith; thy heart, destitute of faith, goeth forth into punishment—thy heart, which if full of faith, would go forth unto a crown. Behold, what thou hast done is nothing: and thou hast offended God for nothing. The water which hath overwhelmed thee is without substance. For the sake of what hath the sinner provoked God? Such as transgress without a cause shall be put to confusion. For no man transgresseth save without a cause: but no man thinketh of it.

10. Men go: they hear that common proverb; and the proverbs of God slumber in them. What proverb? “Better in hand than in hope.” Unhappy man, what hast thou in hand? Thou sayest, “Better in hand.” Hold it so as not to lose it, and then say, “Better in hand.” But if thou holdest it not, why dost thou not hold fast that which thou canst not lose? What then hast thou in hand? Gold. Keep it in hand, therefore: if thou hast it in hand, let it not be taken away without thy consent. But if through gold also thou art carried where thou wishest not, and if a more powerful robber seeketh thee, because he findeth thee a less powerful robber; if a stronger eagle pursue thee, because thou hast carried off a hare before him: the lesser was thy prey, thou wilt be a prey unto the greater. Men see not these things in human affairs: by so much avarice are they blinded. It is wonderful, my brethren; they who consider them, shudder at them. The more powerful seeketh the less powerful, and seeketh to oppress him, not on any other account, save that he hath what he may take away from him; he seeth him suffer trouble from himself, on no other ground, save because he hath somewhat; and the man heapeth upon himself that, for the sake of which the other suffereth trouble. He did not reflect, while he was persecuting the other; and he was fleeing, he was being tortured, he was fearing, he was seeking where to hide himself; whence should he suffer those evils, save because he had somewhat? Even in him learn what to avoid: that the property which thus distressed him, under thy persecutions, lest it should be taken from him by thee, may also thus torture thee under another’s persecution. Thou remarkest that he is fat: if thou pursuest him because he is fat, fear to grow fat thyself, lest another hunt thee. And all these things

are done in vanity: seek the end; darkness meets thee: seek wherefore; nothing is found.

11. Ver. 6. Let therefore those who say, My soul hath passed over the water without substance, rejoice, and be glad in the Lord; and let them receive back their substance. They have lost it by living riotously; but hath the Father become poor? Let them return, and they shall find there the riches which in their distant sojourn they wasted with harlots; let them escape the water without substance, and say, Blessed be the Lord, Who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth. For the hunters were following, and had placed a bait in their trap. What bait? The sweetness of this life, so that each man for the sake of the sweetness of this life may thrust his head into iniquity, and be caught in the trap. Not they, in whom the Lord was, they who say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us; they have not been taken in the trap. Let the Lord be in thee, and thou wilt not be taken in the trap; cry, Blessed, be the Lord, Who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.

12. Ver. 7. Our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. Because the Lord was in the soul itself, therefore hath that soul escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. Why like a bird? Because it had fallen heedlessly, like a bird; and it could say afterwards, God will forgive me. Unstable bird, rather set thy feet firm upon the rock: go not into the trap. Thou wilt be taken, consumed, crushed. Let the Lord be in thee, and He will deliver thee from greater threats, from the snare of the fowlers. As if thou wert to see a bird about to fall into a snare, thou makest a greater noise that it may fly away from the net; so also, when perhaps some even of the Martyrs were stretching out their neck after the enjoyment of this life, the Lord, Who was in them, made the noise of hell, and the bird was delivered from the snare of the fowlers: Our soul hath escaped even as a bird from the snare of the fowlers. What then? Will that snare last for ever? The snare was the sweetness of this life: they were not entangled in the snare, and were slain; by their slaughter the net was broken; no longer did the sweetness of this life remain, that they might again be entangled by it, but it was crushed. Was the bird also crushed? Far be it! for it was not in the snare: The snare is broken, and we are delivered.

13. Ver. 8. Let them cry out, then, since they are delivered; let them fly unto God, let them triumph in God, because they are delivered: since the Lord was in them, that they might not be caught by the snare. Why was the snare broken, and we delivered? Dost thou wish to know why? Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. For if this were not our help, the snare would not indeed remain for ever; but when the bird was once taken, it would be crushed. For this life will pass away; and they who shall have been taken in by its pleasures, and through these pleasures have offended God, will pass away with this life. For the snare will be broken; be ye assured of this: all the sweetness of this present life will no longer exist, when the lot assigned to it hath been fulfilled; but we must not be enthralled by it, so that when the net is broken, thou mayest then rejoice and say, The snare is broken, and we are delivered. But lest thou think that thou canst do this of thy own strength, consider whose work thy deliverance is, (for if thou art proud, thou fallest into the snare,) and say, Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth.

14. The Psalm hath been treated of, and, as far as the Lord hath deigned to aid me, as I hope, expounded. Ye well know that to-morrow a discourse is due unto you, beloved; be present, and aid me with your prayers. For ye should remember our promise; nor would I say what I was designing to treat of, save that I wished aid from the devotion of your faith, and of your prayers. For ye remember that I promised you I would treat of this text in the Gospel, The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. For heretics, the Manicheans especially, are wont to censure the Law, and to declare that God gave it not. This passage must be expounded, so that it may be perceived both that God gave the Law, and that the Law was given by Moses; so that it could not save, owing to a certain reason. The Law saved not, in order that the Captain Himself, the Giver of the Law, might be longed for, to give pardon to sinners; and that the Law might be given through Moses, but that grace and truth might come through Jesus Christ. I wished to make you attend to this. The Lord's mercy will be with us, not from our deservings, but perhaps according to the merits of your longing: nor from our faculties, but from the plenteousness of His gifts: that a subject sufficiently needful for men placed in the new

covenant may be so treated, that the enemy may find no lurking place at all, wherein he may hide himself to deceive the faithful.

PSALM 125

Exposition

A Discourse to the people.

1. Ver. 1, 2. This Psalm, belonging to the number of the Songs of Degrees, (of which title we have already said much in other Psalms, and wish not to repeat it, lest we rather weary than instruct you,) teacheth us, while we ascend and raise our minds unto the Lord our God in loving charity and piety, not to fix our gaze upon men who are prosperous in this world, with a happiness that is false and unstable, and altogether seductive; where they cherish nothing save pride, and their heart freezeth up against God, and is made hard against the shower of His grace, so that it beareth not fruit. For presuming that all things abound to them, which appear needful, and more than what is needful, for this life, they are lifted up; and while they are men through their iniquity beneath all men, through their pride they consider themselves above all men. Would that they would think themselves even as other men. But by sometimes looking upon and too much heeding these, even those who worship God, waver and bow their heads, as if their reward, for the sake of which they worship God, hath perished, when they see themselves in toils, in want, in trouble, in sickness, in pain, in any exigency, and see others blessed with health of body, abounding in temporal things, rejoicing in the security of their property, flourishing in splendid honours, though they not only worship not God, but are enemies also unto all men; when they look upon those men, they waver, and say unto themselves what is openly written in a certain Psalm, How should God perceive it? Is there knowledge in the Most High? Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession. It proceeds thus: And I said, Then have I cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency. Was I a fool, who wished to live righteously, and to converse innocently among men, since I perceive those who refuse to preserve

innocence, enjoy so much prosperity, and insult the righteous, prospering through their iniquity?

2. But who said those words in the Psalm? One whose heart was not as yet straight. For thus beginneth the Psalm which we have just quoted: not that which we have just taken in hand to consider and to treat of, but that in which it is said, How should God perceive it? Is there knowledge in the Most High? Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and have riches in possession: and I said, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and have washed mine hands in innocency. This Psalm, wherein ye see that the soul is in peril, wherein ye see that the feet waver, beginneth thus: How good is God unto Israel: even unto such as are of a clean heart. Nevertheless, he saith, my feet were almost gone: my treadings had well-nigh slipped. And why? I was envious at the wicked, I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity. He saith therefore that his feet were almost gone, and his treadings had well-nigh slipped, by a slip towards a fall from God, because he gazed upon and beheld the prosperity of the ungodly, and saw that they had peace, while he had toil. Now he hath narrated this after he had escaped, when with a heart made straight he had clung unto God, he hath narrated his past dangers. Therefore, God is good unto Israel: but unto whom? even unto such as are of a clean heart. Who are of a clean heart? They who do not censure God. Who are of a clean heart? They who direct their own will by the will of God; and do not endeavour to bend the will of God into conformity with their own will. It is a short commandment, that man make straight his heart. Dost thou wish to have thy heart straight? Do thou do what God willeth; do not wish God to do that which thou dost wish. They therefore are crooked-hearted, that is, such as have not a straight heart, who sit and discuss how God ought to have acted; not praising what He hath done, but blaming it. They wish to amend Him: it is not enough that they refuse to be amended by Him; and say, God ought not to have made men poor, they ought all to be rich; and they alone who are rich ought to live. Why is a poor man created? why doth he, live! A man blames the God of the poor. How much better would he be one of the poor of God, and become rich of God! that is, follow the will of God, and see that his poverty was temporary, and transient, but that spiritual riches would come unto him in such a way that they could by no means pass away. How much better

were it thus to have faith in the riches of the heart, if it was not his lot to have gold in his coffers? For if he had gold in his coffers, he would fear thieves, and still though unwilling lose gold from his coffers; but he would never lose faith from his heart, if he did not himself drive it from thence. However, we can quickly answer the question, dearest brethren. God made a man poor, that He might prove him; and God made a man rich, that He might prove him by means of the poor man. And God did all things which He did, well. And if we cannot see His counsel, why He made this thing so and that so; it is good for us to be subject unto His wisdom, and to believe that He made well, although we know not why He made it: and we shall have a straight heart so that we may trust and confide in the Lord, and our feet shall not be moved, and that taketh place in us as we ascend, whence this Psalm beginneth, (ver. 1.) They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the mount Sion: they shall not be removed for ever.

3. Who are these? (ver. 2.) They who dwell in Jerusalem. They shall stand fast for ever, who dwell in Jerusalem. If we understand this (earthly) Jerusalem, all who dwelt therein have been excluded by wars and by the destruction of the city: thou now seekest a Jew in the city of Jerusalem, and findest him not. Why then will they that dwell in Jerusalem not be moved for ever, save because there is another Jerusalem, of which ye are wont to hear much? She is our mother, for whom we sigh and groan in this pilgrimage, that we may return unto her. We had wandered from her, and had not a way: her King came, and became a way unto us, that we may return unto her. It is she, in whose courts, the courts of Jerusalem, our feet stood, as ye heard in a preceding Psalm of the Songs of Degrees, already treated of and expounded to those among you who were present; for whom he who sung, Jerusalem which is being built as a city: whose partaking is in the same, sighed. They then who dwell therein shall never be moved. But they who dwelt in that earthly Jerusalem, have been moved; first in heart, afterwards by exile. When they were moved in heart and fell, then they crucified the King of the heavenly Jerusalem herself; they were already spiritually without, and shut out of doors their very King. For they cast Him out without their city, and crucified Him without. He too cast them out of His city, that is, of the everlasting Jerusalem, the Mother of us all, who is in Heaven.

4. What is this Jerusalem? He briefly describes it. The mountains stand around Jerusalem. Is it any thing great, that we are in a city surrounded by mountains? Is this the whole of our happiness, that we shall have a city which mountains surround? Do we not know what mountains are? or what are mountains save swellings of the earth? Different then from these are those mountains that we love, lofty mountains, preachers of truth, whether Angels, or Apostles, or Prophets. They stand around Jerusalem; they surround her, and, as it were, form a wall for her. Of these lovely and delightful mountains Scripture constantly speaketh. Heed when ye hear or read: in more passages ye find delightful mountains, than I can enumerate. Nevertheless, as far as the Lord doth suggest, it delighteth us to say many things of these mountains; and divine testimonies have occurred to us from the sacred Scriptures. They are the mountains who are enlightened by God: and they are enlightened in the first place, that light may descend from them into the valleys, or the hills; because they are not of so great height as are the mountains. They are the mountains through whom Scripture is first declared unto us, whether in Prophecy, or in the Apostles, or in the Gospel. They are the mountains of whom we sing: I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come: because in this life we have help from the holy Scriptures. But because the mountains themselves are not protected by themselves, and it is not of themselves that they provide for us, and our hope ought not to be in the mountains, lest we should be accursed for putting our trust in men; after saying, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come: he added, My help shall come from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. They are the mountains of whom he again saith, Let the mountains receive peace for Thy people, and the little hills righteousness. The mountains are great, and the hills are less. The mountains therefore see, the hills believe: they who see, have received peace, and brought it unto those who believe. For they who believe, receive righteousness: for the righteous liveth by faith. The Angels see, they announce what they see, and we believe. John saith, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: he saw, he preached unto us that we might believe. And through the mountains that receive peace, the little hills received righteousness: for what saith he of the mountains themselves? He said not, they have peace from themselves, or they make peace, or generate peace; but, they receive

peace. The Lord is the source, whence they receive peace. So therefore lift up thine eyes to the mountains for the sake of peace, that thy help may come from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. Again, the Holy Spirit mentioning these mountains saith this: Thou dost light them wonderfully from Thy everlasting mountains. He said not, the mountains light them: but, Thou lightest them from Thy everlasting mountains: through those mountains whom Thou hast willed to be everlasting, preaching the Gospel, Thou lighting them, not the mountains. Such then are the mountains that stand around Jerusalem.

5. And that ye may know what sort of mountains these be that stand around Jerusalem; where Scripture hath mentioned good mountains, very rarely, and hardly, and perhaps never, doth it fail instantly to mention the Lord also, or allude to Him at the same moment, that our hopes rest not in the mountains. So, behold how many instances I have mentioned. I lift up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come; and that thou mayest not stay there, he addeth, My help is from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. Again, let the mountains receive peace for Thy people: in the word, receive, he sheweth that there is another source whence they receive. Again, lighting from the mountains: but, he saith, Thou lighting them from Thy everlasting mountains. Again, in this passage, after saying, The mountains stand around Jerusalem: lest thou again shouldest tarry in the mountains, he at once addeth, Even so the Lord standeth round about His people: that thy hope might not lie in the mountains, but in Him Who lighteth the mountains. For when He dwelleth in the mountains, that is, in the Saints, He Himself is round about His people; and He hath Himself walled His people with a spiritual fortification, that it may not be moved for evermore. But when Scripture speaketh of evil mountains, it addeth not the Lord unto them. Such mountains, we have already told you often, signify certain mighty, but evil, souls. For ye are not to suppose, brethren, that heresies could be produced through any little souls. None save great men have been the authors of heresies; but in proportion as they were mighty, so were they evil, mountains. For they were not such mountains as would receive peace, that the hills might receive righteousness; but they received dissension from their father the devil. There were therefore mountains: beware thou fly not to such mountains. For men will come, and say unto

thee, There is a great hero, there is a great man! How great was that Donatus! How great is Maximian! and a certain Photinus, what a great man he was! And Arius too, how illustrious he was! All these I have mentioned are mountains, but mountains that cause shipwreck. Ye see that a certain flame of eloquence shineth from them, and that a certain flame is kindled from them. If ye navigate on the Wood, and suffer night, that is, the darkness of this life; let them not deceive you, and guide not your ship thither: there there are rocks, there terrific shipwrecks take place. When therefore these mountains shall be praised before thee, and some one attempteth to persuade thee to go to those mountains, as if for help, and to repose there; answer, In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye then to my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the mountains? For it is good for thee to lift up thine eyes unto those mountains, whence help may come unto thee from the Lord, that thou mayest flee as a bird from the snare of the fowlers, and not fly unto the mountains. For a bird is an unstable thing; quickly is it moved, quickly doth it fly hither and thither. But do thou trust in the Lord, and thou wilt be as the mountain of Sion; thou shalt not be moved for ever, and thou shalt not flee into the mountains like a bird. Hath he there so mentioned the mountains, as to speak of the Lord?

6. But love such mountains, in whom the Lord is. Then do those very mountains love thee, if thou hast not placed hope in them. See, brethren, what the mountains of God are. Thence they are so called in another passage: Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God. Not their righteousness, but Thy righteousness. Hear that great mountain the Apostle. That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ. But they who have chosen to be mountains through their own righteousness, as certain Jews or Pharisees their rulers, are thus blamed: Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. But they who have submitted themselves are exalted in such a manner as to be humble. In that they are great, they are mountains; in that they submit themselves unto God, they are valleys: and in that they have the capacity of piety, they receive the plenteousness of peace, and transmit the copious irrigation to the hills, only beware, at present, what mountains thou lovest. If thou wish

to be loved by good mountains, place not thy trust even in good mountains. For how great a mountain was Paul? where is one like him found? (We speak of the greatness of men.) Can any one readily be found of so great grace? Nevertheless, he feared lest that bird should place trust in him: and what doth he say: Was Paul crucified for you? But lift up your eyes unto the mountains, whence help may come unto you: for, I have planted, Apollos hath watered: but, your help cometh from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth; for, God gave the increase. The mountains, therefore, stand around Jerusalem. But as the mountains stand around Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about His people, from this time forth for evermore. If therefore the mountains stand around Jerusalem, and the Lord standeth round about His people, the Lord bindeth His people into one bond of love and peace, so that they who trust in the Lord, like the mount Sion, may not be moved for evermore: and this is, from this time forth for evermore.

7. Ver. 3. For the Lord will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto wickedness. At present indeed the righteous suffer in some measure, and at present the unrighteous sometimes tyrannize over the righteous. In what ways? Sometimes the unrighteous arrive at worldly honours: when they have arrived at them, and have been made either judges or kings; for God doth this for the discipline of His folk, for the discipline of His people; the honour due to their power must needs be shewn them. For thus hath God ordained His Church, that every power ordained in the world may have honour, and sometimes from those who are better than those in power. For the sake of illustration I take one instance; hence calculate the grades of all powers. The primary and every day relation of authority between man and man is that between master and slave. Almost all houses have a power of this sort. There are masters, there are also slaves; these are different names, but men and men are equal names. And what saith the Apostle, teaching that slaves are subject to their masters? Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh: for there is a Master according to the Spirit. He is the true and everlasting Master; but those temporal masters are for a time only. When thou walkest in the way, when thou livest in this life, Christ doth not wish to make thee proud. It hath been thy lot to become

a Christian, and to have a man for thy master: thou wast not made a Christian, that thou mightest disdain to be a servant. For when by Christ's command thou servest a man, thou servest not the man, but Him who commanded thee. He saith this also: Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will. Behold, he hath not made men free from being servants, but good servants from bad servants. How much do the rich owe to Christ, who orders their house for them! so that if thou hast had an unbelieving servant, suppose Christ convert him, and say not to him, Leave thy master, thou hast now known Him Who is thy true Master: he perhaps is ungodly and unjust, thou art now faithful and righteous: it is unworthy that a righteous and faithful man should serve an unjust and unbelieving master. He spoke not thus unto him, but rather, Serve him: and to confirm the servant, added, Serve as I served; I before thee served the unjust. From whom but His servants did the Lord suffer so much in His Passion? from whom, but evil servants? For if they had been good servants, they would honour their Master. But since they were evil servants, they wronged Him. What did He, on the other hand? He recompensed love for hatred: for He said, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. If the Lord of heaven and earth, through Whom all things were created, served the unworthy, asked mercy for His furious persecutors, and, as it were, shewed Himself as their Physician at His Advent: (for physicians also, better both in art and health, serve the sick:) how much more ought not a man to disdain, with his whole mind, and his whole good will, with his whole love to serve even a bad master! Behold, a better serveth an inferior, but for a season. Understand what I have said of the master and slave, to be true also of powers and kings, of all the exalted stations of this world. For sometimes they are good powers, and fear God; sometimes they fear not God. Julian was an infidel Emperor, an apostate, a wicked man, an idolater; Christian soldiers served an infidel Emperor; when they came to the cause of Christ, they acknowledged Him only Who was in heaven. If he called upon them at any time to worship idols, to offer incense; they preferred God to him: but whenever he commanded them to deploy into line, to march against this or that nation, they at once obeyed. They distinguished their everlasting from their

temporal master; and yet they were, for the sake of their everlasting Master, submissive to their temporal master.

8. But will it be thus always, that the ungodly have power over the righteous? It will not be so. See what this Psalm saith: For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous. The rod of the ungodly is felt for a season upon the lot of the righteous; but it is not left there, it will not be there for ever. A time will come, when Christ, appearing in his glory, shall gather all nations before Him; and shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. And thou wilt see there many slaves among the sheep, and many masters among the goats; and again many masters among the sheep, many slaves among the goats. For all slaves are not good—do not infer this from the consolation we have given to servants—nor are all masters evil, because we have thus repressed the pride of masters. There are good masters who believe, and there are evil: there are good servants who believe, and there are evil. But as long as good servants serve evil masters, let them endure for a season. For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous. Why will He not? Lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness: that the righteous may endure for a season the domination of the ungodly, and may understand that this is not for ever, but may prepare themselves to possess their everlasting heritage. What heritage? When all principalities and powers shall be subdued, that God may be all in all. Reserving themselves for this, and contemplating this in heart, and still retaining it in faith, and, that they may see, patiently enduring, they put not forth their hand unto wickedness. For, should they see that the rod of the ungodly is for ever upon the lot of the righteous, they reflect with themselves, and say, What doth it profit me that I am righteous? Will the ungodly for ever have power over me, and shall I evermore be a servant? I also then will do wickedness; for it profiteth nothing to hold unto righteousness. But that he may not say this, faith is given him, that the rod of the ungodly may for a season be upon the lot of the righteous, but the Lord will not leave it upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness; but let them withdraw their hands from wickedness, and endure, not work, iniquity. For it is better to endure than to work iniquity. How doth it appear

that it will not last for ever? For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous.

9. Ver. 4. They who are right in heart, of whom I was speaking a little before,—they who follow the will of God, not their own will,—reflect upon this. But they who wish to follow God, allow Him to go before, and themselves to follow; not themselves to go before, and Him to follow; and in all things they find Him good, whether chastening, or consoling, or exercising, or crowning, or cleansing, or enlightening; as the Apostle saith, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. And he therefore addeth, (ver. 4.) Do well, O Lord, unto those that are good and true of heart.

10. But as he who is righteous in heart turneth away from evil, and doeth good, because he is not envious at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity; so he of a crooked heart, who is offended in the paths of the Lord, turneth away from God, and doeth evil, and is enticed by the sweetness of the world, and ensnared and taken by means of it, he payeth a bitter penalty. But as he turneth aside from God, Whose chastening he was unwilling to bear, the deceitful prosperity of the wicked becometh unto him a real snare. Whence the Psalmist at once addeth: (ver. 5.) As for such as turn aside, the Lord shall lead them forth unto strangling with the workers of unrighteousness: that is, those whose deeds they have imitated; because they took delight in their present pleasures, and did not believe in their punishments to come. What then shall they have, who are righteous in heart, and who turn not back? Let us now come to the heritage itself, brethren, for we are sons. What shall we possess? What is our heritage? what is our country: what is it called? Peace. In this we salute you, this we announce to you, this the mountains receive, and the little hills receive as righteousness. Peace is Christ: for He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Since we are sons, we shall have an inheritance. And what shall this inheritance be called, but peace? And consider that they who love not peace are disinherited. Now they who divide unity, love not peace. Peace is the possession of the pious, the possession of heirs. And who are heirs? Sons. Hear the Gospel: Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the

children of God. Hear also the conclusion of this Psalm: but peace shall be upon Israel. Israel is interpreted, 'Seeing God;' Jerusalem, 'a Vision of Peace.' Understand, my beloved, Israel is interpreted, 'Seeing God,' Jerusalem, a 'Vision of Peace.' Who are they who shall never be moved? The dwellers in Jerusalem. They then who dwell in the Vision of Peace, shall not be moved for evermore. But peace shall be upon Israel. Israel therefore, which meaneth seeing God, meaneth, seeing Peace: and Israel is the same as Jerusalem: for the people of God is the city of God. If therefore seeing peace be the same as seeing God, justly also is God Himself peace. Since then Christ the Son of God is peace, He therefore came to gather together His own, and to separate them from the wicked. From what wicked men? From those who hate Jerusalem, who hate peace, who wish to tear unity asunder, who believe not peace, who preach a false peace to the people, and have it not. To whom answer is made, when they say, "Peace be with you," "And with thy spirit:" but they speak falsely, and they hear falsely. Unto whom do they say, Peace be with you? To those whom they separate from the peace of the whole earth. And unto whom is it said, "And with thy spirit?" To those who embrace dissensions, and who hate peace. For if peace were in their spirit, would they not love unity, and leave dissensions? Speaking then false words, they hear false words. Let us speak true words, and hear true words. Let us be Israel, and let us embrace peace; for Jerusalem is a vision of peace, and we are Israel, and peace is upon Israel.

PSALM 126

A Sermon to the People.

1. Ye will remember, that this next Psalm for us to treat in order is the hundred and twenty-fifth, which is among those Psalms the title of which is A Song of Degrees. Now this is, as ye know, the voice of them that ascend;—whither, save to that Jerusalem above, the mother of us all, which is in Heaven? The same that is above, is also everlasting. But this which was here on earth shewed a shadow of that other. So then this fell, the other abideth: this fulfilled the period of instruction, to the other belongeth the eternity of our restoration. From her we are on pilgrimage in this life, for return to her we sigh, wretched and toiling along, till we come home to her. Nor have our fellow citizens the Angels forsaken us in our pilgrimage; they have told us of our King Who is to come to us. And He came to us, and was despised among us, first by ourselves, afterwards with ourselves; and taught us to be despised, because He was despised; taught us to endure, because He endured; taught us to suffer, because He suffered; and promised that we should rise again, because He rose again; shewing in Himself what we ought to hope for. If therefore, brethren, the ancient Prophets, our fathers, before the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, before He rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, yet sighed after that city: how much ought we to long for the place whither Himself is gone before us, and which He never left. For the Lord did not so come to us as to leave the Angels. He both abode for them, and came to us: for them He abode in majesty, to us He came in the flesh. But we were, where? If He is called our Redeemer, we were held captives. But where were we held, that He should come to redeem us as captives? Perchance among barbarians? worse than any barbarians are the devil and his angels. They were before in possession of the human race: from them He redeemed us, Who gave not gold nor silver for us, but His own Blood.

2. But how man had come into captivity, let us ask the Apostle Paul. For he especially groans in that captivity, sighing for the everlasting Jerusalem, and has taught us to groan from that very Spirit with which he too was filled when he groaned. For this he said: The whole creation groaneth together, and is in pain until now. And again, For the creature was made subject to vanity, he says, not of itself, but because of him who subjected the same in hope. By all creation, he meant that even in those who do not believe, but are yet to believe, the creature groaneth in labours. Is it then only in those who have not yet believed? Yea, does not the creature groan nor travail in those who have believed? But not only so, he saith, but even we who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, that is, who already serve God in the Spirit, who now with the mind have believed in God, and in the very act of believing have given some sort of firstfruits, that we may follow our First-fruits. Therefore, we ourselves also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. So then he himself also groaned, and all the faithful groan, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of their body. Where do they groan? In this mortal state. What redemption do they wait for? That of their body, which went before in the Lord, Who rose again from the dead, and ascended into Heaven. Till this be restored us, we must needs groan, though faithful, though hoping. Therefore he goes on after saying, We also ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body: as though it were said to him, What then, hath Christ profited thee, if thou still groanest; and how hath the Saviour saved thee? He who groaneth, is still sick. Therefore he subjoined and said, For we are saved in hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, by patience we wait for it. Behold wherefore it is we groan, and how it is we groan, because what we hope for we are already indeed waiting for, but have it not yet in possession, and until we have it in possession we sigh, during time, because we long for what we have not yet. Wherefore? Because we have been saved in hope. Already the flesh taken of us in the Lord is saved not in hope but in fact. For our flesh hath risen again, and ascended, in our Head, whole, though in the members it hath yet to be made whole. The members rejoice fearlessly, because they have not been deserted by their Head. For He said to His members in trouble, Behold, I am with you, even unto the consummation of the world. Thus it was done that we

might be converted unto God. For we had no hope save toward the world; and thence were wretched slaves, and twice wretched, because we had placed our hope in this life, and had our face toward the world, and our back toward God. But when the Lord hath turned us, so that we begin now to have our face toward God, and our back toward the world, though still in the way, we mind our own home, and when perchance we suffer any tribulation, but yet keep on our voyage, and are borne on the Wood; the wind indeed is rough, but it is a favourable wind; with toil indeed, but quickly it beareth us, quickly it beareth us home. Since then we were groaning for our captivity; and even they groan who have already believed; but had forgotten how we became captives, and are reminded of it by the Scripture; let us ask the Apostle Paul himself. For he saith; For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. Behold whence we became captives; because we were sold under sin. Who sold us? We ourselves, who consented to the seducer. We could sell ourselves; we could not redeem ourselves. We sold ourselves by consent of sin, we are redeemed in the faith of righteousness. For innocent blood was given for us, that we might be redeemed. Whatsoever blood he shed in persecuting the righteous, what kind of blood did he shed? Righteous men's blood, indeed, he shed; they were Prophets, righteous men, our fathers, and Martyrs. Whose blood he shed, yet all coming of the offspring of sin. One blood he shed of Him Who was not justified, but born righteous: by shedding that blood, he lost those whom he held. For they for whom innocent blood was given were redeemed, and, turned back from their captivity, they sing this Psalm.

3. Ver. 1. When the Lord turned back the captivity of Sion, we became as those that are comforted. He meant by this to say, we became joyful. When? When the Lord turned back the captivity of Sion. What is Sion? Jerusalem, the same is also the eternal Sion. How is Sion eternal, how is Sion captive? In angels eternal, in men captive. For not all the citizens of that city are captives, but those who are away from thence, they are captives. Man was a citizen of Jerusalem, but sold under sin he became a pilgrim. Of his progeny was born the human race, and the captivity of Sion filled all lands. And how is this captivity of Sion a shadow of that Jerusalem? The shadow of that Sion, which was granted to the Jews, in an image, in a figure, was in

captivity in Babylonia, and after seventy years that people turned back to its own city. Seventy years signify all that time which revolves in seven days. But when all time is past, then we return to our country, as after seventy years that people returned from the Babylonish captivity, for Babylon is this world; since Babylon is interpreted confusion. See if the whole of man's life is not confusion. Whatsoever men do in vain hope, when they have found out what they are doing they blush. Wherefore do they labour? For whom do they labour? For my children, he saith. And they for whom? For their children. And they for whom? For their children. No one, therefore, for himself. From this confusion, then, they were already turned back to whom the Apostle saith, For what glory had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? So then this whole life of human affairs is confusion, which belongeth not unto God. In this confusion, in this Babylonish land, Sion is held captive. But the Lord hath turned back the captivity of Sion.

4. And we became, he saith, as those that are comforted. That is, we rejoiced as receiving consolation. Consolation is not save for the unhappy, consolation is not save for them that groan, that mourn. Wherefore, as those that are comforted, except because we are still mourning? We mourn for our present lot, we are comforted in hope: when the present is passed by, of our mourning will come everlasting joy, when there will be no need of consolation, because we shall be wounded with no distress. But wherefore saith he as those that are comforted, and saith not comforted? This word as, is not always put for likeness: when we say As, it sometimes refers to the actual case, sometimes to likeness: here it is with reference to the actual case. But we must give examples also from the common speech of men, that we may be easily understood. When we say, As the father lived so did also the son, we say it of likeness: and, As a beast dieth, so man dieth; this too is said of likeness. But when we say, He acted as a good man; is he not a good man, but something like a good man? He acted like a just man. This 'like' does not deny that he is just, but denotes his actual character. Thou didst it as a senator: if he should say, Am I not then a senator? Yea, because thou art, thou didst it as a senator; and because thou art just, thou didst like a just man; and because thou art good, thou didst it like a good man. Therefore because these also were truly comforted, they rejoiced as those that were comforted. That is, great was their joy, as of those who are

comforted, when He Who had died comforted those who had yet to die. For we all groan in that we die: He Who died hath comforted us, that we should not fear to die. He rose again first, that we might have what to hope for. Since then He first rose again, He gave us hope. Because when in distress, we were comforted by hope; hence our joy is great. And the Lord hath turned back our captivity, so that now from our captivity we are on our way, and are going toward our home. Now then, being redeemed, on our way let us not fear our enemies that lay wait for us. For He therefore redeemed us, that the enemy might not dare to lay wait for us if we did not leave the way. For Christ Himself became our way. Wouldest thou not suffer from robbers? He saith to thee. I have paved thee a way to thy home, leave not the way. Such a way have I paved, that the robber cannot venture to come nigh thee: do thou beware of leaving it, and the robber dares not come nigh thee. Walk therefore in Christ, and sing rejoicing, sing as one that is comforted; because He went before thee Who hath commanded thee to follow Him.

5. Ver. 2. Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with exultation. That mouth, brethren, which we have in our body, how is it filled with joy? It useth not to be filled, save with meat, or drink, or some such thing put into the mouth. Sometimes our mouth is filled; and it is more that we say to your holiness, when we have our mouth full, we cannot speak. But we have a mouth within, that is, in the heart, whence whatsoever proceedeth, if it is evil, defileth us, if it is good, cleanseth us. For concerning this very mouth ye heard when the Gospel was read. For the Jews reproached the Lord, because His disciples ate with unwashen hands. They reproached who had cleanness without; and within were full of stains. They reproached, whose righteousness was only in the eyes of men. But the Lord sought our inward cleanness, which if we have, the outside must needs be clean also. Cleanse, He saith, the inside, and the outside shall be clean also. The Lord Himself saith in another place, But give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you. But whence proceedeth alms? From the heart. For if thou hold out thy hand, and pity not in thy heart, thou hast done nothing; but if thou hast compassion in thy heart, even though thou hast not what to bestow with thy hand, God accepteth thy alms. But they, wicked men as they were, sought cleanness without. Among them was that

Pharisee, who had invited the Lord, when a woman, who had been a notorious sinner in the city, came unto Him, who washed the Lord's feet with tears, wiped them with her hair, anointed them with ointment. The Pharisee, who had invited the Lord, and had not cleanness save outwardly in the body, but was in heart full of iniquity and rapine, said unto himself, This man if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him. How did he learn whether Jesus knew or knew not? But he concluded that He knew not, because He did not repel her from Him. If such a woman had approached this Pharisee, he whose purity was as it were in the flesh, would have blown upon her as something evil, would have repelled her, would have cast her off; that the unclean might not touch the clean, and pollute his cleanness. Because our Lord did not this, he believed Him to be ignorant what sort of woman had approached His feet: whereas the Lord not only knew her, but also heard his thoughts: for although the touch of the body doth something, O unclean Pharisee, would the Lord's flesh have been polluted by a woman's touch, or the woman have been cleansed by the Lord's touch? But the Physician allowed the sick to touch the healer; and she who had come, knew the Physician; and she who had been wont perhaps in her fornication to be bold, became even more bold for her cure. She burst into a house whither she had not been invited: but she had wounds, and had come where the Physician was reclining. But he who had invited the Physician, seemed to himself whole; and for this very reason, he was left unhealed. What followeth in the Gospel ye know; how this Pharisee was confounded, when He shewed him both that He knew this woman's character, and had heard his thoughts.

6. But let us return to what was just now read from the Gospel, relating to the verse before us, Our mouth was filled with joy, and our tongue with delight: for we are enquiring what mouth and what tongue. Listen, beloved brethren. The Lord was scoffed at, because His disciples ate with unwashed hands. The Lord answered them as was fitting, and said unto the crowds whom He had called unto Him, Hear ye all, and understand: not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. What is this? when He said, what goeth into the mouth, He meant only the mouth of the body. For meat goeth in, and meats defile not a man; because, All things are clean to the clean; and, Every

creature of God is good, and none to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. Some things were placed in a figurative relation to the Jews, and were called unclean. But after the light itself came, the shadows were removed. We are not bound in the letter, but quickened in the Spirit: and the yoke of these ceremonial observances, imposed upon the Jew, was not imposed upon Christians; for the Lord said, For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light; and the Apostle saith, Unto the pure are all things pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure: but even their mind and conscience is defiled. What did he mean to be understood? Both bread and swine's flesh is pure to a pure man, to an impure man neither bread nor swine's flesh is pure. To the unbelieving and the defiled, he saith, nothing is pure. Why is nothing pure? But even their mind and conscience, he saith, are defiled: because if what is within is impure; what is without cannot be pure. If therefore to them unto whom the inner is impure, the outward cannot be pure; if thou wishest that the outside should be pure, purify the inward. For there is the mouth which shall be filled with joy, even when thou art silent: for when thou art silent and dost rejoice, thy mouth crieth unto the Lord. But consider whence thou rejoicest. If thy joy be from the world, thou criest unto God with impure joy: but if thou rejoicest in thy redemption, as this Psalm saith, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then did we rejoice; then is thy mouth filled with true joy, and thy tongue with delight: it is clear that thou rejoicest in hope, and thy joy is accepted with God. In this very joy, or in this very mouth which we have within, we both eat and drink: just as we eat with this mouth for our bodily refreshment, so do we with that mouth for the refreshment of the heart. For from thence, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

7. But if nothing make a man impure save what goeth forth from his mouth, and, when we hear this in the Gospel, if we only understand the mouth of the body; it is ridiculous and outrageously foolish, to imagine that a man doth not become impure when he eateth, and to think that he then becometh impure, if he vomit. For the Lord saith, Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. When therefore thou eatest, thou art not unclean; when thou dost vomit, dost thou then become unclean? When thou drinkest, thou art not

unclean: and when thou spewest, art thou then unclean? For when thou spewest, something goeth forth from thy mouth; when thou drinkest, something goeth into thy mouth. What did the Lord mean to say? Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which goeth out of the mouth, that defileth a man. According to another Evangelist, He goeth on at once to describe what things go out of the mouth; that thou mayest understand that He spake not of the mouth of the body, but of the mouth of the heart. For he saith, For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things that defile a man, but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. In what sense then, my brethren, do these things go out of the mouth, save because they go out of the heart, even as the Lord Himself saith? For they do not defile us when we speak of them. Let not any one say, When we speak of them, they go forth from our mouth, because words and sounds go forth from our mouth; and when we speak evil words, we become impure. What if any one should not speak, and should only think of evil things: is he clean, because nothing hath gone out of the mouth of his body? But God hath already heard it from the mouth of his heart. Behold, my brethren, listen to what I say. I name a theft: I have only named a theft; because I have named a theft, hath the theft defiled me? Behold, it hath gone out of my mouth, and hath not made me impure. But the thief ariseth in the night, and saith nothing with his mouth, and by his deed becometh impure. He not only saith not, but buries the deed in utter silence; and is so fearful of his voice being heard, that he wisheth not even his steps to creak: because, then, he is thus silent, is he pure? I say even more, my brethren. Lo, he still lieth in his couch, he hath not yet risen to execute the theft; he is awake, and waiting for men to sleep: he already crieth in the ear of God, he is already a thief, he is already impure, already the deed hath gone out of his inward mouth. For when doth the crime go out of his mouth? When he maketh up his mind to perpetrate it. Thou hast decided to do it: thou hast said, thou hast done it. If thou hast not committed an outward act of theft, possibly he from whom thou didst plan to take away, did not deserve to lose: and he hath lost nothing, while thou wilt be condemned for theft. Thou hast determined to kill a man; thou hast said this in thy heart, murder hath sounded from thy inward mouth: still the man liveth, and thou the murderer

art punished. For the question before God is, what thou art, not what thou hast not yet appeared in the sight of men.

8. We then surely know, and ought to be certain, to maintain, that there is a mouth of the heart, there is also a tongue of the heart. That mouth itself is filled with joy: in that mouth itself we pray God inwardly, when the lips are closed, and the conscience is laid open. All is silent: and the breast crieth out: but unto whose ears? Not to the ears of man, but of God. Be therefore fearless: He who hath mercy, heareth. And again, when no man heareth evil words, if they go out of thy mouth, be not fearless, because He who condemneth, heareth. Susanna was not heard by her unjust judges, she was silent, and prayed. Her mouth was not heard by men, her heart cried forth unto God. Because her voice went not out of the mouth of her body, did she not on that account deserve to be heard? She was heard; when she prayed, no man knew. Therefore, brethren, consider what we have in the inner mouth. See that ye say no evil there within, and ye will do no evil without: for nothing can be done by man without, save what hath been said within. Guard the mouth of thy heart from evil, and thou wilt be innocent: the tongue of thy body will be innocent, thy hands will be innocent; even thy feet will be innocent, thy eyes, thy ears, will be innocent; all thy members will serve under righteousness, because a righteous commander hath thy heart.

9. Then shall they say among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them. (Ver. 3.) Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice. Consider, my brethren, if Sion doth not at present say this among the heathen, throughout the whole world; consider if men are not running unto the Church. In the whole world our redemption is received; Amen is answered. The dwellers in Jerusalem, therefore, captive, destined to return, pilgrims, sighing for their country, speak thus among the heathen. What do they say? The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoice. Have they done any thing for themselves? They have done ill with themselves, for they have sold themselves under sin. The Redeemer came, and did the good things for them: The Lord hath done great things for them: the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice.

10. Ver. 4. Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the torrents in the south. Consider, my brethren, what this meaneth. He had already said, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion. He was speaking as it seemeth of the past: but a Prophet, speaking of the past, usually foretells the future. He seemed to be speaking of the past, when he said in another Psalm, They pierced My hands and My feet: they numbered all My bones. He said not, they will pierce My feet: he said not, they will number: he said not, they will part My garments among them: he said not, over My raiment will they cast lots: these things were to come, and were yet related as if they had passed. For all things destined to happen, have already happened unto God. So here when he was saying, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then were we like unto them that are consoled. Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with delight; that he might shew that he was thinking of things future under the figure of the past, he addeth, Then shall they say among the heathen. Shall say, is now of the future. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoice. Then when they were being sung they were future, and now they are seen as present. He therefore prayeth for them as if for things future, though he sang of future things as things past: Turn our captivity, O Lord. Their captivity therefore was not as yet turned, because the Redeemer had not as yet come. Therefore, when the Psalms were sung, what was then prayed for, is now done: Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the torrents in the south. As torrents are turned in the south, so turn our captivity. We were enquiring what this was: but it will presently appear, by the Lord's help, revealed unto your prayers. In a certain passage Scripture saith, in admonishing us concerning good works, Thy sins also shall melt away, even as the ice in fair warm weather. Our sins therefore bound us. How? As the cold bindeth the water that it run not. Bound with the frost of our sins, we have frozen. But the south wind is a warm wind: when the south wind blows, the ice melts, and the torrents are filled. Now winter streams are called torrents; for filled with sudden rains they run with great force. We had therefore become frozen in captivity; our sins bound us: the south wind the Holy Spirit hath blown: our sins are forgiven us, we are released from the frost of iniquity; as the ice in fair weather, our sins are melted. Let us run unto our country, as the torrents in the south. For we have long toiled, and even in good works we toil. For the life of man, which we have entered upon, is wretched, full of toils, sorrows, dangers, troubles,

temptations. Be not seduced with a delight in human life; heed the things that should be wept for in human life. The new born infant might first laugh before he wept: why doth he commence life with weeping? He knoweth not yet how to laugh: why doth he already know how to weep? Because he hath begun to enter upon this life. But if he be among those captives, he here weepeth and groaneth: but joy will come.

11. Ver. 5. For the next words are, They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. In this life, which is full of tears, let us sow. What shall we sow? Good works. Works of mercy are our seeds: of which seeds the Apostle saith, Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith. Speaking therefore of almsgiving itself, what saith he? This I say; he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly. He therefore who soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully: he who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly: and he that soweth nothing, shall reap nothing. Why do ye long for ample estates, where ye may sow plentifully? There is not a wider field on which ye can sow than Christ, Who hath willed that we should sow in Himself. Your soil is the Church; sow as much as ye can. But thou hast not enough to do this. Hast thou the will? As what thou hadst would be nothing, if thou hadst not a good will; so do not despond, because thou hast not, if thou hast a good will. For what dost thou sow? Mercy. And what wilt thou reap? Peace. Said the Angels, Peace on earth unto rich men? No, but, Peace on earth unto men of a good will. Zacchæus had a strong will, Zacchæus had great charity. He entertained the Lord hospitably and with joy, and promised that he would give the half of his patrimony to the poor, and would restore fourfold if he had taken any thing from any man; so that thou mayest understand that he retained the half, not that he might hold it as a safe possession, but that he might have some means of paying his debts. He had a great will, he gave much, he sowed much. Did then that widow who cast her two farthings into the treasury, sow little. Nay, as much as Zacchæus. For she had narrower means, but an equal will. She gave her two mites with as good a will as Zacchæus gave the half of his patrimony. If thou consider what they gave, thou wilt find their gifts different; if thou look to the source, thou wilt find them equal; she gave whatever she had, and he gave what he had.

12. Suppose some one not to have even two coins: is there any thing still cheaper that we can sow, so that we may reap that harvest? There is: Whosoever shall give a disciple a cup of cold water, shall not lose his reward. A cup of cold water doth not cost two coins, but is had for nothing; nevertheless, it sometimes so happeneth, that one man hath it, and another hath it not; if therefore he who hath it give it to another who hath it not; he hath given as much, if he gave what he gave with full charity, he hath given as much, I say, as the widow in her two mites, as Zacchæus in the half of his property. For He added not without cause the epithet cold to water, that he might show that the donor was poor. He said, A cup of cold water, that no man might object on the ground that he had not wood to heat the water. Whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, shall in no wise lose his reward. What if he have not even this? Let him be without fear, even if he have not this; Peace on earth unto men of good will. Let him fear this only, lest he have the means and neglect to bestow them. For if he have them and give not, he hath become frozen within, his sins are not yet melted like the torrent in the south, because his will is cold. What do so great goods as we possess avail? Fervent will cometh, now set free by the southern heat; though it have nothing, the whole is reckoned unto it. How great things do beggars bestow upon one another? Consider, my beloved, how their alms are given. Verily they unto whom thou dost alms are beggars, beggars want. Ye probably attend to your brethren, if they want aught; ye give, if Christ be in you, even to strangers. But if they are beggars whose profession is asking alms, in trouble they also have what to bestow upon one another. God hath not so forsaken them, but that they have wherein they may be tried by their bestowing of alms. This man cannot walk; he who can walk, lendeth his feet to the lame; he who seeth, lendeth his eyes to the blind; and he who is young and sound, lendeth his strength to the old or the infirm, he carrieth him: the one is poor, the other is rich.

13. Sometimes also the rich man is found to be poor, and something is bestowed upon him by the poor. Somebody cometh to a river, so much the more delicate as he is more rich; he cannot pass over: if he were to pass over with bare limbs, he would catch cold, would be ill, would die: a poor man more active in body cometh up: he carries the rich man over; he giveth alms unto the rich. Think not therefore those only poor, who have not

money. Attend to every man in that wherein he wanteth: for perhaps thou art rich in this, wherein he is poor, and hast wherewith thou mayest help him. Perhaps thou lendest him thy limbs, and this is more than if thou shouldest lend him money. He wanteth counsel, thou art full of counsel; he is poor, thou art rich in counsel. Lo, thou dost not toil, nor lovest any thing; thou givest counsel, and thou hast given alms. Now, my brethren, while we are speaking, ye are as it were poor, compared unto us: and since God hath deigned to give unto us, we bestow therefore upon you; and we all receive from Him, Who alone is rich. Thus therefore the body of Christ holdeth itself; thus the kindred members are held together and made one in charity and the bond of peace, when each man giveth what he hath unto him who hath it not; in that which he hath he is rich; in that which the other hath not, he is poor. Thus love ye, thus be ye affectioned unto one another. Attend not solely to yourselves: but to those who are in want around you. But because these things take place in this life with troubles and cares, faint not. Ye sow in tears, ye shall reap in joy. How, my brethren? When the farmer goeth forth with the plough, carrying seed, is not the wind sometimes keen, and doth not the shower sometimes deter him? He looketh to the sky, seeth it lowering, shivers with cold, nevertheless goeth forth, and soweth. For he feareth lest while he is observing the foul weather, and awaiting sunshine, the time may pass away, and he may not find any thing to reap. Put not off, my brethren; sow in wintry weather, sow good works, even while ye weep; for, They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. They sow their seed, good will, and good works.

14. Ver. 6. They went on their way and wept, casting their seed. Why did they weep? Because they were among the miserable, and were themselves miserable. It is better, my brethren, that no man should be miserable, than that thou shouldest do alms. For he who desireth that there should be sufferers in order that he may give alms, hath but a cruel compassion; just as if a physician should wish there were many sick, that he might exercise his art, it would be a cruel medicine. It is better that all should be whole, than that the physician's art should be exercised. It is better therefore that all should blissfully reign in that country, than that there should be objects for the exercise of compassion. Nevertheless, as long as there are objects for its exercise, let us not fail amid those troubles to sow our seed. Although

we sow in tears, yet shall we reap in joy. For in that resurrection of the dead, each man shall receive his own sheaves, that is, the produce of his seed, the crown of joys and of delight. Then will there be a joyous triumph, when we shall laugh at death, wherein we groaned before: then shall they say to death, O death, where is thy strife? O death, where is thy sting? But why do they now rejoice? Because they bring their sheaves with them. For they went on their way weeping, and casting their seed. Why casting their seed? Because they that sow in tears, shall reap in joy.

15. In this Psalm we have chiefly exhorted you to do deeds of alms, because it is thence that we ascend; and ye see that he who ascendeth, singeth the song of steps. Remember: do not love to descend, instead of to ascend, but reflect upon your ascent: because he who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. If he had not descended, he would not have fallen among thieves. Adam hath already descended, and fallen among thieves: and we are all Adam. But the priest passed by, and took no notice: the Levite passed by, and took no notice; for the Law could not heal. A certain Samaritan passed by, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ: for unto Him it was said, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? He replied not, I am not a Samaritan; but, I have not a devil. For the word Samaritan meaneth, a Keeper. If He had said, I am not a Samaritan, He would have denied that He was a Guardian. And who else could guard us? Then figuring the likeness: a Samaritan passed by, and had compassion upon him, as ye know. He was lying wounded by the road side, because he had descended. The Samaritan as He passed by slighted us not: He healed us, He raised us upon His beast, upon His flesh; He led us to the inn, that is, the Church; He entrusted us to the host, that is, to the Apostle; He gave two pence, whereby we might be healed, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour: for on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. He said also unto the host, Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. The Apostle spent more; for, though it was allowed unto all the Apostles to receive, as Christ's soldiers, pay from Christ's subjects, that Apostle, nevertheless, toiled with his own hands, and excused the subjects the maintenance owing to him. All this hath already happened: if we have descended, and have been wounded; let us ascend, let us sing, and make progress, in order that we may arrive.

PSALM 127

Exposition

A Sermon to the Common People.

1. Among all the Songs entitled the Song of degrees, this Psalm hath a further addition in the title, that it is Solomon's. For thus it is entitled, A Song of degrees of Solomon. It hath therefore aroused our attention, and caused us to enquire the reason of this addition, of Solomon. For it is needless to repeat explanations of the other words, Song of degrees; for much has been said on this subject, for the voice of one ascending singeth with feelings of piety and love for that heavenly Jerusalem, for whom we sigh while absent from her, and wherein we shall rejoice on our return from our wandering. Every man who is amending ascendeth towards her. Every man who is losing ground falleth away from her. Think not that thou descendest by thy feet, nor seek to rise by thy feet; by loving God, thou risest: by loving the world, thou fallest. These then are the songs of those who love, who burn with a sort of holy longing. They who sing these verses from their heart burn, and their ardent heart is discovered also in their conduct, in good conversation, in works according to the commandments of God, in contempt of temporal things, in love of things eternal. I will now explain to you, beloved, as far as the Lord shall allow me, the meaning of the additional word, Solomon's.

2. Solomon was in his time David's son, a great man, through whom many holy precepts and healthful admonitions and divine mysteries have been wrought by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. Solomon himself was a lover of women, and was rejected by God: and this lust was so great a snare unto him, that he was induced by women even to sacrifice to idols, as Scripture witnesseth concerning him. But if, by his fall what was delivered through him were blotted out, it would be judged that he had himself delivered these

precepts, and not that they were delivered through him. The mercy of God, therefore, and His Spirit, excellently wrought that whatever of good was declared through Solomon, might be attributed unto God; and the man's sin, unto the man. What marvel that Solomon fell among God's people? Did not Adam fall in Paradise? Did not an angel fall from heaven, and become the devil? We are thereby taught, that no hope must be placed in any among men. Since that very Solomon had built a temple to the Lord, in the type and figure of the Church which was to come, and of the Lord's Body; whence He saith in the Gospel, Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up; since then He had Himself built, I say, this Temple, the True Solomon, our Lord Jesus Christ, the True Peacemaker, built unto Himself a Temple. For the name of Solomon is interpreted to mean peacemaker: now He is the True Peacemaker, of Whom the Apostle saith, He is our Peace, Who hath made both one. He is the True Peacemaker, Who joined together in Himself two walls coming from different sides, wherein He became the chief Corner Stone, both to the believing host who came from circumcision, and to the believing people who came from the uncircumcision of the Gentiles; He made one Church of two nations, He became unto them a chief Corner Stone, and for this reason was the True Peacemaker. Since, therefore, He is the true Solomon; for that Solomon, who was the son of David of the woman Bersabe, the king of Israel, was the figure of this Peacemaker, when he built the temple; that thou mayest not think he who built the house unto God was the true Solomon, Scripture shewing unto thee another Solomon thus commences this Psalm: (ver. 1.) Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. The Lord, therefore, buildeth the house, the Lord Jesus Christ buildeth His own house. Many toil in building: but, except He build, their labour is but lost that build it. Who are they who toil in building it? All who preach the word of God in the Church, the ministers of God's mysteries. We are all running, we are all toiling, we are all building now; and before us others have run, toiled, and built: but except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. Thus the Apostles seeing some fall; and Paul in particular saith, Ye observe days and months and times and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. Because he knew that he himself was builded inwardly by the Lord, he bewailed these men, in that he had laboured in vain for them. We, therefore, speak without, He buildeth within.

We can observe with what attention ye hear us; He alone Who knoweth your thoughts, knoweth what ye think. He Himself buildeth, He Himself admonisheth, He Himself openeth the understanding, He Himself kindleth your understanding unto faith; nevertheless, we also toil like workmen; but, except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it.

3. But that which is the house of God is also a city. For the house of God is the people of God; for the house of God is the temple of God. And what doth the Apostle say? The temple of God is holy, which are ye. But all the faithful, who are the house of God, not only those who now exist, but those also who have been before us and have already slept, and they who are to come after us, unto the world's end, innumerable hosts of the faithful gathered into one body, but counted by the Lord, of whom the Apostle saith, The Lord knoweth them that are His; those grains of wheat which as yet groan among the chaff, which will constitute one mass, when the floor shall in the end have been winnowed: the whole number of faithful Saints, destined to be changed from the human state, that they become equal with the Angels of God; themselves joined unto the Angels, who are no longer pilgrims, but are awaiting us on our return from our pilgrimage; all make together one house of God, and one city. This is Jerusalem: she hath guards: as she hath builders, labouring at her building up, so also hath she guards. To this guardianship these words of the Apostle relate: I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ. He was guarding the Church. He kept watch, to the utmost of his power, over those over whom he was set. The Bishops also do this. For a higher place was for this reason given the Bishops, that they might be themselves the superintendents and as it were the guardians of the people. For the Greek word Episcopus, and the vernacular Superintendent, are the same; for the Bishop superintends, in that he looks over. As a higher place is assigned to the vinedresser in the charge of the vineyard, so also to the Bishops a more exalted station is allotted. And a perilous account is rendered of this high station, except we stand here with a heart that causeth us to stand beneath your feet in humility, and pray for you, that He Who knoweth your minds may be Himself your keeper. Since we can see you both coming in and going out; but we are so unable to see what are the thoughts of your hearts,

that we cannot even see what ye do in your houses. How then can we guard you? As men: as far as we are able, as far as we have received power. And because we guard you like men, and cannot guard you perfectly, shall ye therefore remain without a keeper? Far be it! For where is He of Whom it is said, Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain? We are watchful on our guard, but vain in our watchfulness, except He Who seeth your thoughts guard you. He keepeth guard while ye are awake, He keepeth guard also whilst ye are asleep. For He hath once slept on the Cross, and hath risen again; He no longer sleepeth. Be ye Israel: for the Keeper of Israel neither sleepeth nor slumbereth. Yea, brethren, if we wish to be kept beneath the shadow of God's wings, let us be Israel. For we guard you in our office of stewards; but we wish to be guarded together with you. We are as it were shepherds unto you; but beneath that Shepherd we are fellow-sheep with you. We are as it were your teachers from this station; but beneath Him, the One Master, we are schoolfellows with you in this school.

4. Ver. 2. If we wish to be guarded by Him Who was humbled for our sakes, and Who was exalted to keep us, let us be humble. Let no one assume any thing unto himself. No man hath any good, except he hath received it from Him Who alone is good. But he who chooseth to arrogate wisdom unto himself, is a fool. Let him be humble, that wisdom may come, and may enlighten him. But if, before wisdom cometh unto him, he imagine that he is wise; he riseth before light, and walketh in darkness. What doth he hear in this Psalm? It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up before dawn. What meaneth this? If ye arise before light ariseth, ye must needs lose your labour, because ye will be in the dark. Our light, Christ, hath arisen; it is good for thee to rise after Christ, not to rise before Christ. Who rise before Christ? They who choose to prefer themselves to Christ. And who are they who wish to prefer themselves to Christ? They who wish to be exalted here, where He was humble. Let them, therefore, be humble here, if they wish to be exalted there, where Christ is exalted. For He saith of those who had clung in faith unto Him, among whom we also are, if we too believe on Him with a pure heart: Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am. A great gift, a great grace, a great promise, my brethren! And who doth not wish to be with Christ, where Christ is? But

Christ is now exalted; dost thou wish to be there where He is exalted? Be thou humble, where He also was humble. On this account the Light Himself saith unto them, The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. The disciples who wished to be above their Master, and the servants who wished to be above their Lord, wished to rise before light; their labour was lost, because they went not forth after the light. To them, therefore, this Psalm saith, It is but lost labour that ye rise before dawn. Such were the sons of Zebedee, who, before they were humbled according to the Lord's Passion, were already choosing themselves places, where they might sit, the one on the right hand, the other on the left; they wished to rise before dawn; for this reason their labour was lost. The Lord recalled them to humility, when He heard this, and said unto them, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? I came to be humble: and are ye wishing to be exalted before Me? The way I go, do ye follow, He saith. For if ye choose to go this way where I do not go, your labour is lost, in rising before dawn. Peter too had risen before the light, when he wished to give the Lord advice, deterring Him from suffering for us. He had spoken of His Passion, wherein we were to be saved, of humiliation itself; for He suffered humbly: when, therefore, He was foretelling His destined Passion, Peter was alarmed, though he had called Him, a little before, the Son of God; he feared lest He should die, and said unto Him, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee. He was wishing to rise before the Light, and to give counsel unto the Light. But what did our Lord do? He caused him to rise after the Light: Get thee behind Me, Satan. He was Satan, because he wished to rise before Light. Get thee behind Me: that I may precede, thou mayest follow: where I go, there thou mayest go; and mayest not wish to lead Me, where thou wouldest go.

5. The Psalm then saith unto those who wished to rise before light, It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise before light. When shall we rise, then? When we have been humbled: Rise after ye have sitten. Rising signifieth exaltation: sitting signifieth humility. In some passages sitting is understood of judging in honour, in others it meaneth humility. How does sitting signify judging in honour? Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. How is sitting a sign of humility? About the sixth hour, Jesus being wearied, sat upon the well. The Lord's weariness was the

weakness of the Lord, the weakness of Power, the weakness of Wisdom: but this very weakness is humility. If therefore He sat down from weakness, that sitting down signifieth humility. And this His sitting, that is His humility, saved us; because, The weakness of God is stronger than men. He therefore saith in a certain Psalm, Lord, Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising; that is, my humility and mine exaltation. Why then do ye, O sons of Zebedee, wish to be exalted before light? For let us thus speak, and rather make mention of them, who are not angry with us; for these things are written concerning them for this reason, that others might beware of that pride for which they were corrected. Why then do ye wish to rise before the light? Your labour is lost. Do ye wish to be exalted, before ye are humbled? Your Lord Himself, Who is your light, was humbled that He might be exalted. Hear Paul saying, Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. How was it not robbery in Him? Because it was His nature, because He was born for this, that He might be equal with Him by Whom He was begotten. But what did He do? He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. This is His sitting. Now hear of His rising again. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. Ye are now hastening unto that name: rise, but after ye have sat down. Ye wish to rise: but first sit: and rising from humility, thou reachest the kingdom. For if thou art in a hurry to reach the kingdom, thou fallest from the kingdom before thou risest. Are ye able, He saith, to drink of the cup which I shall drink of? They reply, We are able. He answereth, Ye shall drink indeed of My Cup; but to sit on My right hand and on My left, is not Mine to give unto you, but it is prepared of My Father for others. What meaneth, It is not Mine to give? It is not Mine to give to the proud: for such they as yet were. But if ye wish to receive this, be not what ye are. It is prepared for others: do ye become others, and for you it is prepared. What meaneth, Become others? Do ye who already wish to be exalted, first be humbled. They therefore understood that humility would benefit them, and were rebuked. Let us too therefore listen to this, for this Psalm giveth us the same lesson in these words: Rise after ye have sat down.

6. But lest any one should imagine that he sitteth that he may be honoured; that he might shew that by this sitting his intent was to enjoin humility; that no man might suppose that he was ordered to sit either for judgment, or banquetting and rejoicing, and thereby seek a higher pride; to signify humility he hath added, Ye that eat the bread of grief. They therefore eat the bread of grief, who groan in this pilgrimage. They are in the vale of misery. For God placeth ascending steps in the heart. Where hath he placed them? He hath set, saith the Psalmist, steps of ascent in his heart. Who? God. If steps of ascent in the heart, therefore they sing the Song of steps. Let us be humbled in the world, let us ascend. How? in the heart. Because the ascent of the heart itself riseth from the vale of misery. In the vale, saith he, of misery. As the mountains are erect, so do the valleys sit: for by valleys are meant the low spots of the earth; while hills signify the eminences of lower height than mountains: very high spots of the earth are called mountains. It is not enough; he saith not, rise from the hills; nor, from the plain; but, from the valley, meaning something more lowly than the plain. If therefore thou eatest the bread of grief in the valley of misery, and sayest, My tears have been my meat day and night: while they say unto me, Where is now thy God? thou risest rightly, because thou hast sat down.

7. And as if thou shouldest say, When shall we rise? we are ordered now to sit: when will be our rising? When the Lord's was. Look unto Him, Who went before thee: for if thou heedest not Him, it is lost labour for thee to rise before dawn. When was He raised? When He had died. Hope therefore for thine uplifting after thy death: have hope in the resurrection of the dead, because He rose again and ascended. But where did He sleep? On the Cross. When He slept on the Cross, He bore a sign, yea, He fulfilled what had been signified in Adam: for when Adam was asleep, a rib was drawn from him, and Eve was created; so also while the Lord slept on the Cross, His side was transfixured with a spear, and the Sacraments flowed forth, whence the Church was born. For the Church the Lord's Bride was created from His side, as Eve was created from the side of Adam. But as she was made from his side no otherwise than while sleeping, so the Church was created from His side no otherwise than while dying. If therefore He rose not from the dead save when He had died, dost thou hope for exaltation save after this life? But that this Psalm might teach thee, in case thou

shouldest ask, When shall I rise? perhaps before I have sat down? he addeth, When He hath given His beloved sleep. God giveth this when His beloved have fallen asleep; then His beloved, that is, Christ's, shall rise. For all indeed shall rise, but not as His beloved. There is a resurrection of all the dead; but what saith the Apostle? We shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed. They rise unto punishment: we rise as our Lord rose, that we may follow our Head, if we are members of Him. And if we are members of His, then are we His beloved; then pertaineth unto us that resurrection which went before in the Lord, so that the Light rose before us, we after the Light; because it is but lost labour for us to rise before light, that is, to seek exaltation before we die; since Christ our Light was not exalted in the flesh, save after He had died. Constituted then His members, and in His members His beloved, when we have received our sleep, then shall we rise in the resurrection of the dead. One hath risen from the dead, to die no more. Lazarus rose, but to die: the daughter of the ruler of the Synagogue rose, but to die; the widow's son rose, but to die; Christ rose, no more to die. Hear the Apostle: Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. Hope for such a resurrection; and for the sake of this be a Christian, not for the sake of this world's happiness. For if thou wish to be a Christian for the sake of this world's happiness, since He thy Light sought not worldly happiness; thou art wishing to rise before the light; thou must needs continue in darkness. Be changed, follow thy Light; rise where He rose again: first sit down, and thus rise, when He giveth His beloved sleep.

8. Ver. 3. As if thou shouldest ask again, Who are the beloved? Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord. Since he saith, fruit of the womb, these children have been born in travail. There is a certain woman, in whom what was said unto Eve, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, is shewn after a spiritual manner. The Church beareth children, the Bride of Christ; and if she beareth them, she travaileth of them. In figure of her, Eve was called also the Mother of all living. He who said, My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you, was amongst the members of her who travaileth. But she travailed not in vain, nor brought forth in vain: there will be a holy seed at the resurrection of the dead: the righteous who are at present scattered over

the whole world shall abound. The Church groaneth for them, the Church travaileth of them; but in that resurrection of the dead, the offspring of the Church shall appear, pain and groaning shall pass away. And what shall be said? Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord. The word fruit is in the possessive case. It is, the reward of the fruit of the womb. What is this reward? Resurrection from the dead. What is this reward? To rise, after thou hast sat down. What is this reward? Rejoicing, after thou hast eaten the bread of sorrow. Of what womb? Of the Church: in whose womb, for Rebecca was her type, those two twins as two people strove. One mother contained in her womb brethren, who disagreed before they were born; they agitated their mother's womb with internal discords; she groaned, and suffered violence; but when she brought forth, she discerned what twins she had endured when pregnant. Thus also now, brethren, as long as groans are given unto the Church, as long as the Church travaileth, there are within her both good and evil. But the fruit of the womb was in Jacob, for his mother loved him. Jacob have I loved, said God, but Esau have I hated. Both went forth from one womb; one deserved to be loved, the other to be reprobated. Her fruit will be, therefore, among the beloved. The fruit of the womb, therefore, hath a reward.

9. Ver. 4. Like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of those that are shot out. Whence hath sprung this heritage, brethren? Whence hath sprung so numerous a heritage, as that whereof he saith at the end, Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord? Some have been shot out from the Lord's hand, as arrows, and have gone far, and have filled the whole earth, whence the Saints spring. For this is the heritage whereof it is said, Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. And how doth this possession extend and increase unto the world's uttermost parts? Because, like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of those that are shot out. Arrows are shot forth from the bow, and the stronger the arm which hath sent it forth, the farther flieth the arrow. But what is stronger than the darting of the Lord? From His bow He sendeth forth His Apostles: there could not be a spot left where an arrow shot by so strong an arm would not reach; it hath reached unto the uttermost parts of the earth. The reason it

went no farther was, that there were no more of the human race beyond. For He hath such strength, that even if there were a spot beyond, whither the arrow could fly, He would dart the arrow thither. Such are the children of those who are shot forth as they that are shot forth. It hath been a question respecting this word, agitated by those who before us have treated these subjects, why they are called children of those who have been shot forth, or who are to be understood by the sons of those who have been shaken forth; and to some it hath appeared, as I have just said, that the children of those who have been shaken forth, are the children of the Apostles.

10. Beloved, listen for a short season. The question hath been raised, why the Apostles are 'shot' or 'shaken' out: some allege, that they are thus styled, because the Lord enjoined them, When ye depart out of that house, or of that city, shake off the dust from off your feet. Another saith, They ought not then to be called the sons of those who have been shaken forth, but the sons of those who shake out; for the Lord made those unto whom He said, Shake off the dust from off your feet; shaking out, not shaken off. He indeed who before us treated this subject, wished with subtilty to contradict the foregoing opinion: nevertheless we, with the Lord's help, seeking in what sense they might rightly be called shaken out, unto whom our Lord saith, Shake off the dust from off your feet, find that they can thus be termed without absurdity. For although they themselves shook off, they shook themselves out. I mean this: he who shaketh out, either shaketh himself out, or something else; if he shaketh off any thing else, he shaketh out, he is not shaken out; but if he shake out himself, he both shaketh out and hath been shaken out. Listen, I will say this more clearly, if I can. If he shake out any thing else, he shaketh out, and is not shaken out; if he be shaken out by another, he is shaken out, and doth not shake out; but if he shake out himself, he shaketh out, because he shaketh out himself; and is shaken out, because he is shaken out by himself. A question, therefore, is raised, whom the Apostles shook out? Themselves, surely: for they shook off dust from their own feet. But some one saith, They shook not out themselves, but the dust. This is clearly a cavil. For we say, that something is shaken out in two ways: either that which is shaken out thence, or that whence it is shaken out. For we say both the dust hath been shaken out, and the garment hath been shaken out. Some hold and shake the garment; and

thence issueth dust, that had clung unto it. What sayest thou of the dust? The dust hath been shaken out. What sayest thou of the garment? The garment hath been shaken out. If, therefore, both that which issueth forth from the shaking, and that from which the dust issueth forth, is said to be shaken out; both the dust hath been shaken out, and the Apostles have been shaken out. Why then are not the children of those that have been shaken out, called the children of the Apostles?

11. But there is another opinion also which we ought not to pass over. For perhaps the words are rather obscurely expressed for this reason, that they may call forth many understandings, and that men may go away the richer, because they have found that closed which might be opened in many ways, than if they could open and discover it by one interpretation. We say also that any thing is shaken out; that what is perhaps concealed may come out thence. For we say with one meaning that a garment is shaken, that they may shake out dust thence; and in another sense we say that a sack is shaken, that what lay concealed within may issue forth. I understand therefore, brethren, as far as I am able, that perhaps the Apostles themselves are styled the sons of those who have been shaken out, the sons of the Prophets. For the Prophets comprised closed and covered mysteries: they were shaken, that they might come forth thence manifestly. Suppose therefore, a Prophet to have said, as one truly saith, The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know Me. This illustration cometh before my mind at present, to speak of a prophet; had another occurred, I would have adduced it. When a man heareth this, if he think of an ass and an ox, and cattle, and beasts of burden, he will be treating an interior meaning in its outward aspect, ignorant of the latent sense. The ass and the ox signify something. What then is said unto a man who wisheth to know how to preach the truth? Wait; what thou art touching is closed, shake off the covering; the Prophet conceals something beneath this veil of language; he meaneth something by the ass, something by the ox. For the ass, figuring the people of God, is God's beast of burden, carrying the Lord its Rider, that it may not stray in its path: and that ox whereof the Apostle saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn: doth God take care for oxen, he asks, or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, he saith, without doubt this is

written. Every preacher of God's Word, therefore, warneth, chideth, frighteneth, thresheth the floor, and filleth the office of the ox. The ox came from the Jews' nation; for thence came the Apostles, Preachers: the ass came from the nation of the uncircumcised, that is, from the Gentiles. He came to carry the Lord: and therefore the Lord sat upon an ass that never had carried man; since the Law was not sent to the Gentiles, nor the Prophets. Since therefore our Lord Jesus Christ willed to be our meat, and on this account was laid in the manger at His birth, the ox knew his owner, and the ass his master's crib. But would these meanings issue forth, unless the bag were shaken out? Except the prophecy involved were sifted with diligence, would the concealed meanings come forth unto us? All these meanings were therefore closed before the Lord's advent. The Lord came, and shook out these hidden meanings, and they were made manifest; the Prophets were shaken out, and the Apostles were born. Since then they were born of the Prophets who had been shaken out, the Apostles are sons of those that were shaken out. They, placed as the arrows in the hand of the giant, have reached the uttermost parts of the earth. How must it needs be said of the end, Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are the heritage of the Lord. Lord. Because this heritage is gathered from the uttermost parts of the earth: because, Like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of them that are shaken out; that is, the Apostles the sons of the Prophets have been like as the arrows in the hand of a mighty one. If He is mighty, He hath shaken them out with a mighty hand; if He hath shaken them out with a mighty hand, they whom He hath shaken forth have arrived even at the uttermost parts of the earth.

12. Ver. 5. Blessed is the man who hath filled his desire from them. Well, my brethren, who filleth his desire from them? Who loveth not the world. He who is filled with the desire of the world, hath no room for that to enter which they have preached. Pour forth what thou carriest, and become fit for that which thou hast not. That is, thou desirest riches: thou canst not fill thy desire from them: thou desirest honours upon earth, thou desirest those things which God hath given even unto beasts of burden, that is, temporal pleasure, bodily health, and the like; thou wilt not fulfil thy desire from them. But if thou desirest thus, even as the hart longeth for the streams of waters; if thou sayest, My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the

courts of the Lord; thou fillest thy desire from them; not that they can fulfil such a desire, but by imitating such thou comest unto Him Who hath filled their desire.

13. He shall not be ashamed, when he speaketh with his enemies in the gate. Brethren, let us speak in the gate, that is, let all know what we speak. For he who chooseth not to speak in the gate, wisheth what he speaketh to be hidden, and perhaps wisheth it to be hidden for this reason, that it is evil. If he be confident, let him speak in the gate; as it is said of Wisdom, She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city. As long as they hold unto righteousness in innocency, they shall not be ashamed: this is to preach at the gate. And who is he who preacheth at the gate? He who preacheth in Christ; because Christ is the gate whereby we enter into that city. I lie, had He not Himself said; I am the door. If He be the door, He is also the gate; for door is applied to a house; the door of a city is its gate, the gate of a house is its door. But perhaps the term gate is not aptly used: if that which is called a house be not rightly termed a city. For both are said a little before: Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it; and lest thou shouldest think this house some small thing, he addeth, Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. The house, therefore, and the city are the same. The city hath a door like a house, and hath a gate as a city. He, therefore, Who is the door of the house, is Himself the gate of the city. If, therefore, Christ be the gate of the city, he is not ashamed who standeth in Christ, and thus preacheth. But he who preacheth against Christ, against him the gate is shut. Who are they who preach against Christ? They who deny that the arrows are sent from the hand of the Mighty One, and have reached the uttermost parts of the earth; and this is the heritage of the Lord, of which it is said, Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. It was preached, it was listened to, before it was fulfilled; and now that it hath been fulfilled, they refuse to acknowledge it. They, therefore, who speak against Christ, are without the gate; because they seek their own honours, not those of Christ. But he who preacheth in the gate, seeketh Christ's honour, not his own: and, therefore, he who preacheth in the gate, saith, Trust not in me; for ye will not enter through me, but through the gate. While they who wish men to trust in themselves, wish them not to enter

through the gate: it is no marvel if the gate be closed against them, and if they vainly knock for it to be opened. Be present in mind, therefore, brethren, on account of to-morrow's discourse also, which shall be delivered to you, according to our promise, by the Lord's help, from the Gospel concerning the dove. In Whose Name we have promised, in His mercy we will fulfil our promise. But, that we may fulfil it worthily, and may not have been too daring in promising, do ye pray for us.

PSALM 128

Exposition

A Sermon to the People, on the day of St. Felix the Martyr.

1. Ver. 1–4. As the Apostle saith, dearest brethren, Comparing spiritual things with spiritual; but the natural man receiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God; we must be on our guard lest natural men, not receiving the things that are of the Spirit of God, may rather be scandalized than edified by this Psalm. For briefly (though we heard it in the singing) I am running through it, since it is brief, not expounding, but reading it. Now consider that if every man hath desired such things as a great gift from God, as this Psalm mentioneth; and perhaps, not because he is forsaken by God, but because he is more loved, hath not received them; and seeth that what he hath here heard described as the rewards of them that fear God, abound unto those who fear not God: his steps totter, and his footsteps slip, and he saith in his heart, that he hath feared God without a cause, since he hath not received those rewards which God hath promised to them that fear Him; while they have received over and above, who not only have not feared, but have even blasphemed Him. Consider what he saith, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labours of thy hands. O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be. We may, as far as this, though we be natural men, think of the bliss of a future life: but consider what followeth: Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thine house. Thy children like the olive-branches, round about thy table. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed, that feareth the Lord. How? In that his wife shall be as the fruitful vine, upon the walls of his house: and his children like the olive-branches, round about his table. Have they then, who for God's sake have even refused to marry, lost their reward? No: he who refuseth to marry saith: God will bless me in other ways. Nay truly: either

He will bless thee thus, or He will not bless thee at all; the language of the Psalm is plain, Lo, thus shall the man be blessed, that feareth the Lord.

2. What then, brethren, is the meaning of this? That we may not, by desiring temporal and earthly blessings, lose our heavenly happiness, the Prophet setteth before us a sort of veil, this veil hath I know not what within. You remember, beloved, when I was expounding the preceding Psalm to you, which goeth before this, we met with a certain obscure verse, where it was said, Like as the arrows in the hand of a mighty one, so are the sons of them that are shaken out; and when we enquired who the sons of them that are shaken out were, it seemed to us, that the Apostles (the Lord suggesting this, as we believe) were termed the sons of them that were shaken out, the sons of the Prophets: because the Prophets spoke in enigmas, and under figures as with the veil of mysteries covered their meaning; which meaning could not issue forth unto men, unless these veils were shaken out; whence they were called the sons of those that are shaken out, who gained spiritual profit by the opening out the Prophets. Let us too, therefore, shake out this one, that we may not be deceived through the coverings, lest touching what is within and not seeing it, we may perchance say wood for gold, and tiles for silver. Let us shake it out, if it seem good unto you, beloved; the Lord will aid, that what is within may come forth; especially, my brethren, as we are celebrating the birthdays of the Martyrs. How great evils have the Martyrs endured, what deaths, what terrible tortures, what filthy prisons, pinching of chains, fury of wild beasts, heat of flames, stings of insults! Would they have endured all these things, unless they saw somewhat, whither they were tending, not belonging to the happiness of this world? Now it is shameful for us to celebrate the birthdays of the Martyrs, that is, of those servants of God who despised this world for the sake of everlasting bliss, and understand what is here written in the sense of present happiness; so that we should say of any faithful man of God, citizen of that Jerusalem, to whom marriage may have brought no issue, This man feareth not the Lord; for if he feared the Lord, his wife would be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of his house, not barren, so that she could give birth to none; and if this man feared the Lord, his sons would surround his table, like olive-branches. For if we should speak thus, we are natural men, not receiving the things that are of the Spirit of God. Let us also begin to shake them out, that

we also may be the sons of them that are shaken out. For if we shall be the sons of them that are shaken out, we shall be like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, and He will dart us from His commandment into the hearts of men who do not as yet love Him, that, struck by the arrows of God's words, they may love. For if we begin to preach to them such words as these, My sons, or my brethren, fear ye the Lord, that ye may have children and grandchildren, that your house may be joyful; we are not leading them to love that everlasting Jerusalem; they will remain in the love of earthly things, and seeing these things abound to the ungodly, though they dare not speak so to us, they will say in their heart, Why hath he who feareth not God, his house full of children? And if perchance another say to him, As yet thou knowest not what may happen; what if he shall have to bury them, because he feareth not God; what if many sons were born unto him for this reason, that he might suffer greater pain from their death? But if thou speak thus, he will answer thee: I know of a man who was ungodly, a heathen, sacrilegious, a worshipper of idols, (and perhaps he doth know, and saith the truth, and knoweth not one only, nor even two or three only,) whom numerous sons and grandsons have carried to the grave, an old man, bowed down with years, who had died in his bed. Lo, he feared not the Lord, and yet a most numerous offspring of his house hath closed his eyes. What shall we say to this? Nothing evil can happen to him, for he can never, in his lifetime, bury his children, since he hath already died, and been borne to an honourable tomb by his children.

3. Let us shake this out then, let us shake it out, if we wish to be the sons of them that are shaken out: let some meaning be educed from it. For there is a certain Man who is thus blessed: and no one feareth the Lord, except he be in the members of this Man: and there are many men, and there is one Man; for there are many Christians, and there is One Christ. The Christians themselves with their Head, Who hath ascended into heaven, are one Christ. He is not One, and we many, but we many are one in That One. Christ then is one Man, the Head of the Body. What is His Body? His Church, as the Apostle saith: We are members of His Body; and, ye are the body of Christ, and His members in particular. Let us therefore understand the words of this Man, in whose body we are one man; and we shall there see the true good things of Jerusalem. For thus he saith at the end: That thou mayest see the

good things that are of Jerusalem. But if thou hast looked for these good things with an earthly eye, the abundance of children and grandchildren, and the fecundity and fruitfulness of his wife, are not the good things of that Jerusalem; for these good things are in the land of the dying, that is the land of the living. Hold it not as a very great thing, if thou hast sons who will die, although not before thee, yet certainly after thee. Dost thou wish to have children who will never die, and who will ever live with thee? Be thou in His Body, of Whom it hath been said, Ye are the Body of Christ, and His members in particular.

4. That this Psalm also might shew this, since it is so far obscure that it admonisheth us to knock at it, so far covered that it doth wish to be shaken out, it beginneth with speaking of many: Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways. He speaketh to many; but since these many are one in Christ, in the next words he speaketh in the singular: For thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits. He had said above, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways; why doth he now say, Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits: and not, ye shall eat? and why, the labours of thy fruits, and not the labours of your fruits. Hath he forgotten that so lately as in the preceding verse he was speaking of more than one? If thou hast already shaken it out, what doth he answer thee? When I speak of Christians in the plural, I understand one in the One Christ. Ye are therefore many, and ye are one; we are many, and we are one. How are we many, and yet one? Because we cling unto Him Whose members we are; and since our Head is in heaven, that His members may follow.

5. Let him therefore now go on with his description: for it is now clear Whom he is describing. Thus will all that followeth be open: only do ye fear the Lord, and walk in His ways, and do not envy those who walk not in His ways, when ye shall see them happy without happiness. For men of the world are happy without happiness; but the Martyrs were unhappy with happiness. For they were unhappy for a season, but happy for evermore; and herein that they were unhappy for a season, they were thought to be more unhappy than they were. For what saith the Apostle? As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. Why, alway? Both here and there: altogether both here and there. For whence do we rejoice here? In hope. Whence shall we rejoice

there? In fulfilment. The hope of one rejoicing hath great joy, and if rejoicing in hope, see what followeth, patient in tribulation. The Martyrs were therefore patient in tribulation, because they rejoiced in hope. But because that which is promised did not yet exist, what saith the Apostle? For hope which is seen is not hope: but if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Behold the reason why the Martyrs endured all things, because they waited patiently for what they saw not. They who slew them, loved what they saw: they who were slain, sighed for those things which they saw not, and hastened to reach those things which they saw not; and in that they were put to a lingering death, thought they were delayed.

6. Therefore, brethren, Felix the Martyr, truly Felix both in his name and his crown, whose birthday this is, despised the world. Was he, because he feared the Lord, thence happy, thence blessed, because his wife was as a fruitful vine upon the earth, and his children stood around his table? All these blessings he hath perfectly, but in the Body of Him Who is here described; and, because he understood them in this sense, he scorned things present, that he might receive things future. Ye are aware, brethren, that he suffered not the death that other martyrs suffered. For he confessed, and was set aside for torments; on another day his body was discovered lifeless. They had closed the prison to his body, not to his spirit. The executioners found him gone; when they were preparing to torture, they spent their rage for nought. He was lying dead, without sense to them, that he might not be tortured; with sense with God, that he might be crowned. Whence was he also happy, brethren, not only in name, but in the reward of everlasting life, if he loved these things.

7. Let us therefore so hear this Psalm, as considering it to be spoken of Christ: and all of us who cling unto the Body of Christ, and have been made members of Christ, walk in the ways of the Lord; and let us fear the Lord with a chaste fear, with a fear that abideth for ever. For it is another fear which charity excludeth, as St. John saith, There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear. He saith not of every fear that it is cast out by love; for thou findest the Psalm saying, The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever. One fear therefore endureth, the other is cast out. The

fear which is cast out, is not clean: but that which endureth, is clean. What is the fear which is cast out? Deign to consider. Some fear only for this reason, lest they suffer some evil on earth,—lest sickness befall them, lest loss, lest bereavement of children, lest the loss of any that is dear, lest exile, lest condemnation, lest prison, lest any tribulation; for these reasons they fear and tremble: still this fear is not a chaste one. Still hear. Another feareth not on this earth, but feareth hell, whereby the Lord also alarmed men. Ye have heard when the Gospel was being read, Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Men hear these words; and because they will really happen to the ungodly, they fear, and restrain themselves from sin. They have fear, and through fear restrain themselves from sin. They fear indeed, but love not righteousness. But when through fear they restrain themselves from sin, righteousness becometh a habit, and what was hard beginneth to be loved, and good becometh sweet: and man now beginneth to live righteously for this reason, not because he feareth punishments, but because he loveth eternity. Fear therefore is cast out by love; but a clean fear hath succeeded.

8. What is this clean fear? According to which we ought, my brethren, to understand what is said, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways. If I shall be enabled to speak worthily of this clean fear, by the help of the Lord our God, many will perchance be inflamed by this clean fear unto a clean love. Nor can I perhaps explain, unless by putting forward some similitude. Suppose some chaste woman, fearing her husband: suppose another an adulterous woman; she also feareth her husband. The chaste woman feareth lest her husband depart: the adulterous wife feareth him, lest he come. What if both be absent? The one feareth lest he come: the latter, lest he delay. He is in a certain sense absent unto Whom we have been betrothed; He is absent, Who gave unto us as a pledge His Holy Spirit; He is absent, Who redeemed us with His blood; that Husband than Whom nothing is more beautiful, Who seemed as it were deformed among the hands of His persecutors, of Whom a little before Isaiah said, He hath no form or comeliness. Is then our Bridegroom deformed? God forbid! for how would the virgins love Him, who have not sought husbands on earth? He therefore seemed deformed to His persecutors: if they thought Him not such, they would not insult Him, they would not strike Him with whips,

would not crown Him with thorns, would not defile Him with spittle; but because He seemed such unto them, they did these things unto Him; for they had not eyes whereby Christ could seem beautiful. To what sort of eyes did Christ seem beautiful? To such as Christ Himself sought, when He said unto Philip, Have I been so long with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip? These eyes must be cleansed, that they may see that light; and, though slightly touched with the splendour, they are kindled with love, that they may wish to be healed, and may become enlightened. For that ye may know that Christ, Who is loved, is beautiful, the Prophet saith, Fairer in beauty than the children of men. His beauty surpasseth all men. What is it we love in Christ? His crucified members, His transfixed side, or His love? When we hear that He suffered for us, what do we love? Love is loved. He loved us, that we might in turn love Him; and that we might return His love, He hath visited us with His Spirit. He is beautiful, and is absent. Let the spouse ask herself if she be chaste. We are all among His members, my brethren; we are among His members, we are for this reason one Man. Let each man see what sort of fear he hath, whether that which love casteth out, or that clean fear which endureth for evermore. He hath lately proved this; I say unto you, He will also prove it. Our Bridegroom is afar: ask thy conscience; dost thou wish that He come, or dost thou still wish that He delay? Consider, brethren: I have knocked at the doors of your hearts; He hath heard the voice of them that dwell therein. What the consciences of each of you may have answered, could not reach my ears, since I am but a man: He Who is afar in respect of bodily presence, but is present in the strength of His Majesty, hath heard you. How many, if it be said unto them, Lo, here is Christ, to-morrow is the day of judgment; say not, Would that He may come! They who speak thus, love much; and if they are told, He will delay, they fear lest He delay, because their fear is clean. And as His delaying is now feared: so, after His coming, His leaving us will be feared. That will be a clean fear, for it is tranquil and secure. For we shall not be forsaken of Him, when He hath found us, since He sought us before we sought Him: a chaste fear therefore, my brethren, hath this source: it cometh from love. But that fear which is not yet chaste, feareth His Presence, and its punishment. From fear it doeth whatever of good it doeth: not from fear of losing that good, but from fear of suffering that evil. He feareth not lest he lose the embrace of his most comely bridegroom, but lest he be cast into

hell. This fear is good, is useful; it will not indeed remain for evermore: but it is not as yet of that clean sort, that abideth for evermore.

9. In whom is it clean? I am now asking a question for the second time, which ye may ask of yourselves. If God should come and speak unto us with His Own Voice, (although He ceaseth not to speak through His Scriptures,) and should say unto man, Thou wishest to sin: sin; do whatsoever pleaseth thee; whatever thou loveston the earth, let it be thine: whoever thou art angry with, let him perish; whomsoever thou wishest to seize upon, let him be seized; whomsoever to kill, let him be killed; whomsoever to condemn, let him be condemned; whomsoever thou wishest to possess, possess him: let no man resist thee, let no man say unto thee, What art thou doing? No man, Do it not; no man, Why hast thou done it? Let all those earthly things which thou hast desired abound unto thee, and live in them, not for a season, but for evermore: only thou shalt never see My Face. My brethren, wherefore did ye groan, save because that already a clean fear, enduring alway, hath been born? Why is your heart stricken? If God should say, Thou shalt never see My Face: lo, thou wilt abound in all that earthly felicity; temporal goods will surround thee: thou lovest them not, thou forsakest them not; what dost thou wish more? Clean fear would weep indeed and would groan, and would say, Nay, let all things be taken away, and let me see Thy Face. Clean fear would cry out from the Psalm, and would say, Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts: shew us the light of Thy countenance, and we shall be whole. Clean fear would cry forth from the Psalm, and would say, One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require. See how ardent is that clean fear, that true love, unmixed love. One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require. What is this? Even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. What if he desire this for the sake of earthly happiness? Hear what followeth: to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to be protected; that is, to be His Temple, and to be protected by Him, this one thing have I desired of the Lord. If ye ask this one thing, if ye train your hearts toward this one thing, and fear to lose this one thing only, ye will not envy earthly delights, and ye will hope for that true happiness, and will be in His Body to Whom it is sung, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways.

10. Ver. 2. Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits. And ye, O thou, ye many who are One, Thou shalt eat of the labours of thy fruits. He seemeth to speak perversely to those who understand not: for he should have said, thou shalt eat the fruit of thy labours. For many eat the fruit of their labours. They labour in the vineyard; they eat not the toil itself; but what ariseth from their labour they eat. They labour about trees that bear fruit: who would eat labours? But the fruit of these labours, the produce of these trees; it is this that delighteth the husbandman. What meaneth, Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits? At present we have toils: the fruits will come afterwards. But since their labours themselves are not without joy, on account of the hope whereof we have a little before spoken, Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation; at present those very labours delight us, and make us joyful in hope. If therefore our toil has been what could be eaten, and could also delight us; what will be the fruit of our labour when eaten? They who went weeping on their way, scattering their seed, did eat their labours; with how much greater pleasure will they eat the fruits of their labours, who shall come again with joy, bearing their sheaves with them? And that ye may know, brethren, that this labour is eaten, in the former Psalm ye have heard it said to the proud, who wished to rise before light, that is, before Christ, not through humility, whereby Christ rose; it was said unto them, Rise after ye have sat down; that is, be humbled, and thence rise; since He also, Who hath been exalted on account of you, came to be humbled. And what is said? Who eat the bread of grief. This is the labour of fruits, the bread of grief. For unless it were eaten, it would not be called bread; unless this bread had some sweetness, no one would eat it. With how much sweetness doth he weep in his groanings, who prayeth? The tears of the praying are sweeter than the joys of theatres. And hear the flame of longing, wherewith this bread is eaten, of which he saith here, Ye who eat the bread of grief. In another passage this lover saith, whose voice we usually recognise in the Psalm, My tears have been my meat day and night. How have tears become meat? While they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God? For before we see Him Who loved us, Who hath given us a pledge, to Whom we are betrothed, the Heathen insult us, and say, Where is that which Christians worship? Let them shew us Him Whom they adore. Behold, I shew them my deity, and let them shew me their Deity. When the Heathen speaketh thus to thee, thou findest not what to shew unto him; for

thou hast no man to shew it unto. Thou returnest therefore, and weepest before God; for thou sighest for Him, before thou seest Him; and groanest from longing for Him; and because thou weepest in thy longing for Him, tears themselves are even sweet, and will be as meat unto thee, since they have been made unto thee as meat day and night, while it is said to thee, Where is thy God? But thy God, concerning Whom it is asked, Where is He? will come, and will wipe away thy tears, and will Himself be in stead of the bread of tears unto thee, and will feed thee for evermore; because the word of God, upon which Angels feed, will be with us. Meanwhile, now are the labours of our fruits, afterwards will come the fruit of our labours. Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits. Blessed art thou, and well shall it be with thee. Blessed art thou, is of the present: well shall it be with thee, is of the future. When thou eatest the labours of thy fruits, blessed art thou; when thou hast reached the fruit of thy labours, well shall it be with thee. What hath he said? For if it be well with thee, thou wilt be happy: and if thou wilt be happy, thou wilt also have all well with thee. But there is a difference between hope and attainment. If hope be so sweet, how much sweeter will reality be?

11. Let us now come to the words, Thy wife: it is said unto Christ. His wife, therefore, is the Church: His Church, His wife, we ourselves are. As a fruitful vineyard. But in whom is the vineyard fruitful? For we see many barren ones entering those walls; we see that many intemperate, usurious persons, slave dealers, enter these walls, and such as resort to fortune-tellers, go to enchanters and enchantresses when they have a headache. Is this the fruitfulness of the vine? Is this the fecundity of the wife? It is not. These are thorns, but the vineyard is not every where thorny. It hath a certain fruitfulness, and is a fruitful vine; but in whom? Upon the sides of thy house. Not all are called the sides of the house. For I ask what are the sides. What shall I say? Are they walls, strong stones, as it were? If he were speaking of this bodily tenement, we should perhaps understand this by sides. We mean by the sides of the house, those who cling unto Christ. For we do not say without reason of any person in daily discourse, who perchance is faring ill, owing to the counsels of bad friends, "He hath bad sides." What is, "He hath bad sides?" Bad men cling to him. It is therefore said of another also, He hath good sides: he liveth according to good

counsels. What meaneth this? He is ruled by good counsels. They therefore who cling to Christ are the sides of the house. Nor hath His wife been created from His side without a cause. When her spouse slept, Eve was created: when Christ died, the Church was created; she was born of her husband's side, whence a rib had been withdrawn; and the Church was born of the side of Her spouse, when His side was transfixured with a lance, and the Sacraments flowed forth. Therefore thy wife shall be fruitful as a vine. But upon what? Upon the sides of thine house. Among others, who cling not unto Christ, it is barren. But I will not even reckon them in the vine.

12. Thy children. The wife and the children are the same. In these carnal marriages and wedlocks, the wife is one, the children other: in the Church, she who is the wife, is the children also. For the Apostles belonged to the Church, and were among the members of the Church. They were therefore in His wife, and were His wife according to their own portion which they held in His members. Why then it is said concerning them, When the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall the children of the Bridegroom fast? She who is the wife, then, is the children also. I speak a wonderful thing, my brethren. In the words of the Lord, we find the Church to be both His brethren, and His sisters, and His mother. For when His mother and His brethren were announced to Him to be standing without; in that they stood without, they were a figure. Who is the type of His mother? The Synagogue. Who is the type of carnal brethren? The Jews who stood without. And the Synagogue also standeth without. For Mary was among the sides of His House, and His relatives coming of the kindred of the Virgin Mary, who believed on Him, were among the sides of His House; not in respect of their carnal consanguinity, but inasmuch as they heard the Word of God, and obeyed it. For the Lord answered thus: Who is My mother, and who are My brethren? Whence some have attempted to say that Christ had not a mother, because He said, Who is My mother? Why? Had not then Peter and John and James, and the other Apostles, fathers upon earth? And yet what saith He unto them? Call no man your father upon earth: for One is your Father, Who is in Heaven. What, therefore, He taught His disciples in the case of their father, this He Himself shewed them in that of His mother. For our Lord's will is that we prefer God to our earthly connections. Respect thy father, because he is thy father: reverence God,

because He is God. Thy father begot thee by lending his flesh; God created thee by an exertion of His Power. Let not the father be angry when God is preferred to him: let him rather rejoice that so much respect is paid him, that He alone is found to be preferred to him. What then shall I say? What saith the Lord? Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? And he stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren. They were His brethren; how were they His mother? He added; For whosoever shall do the will of My Father Which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother. Brother, perhaps, on account of the male sex whom the Church hath: sister, on account of the women whom Christ hath here in His members. How mother, save that Christ Himself is in those Christians, whom the Church daily bringeth forth Christians through baptism? In those therefore in whom thou understandest the wife, in them thou understandest the mother, in them the children.

13. Let us therefore say what should the character of these children be. Peacemakers they should be. Why peacemakers? Because, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Since therefore in the olive is the fruit of peace: for oil signifieth peace, because it signifieth love; without love there is no peace: and it is clear that they who have rent asunder peace, will not have love. I have already explained to you, beloved, on this principle, why the dove carried the leaves with fruit unto the ark: to signify that they also who have been baptized without, as those branches were baptized without the ark, if they have not leaves alone, that is, words only, but have fruit also, which is love, are borne by the dove to the ark, and come unto unity. Such children ought therefore to be around the Lord's table, like olive-branches. A complete Vine it is, a great bliss: who would now refuse to be there? When thou seest any blasphemer have a wife, children, grandchildren, and thyself perchance without them, envy them not; discern that the promise hath been fulfilled in thee also, but spiritually. Perchance thou art not in His members? If thou art not there, lament that thou art neither here nor there. But if thou be there, be secure; for although thy reward be there and not here, it is a more fruitful one there than here.

14. Ver. 4. If therefore we have, why have we? Because we fear the Lord. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. He is the man, who

is also the men; and the men are one man; because many are one, because Christ is One.

15. Ver. 5, 6. The Lord from out of Sion bless thee. For thou hadst begun to heed the words, Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord: already perchance thine eyes were ranging through those who fear not the Lord, and saw there fruitful wives, children in abundance around their father's table: I know not whither thou wast going: The Lord from out of Sion bless thee. Seek not those blessings which are not out of Sion. Hath not the Lord blessed such, my brethren? This is the Lord's blessing: or if it be not from the Lord, who will marry a wife, if the Lord be unwilling? who can be in sound health, if the Lord deny him? or who can be rich, if the Lord refuse? He giveth these things: but seest thou not that He hath also given them to cattle? This blessing is not therefore from Sion. The Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem. For these good things are not those of Jerusalem. Dost thou wish to see that they are not the good things of Jerusalem? Even to the birds was it said, Be fruitful and multiply. Dost thou wish to hold as a great blessing what was given unto birds? Who can be ignorant, that it was given indeed by the voice of God? But use these goods, if thou receive them; and rather think how thou mayest nourish those who have been born, than that others may be born. For it is not happiness to have children, but to have good ones. Labour in the task of nourishing them, if they be born; but if they be not born, give thanks unto God. Perchance thou wilt be less anxious, and yet thou hast not remained barren in that Mother. Perhaps through thee are spiritually born of that Mother, they who are as olive branches around the Lord's table. May the Lord therefore console thee, that thou mayest see the goods of Jerusalem. For these goods indeed are. Why are they? Because they are everlasting. Why are they? Because the King is there, I am That I am. But these goods are and are not: for they stand not; they slip away, they flow. Thy children are infants: thou dost caress the infants: the infants caress thee: do they abide thus? But thou wishest they may grow, thou wishest that their age may increase. But consider that when one age cometh, another dieth. When boyhood cometh, infancy dieth; when youth cometh, boyhood dieth: when manhood cometh, youth dieth; when old age cometh, manhood dieth: when death cometh, all age dieth. As many successions of

ages as thou wishest for, so many deaths of ages dost thou wish for. These things therefore are not. Finally, are children born unto thee to share life with thee on earth, or rather to shut thee out and to succeed thee? Rejoicest thou in those born to exclude thee? Boys when born speak somewhat like this to their parents: "Now then, begin to think of removing hence, let us too play our parts on the stage." For the whole life of temptation in the human race is a stage play; for it is said, Every man living is altogether vanity. Nevertheless, if we rejoice in children who will succeed us; how much must we rejoice in children with whom we shall remain, and in that Father for Whom we are born, Who will not die, but that we may evermore live with Him? These are the good things of Jerusalem: for they are. The Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem. For thou seest as one blind those goods, which thou heedest. Mayest thou see: but those goods which are seen by the heart. And how long shall I see the good things of Jerusalem? All thy life long. If thy life be for ever, thou wilt see the good things of Jerusalem for evermore. But if, my brethren, these goods are, yet thou seest them not all the days of thy life: for thou diest not, when thou goest forth from the body. Thy life continueth: thy body dieth, but the life of the spirit continueth. The eyes see not, for he who saw through the eyes hath departed. Wheresoever he be, who saw through the eyes, he seeth something. For the rich man, who when on earth was clothed with purple and fine linen, was not dead; if he was dead, he would not have been tormented in hell. It would have been desirable for him to die, but he lived in hell to his hurt. For he was tormented, and saw not those goods which he had left on earth: behold, such was his life, and he saw not those goods. Do thou therefore desire such goods as thou mayest see all thy life long, that is, that thou mayest live with these goods for evermore.

16. Consider therefore, brethren, what those goods are. Can these be called goods? Is it gold; is it silver; is it a pleasant estate; is it walls of marble; is it fretted ceilings? God forbid! The poor have these goods more abundantly than the rich in this life: for it is more to a poor man to see the starry heaven, than to a rich man to see a gilded ceiling. What then, brethren, is that good, whereby we are inflamed, for which we sigh, whereby we are kindled, for the attainment of which good we endure so many toils, as ye

have heard when the Apostle was read, that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution? For it doth not follow that, because the devil rageth not through kings, Christians do not at this hour suffer persecution. If the devil be dead, our persecutions are dead; but if he our adversary liveth, whence doth he not suggest temptations? Whence doth he not rage? whence doth he not procure threats or offences? O if thou wouldest begin to live godly, thou wilt see that every one who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. For the sake of what, then, do we suffer so great persecutions? For, if in this life only, saith the Apostle, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. For what reason were the Martyrs condemned to beasts? What is that good? Can it be declared? by what means, or what tongue can tell it? or what ears can hear it? That indeed, Neither ear hath heard, nor hath it entered into man's heart: only let us love, only let us grow in grace: ye see, then, that battles are not wanting, and that we fight with our lusts. We fight outwardly with unbelieving and disobedient men; we fight inwardly with carnal suggestions and perturbations: we every where as yet fight, because the corruptible body weigheth down the soul; we fight as yet, since if the spirit be life, yet is the body dead through sin. But what will be the issue? But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. When therefore our mortal members shall have been quickened, nothing will then resist our spirit. There will be no hunger, no thirst, because these arise from the corruption of the body. Thou refreshest thyself, because something departeth from thee. The lusts of carnal delights fight against us. We carry with us death in the infirmity of the body: but when death itself shall have been changed into that unchangeableness, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,—what will then be said unto death? O death, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy sting? Perchance, he dieth, and it will be said, do any enemies remain? No; death is the last enemy. When this shall have been destroyed, immortality will succeed. If there shall be no enemy, as 'the last' will death be destroyed. Our good, for which we sigh, will be peace. Behold, brethren, peace is called a good, a great good. Ye were seeking what was called a good: whether it were gold, or silver, or an estate, or raiment? It is peace: not such a peace as the unstable, treacherous,

mutable, uncertain peace which prevails among men; nor such peace as the individual hath with himself. For I have said that a man contendeth also with himself; until he subdue all his lusts, he still fighteth. What sort of peace then is this? One that the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard of. What sort of peace? One from Jerusalem, for Jerusalem is interpreted, A vision of Peace. Thus then the Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem, and that, all thy life long—and mayest thou see, not only thy children, but, thy children's children. What meaneth, Thy children? Thy works which thou here dost. Who are thy children's children? The fruits of thy works. Thou givest alms: these are thy children: for the sake of thine alms thou receivest everlasting life, these are thy children's children. Mayest thou see thy children's children; and there shall be peace upon Israel, the last words of the Psalm. This peace is preached unto you by us: it is loved by us, we wish that it may be loved by you. Unto this peace they come who have been here also peacemakers. They who are peacemakers there, are here such also; who stand around the Lord's table like olive branches, so that the tree is not barren as was that fig-tree, where the Lord when hungry found no fruit. Ye see what happened unto it. It had leaves only, it had not fruit: thus are they who have words, and have not deeds. The Lord when He came unto it hungry found not there what to eat; for the Lord hungereth for faith and for good works on our part. Let us feed Him by living well, and He will feed us for evermore by giving us everlasting life.

PSALM 129

Exposition

A Sermon to the people.

1. The Psalm which we have sung is short: but as it is written in the Gospel of Zacchæus that he was little of stature, but mighty in works; as it is written of that widow who cast two mites into the treasury, little was the money, but great was her charity; thus also this Psalm, if thou count the words, is short; if thou weigh the sentiments, is great. It will not therefore detain us long unto weariness. Wherefore? Let your wisdom attend, and let Christian zeal aid you: let the word of God sound to you whether willing or unwilling, in season or out of season. It hath found itself a place, it hath found hearts where it may rest, it hath found a soil where it may blossom and bear fruit. For it is clear that there are many evil and godless men whom the Church beareth even unto the end; and there are they to whom God's Word is superfluous: and it either falleth among them, as the seed by the way-side is trodden under foot, and gathered up by the birds; or as the seed on rocky places, where it hath not much earth, and withereth under the hot sun as soon as the blade is above ground, because it hath no root; or as the seed that falleth among thorns, which although it sprout and endeavour to rise into the air, is stifled by the multitude of thorns. Such are they who trample on the Word of God as on the seed on the way-side, or they who rejoice for an hour, and when tribulation cometh, wither, as by the sun's heat; or they who stifle what had begun to germinate in them, by the anxieties and cares of this world, as it were by the thorns of avarice. But there is also good earth, where when the seed falleth it beareth fruit, some thirty-fold, other sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold; whether little or much, all shall be in the barn. Such therefore are these: and for their sakes we speak. On account of these the Scripture speaketh, on account of these the Gospel is not silent. But let those too hear, if haply they may be one thing to-day,

another to-morrow: if haply they may be changed by hearing, or plough up the way, or clear away the stones, or pluck up the thorns. Let the Spirit of God speak, let It speak to us, let It sing to us; whether we wish or wish not to dance, let It sing. For as he who danceth, moveth his limbs to the time; so they who dance according to the commandment of God, in their works obey the sound. What therefore saith the Lord in the Gospel to those who refused to do this? We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. Let Him therefore sing; we trust in God's mercy, for there will be those by whom He consoleth us. For they who are obstinate, continuing in wickedness, although they hear the Word of God, by their offences daily disturb the Church. Of such this Psalm speaketh; for thus it commenceth;

2. Ver. 1–3. Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. The Church speaketh of those whom She endureth: and as if it were asked, “Is it now?” The Church is of ancient birth: since saints have been so called, the Church hath been on earth. At one time the Church was in Abel only, and he was fought against by his wicked and lost brother Cain. At one time the Church was in Enoch alone: and he was translated from the unrighteous. At one time the Church was in the house of Noah alone, and endured all who perished by the flood, and the ark alone swam upon the waves, and escaped to shore. At one time the Church was in Abraham alone, and we know what he endured from the wicked. The Church was in his brother's son, Lot, alone, and in his house, in Sodom, and he endured the iniquities and perversities of Sodom, until God freed him from amidst them. The Church also began to exist in the people of Israel: She endured Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The number of the saints began to be also in the Church, that is, in the people of Israel; Moses and the rest of the saints endured the wicked Jews, the people of Israel. We come unto our Lord Jesus Christ: the Gospel was preached, as it was said in the Psalms: I have preached and have spoken: they have been multiplied above number. What meaneth, above number? Not only have they believed who belong to the number of the saints, but some have entered above number: many righteous, but also more unrighteous; and the righteous have endured the unrighteous. When? In the Church. Is it now only, since he counteth, since he mentioneth them? For this reason, lest the Church wonder now, or lest any one wonder in the

Church, who wisheth to be a good member of the Church, let him hear the Church herself his Mother saying to him, Marvel not at these things, my son: Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up.

3. There is great feeling in this commencement of the Psalm: Many a time have they vexed me from my youth up. She now seemeth to be speaking of herself: for she seemed not to have commenced herself, but to have answered. But to whom hath she replied? To them that think and say, How great evils do we endure, how great are the scandals that every day thicken, as the wicked enter into the Church, and we have to endure them? But let the Church reply through some, that is, through the voice of the stronger, let her reply to the complaints of the weak, and let the stable confirm the unstable, and the fullgrown the infant, and let the Church say, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. Now may Israel say, (ver. 2.) Many a time have they vexed me from my youth up. Let the Church say this: let her not fear it. For what is the meaning of this addition, From my youth up, after the words, Many a time have they fought against me? At present the old age of the Church is assailed: but let her not fear: let her say, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. Hath she then failed to arrive at old age, because they have not ceased to fight against her from her youth up? have they been able to blot her out? Now may Israel say; and let Israel comfort herself, let the Church console herself with past examples, and say, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up.

4. Why have they fought against me? For they could not prevail against me. (Ver. 3.) Upon my back have sinners built; they have done their iniquity afar off. Why have they fought against me? Because they could not prevail upon me. What is this? They could not build upon me. I consented not with them unto sin. For every wicked man persecuteth the good on this account, because the good man consenteth not with him to evil. Suppose he do some evil, and the Bishop censure him not, the Bishop is a good man: suppose the Bishop censure him, the Bishop is a bad man. Suppose he carry off any thing, let the man robbed be silent, he is a good man: let him only speak and rebuke, even though he doth not reclaim his goods, he is every thing bad. He is bad then who blameth the robber, and he is good who robbeth! Let

him go on, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. On the contrary the Apostle saith, Evil communications corrupt good manners. Be ye sober, righteous, and sin not. The word soundeth, the discourse soundeth that gainsayeth lust: but he, the lover of his own lust, and the enemy of the discourse that gainsayeth his mistress, is hostile, and hateth the word of God. Lust is become his beloved, God his enemy. For God opposeth avarice, and wisheth nothing to be possessed by avarice. Let Me be possessed, He saith. Why wishest thou to be possessed by avarice? It commandeth hard things, I command light things: its load is heavy, My burden is light; its yoke is hard, Mine is gentle. Wish not to be possessed by avarice. Avarice commands thee to cross the sea, and thou obeyest: it commands thee to trust thyself to the winds and waves; I command thee to give before thy door out of what thou hast to the poor: thou art slothful in doing a good work before thy door, and thou art strenuous to pass over the sea. Because avarice commands, thou obeyest: because God commands, thou hatest. And why? When he beginneth to hate, he beginneth to wish to accuse those from whom he heareth good precepts, and to wish to seek out charges against the servants of God through his suspicions. Do not those who tell us these things do such things, themselves? These things, whether done or undone, are said to be done: and what are done well, are said to be done ill: and what we endure, are ascribed to us as a fault. What do we answer? Heed not me: heed this word: it speaketh to thee through any channel; thou art its enemy. Agree with thine adversary, while thou art with him in the way: thou hast made the word of God thine adversary. Heed not that such an one speaketh to thee: it is a wicked man through whom It speaketh to thee; but the word of God, that speaketh to thee, is not wicked. Accuse God: accuse Him, if thou canst!

5. Do ye believe, brethren, that they of whom it is said, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up, reached such a pitch as even not to hesitate to accuse God? Thou accusest a man of avarice, and he accuseth God on the ground that He made gold. Be not covetous. And God, thou repliest, should not make gold. This now remaineth, because thou canst not restrain thine evil deeds, thou accusest the good works of God: the Creator and Architect of the world displeaseth thee. He ought not to make the sun either; for many contend concerning the lights of their windows, and drag

each other before courts of law. O if we could restrain our vices! for all things are good, because a good God made all things: and His works praise Him, when their goodness is considered by him who hath the spirit of considering them, the spirit of piety and wisdom. God is on every side praised by His works. How do His works praise Him through the mouth of the Three Children? What is passed over? The heavens praise Him, the Angels praise Him, the stars, the sun and moon, praise Him, the days and the nights praise Him, whatever blossoms on earth praises Him, whatever swims upon the sea praises Him, whatever flies in the air praises Him, all the mountains and hills praise Him, the cold and the heat praise Him; and all things else that God hath made, ye have heard, praise God: heard ye there that avarice praiseth God, that luxury praiseth God? These things praise Him not, for He made them not. There, men praise God: God is man's creator. Avarice is the work of a wicked man: man himself is the work of God. And what doth God wish? To kill in thee what thou hast thyself made, and to save what He hath Himself made.

6. Lend not money at interest. Thou accusest Scripture which saith, He that hath not given his money upon usury. I wrote not this: it went not forth first from my mouth: hear God. He replieth: let not the clergy lend upon usury. Perchance he who speaketh to thee, lendeth not at interest: but if he do so lend; suppose that he doth so lend; doth He Who speaketh through him lend at interest? If he doth what he enjoineth thee, and thou dost it not; thou wilt go into the flame, he into the kingdom. If he doth not what he enjoineth thee, and equally with thee doth evil deeds, and preaches duties which he doth not; ye will both equally go into the flames. The hay will burn; but the word of the Lord abideth for evermore. Doth the word which hath spoken to thee through him burn? Either Moses speaketh to thee, that is, a good and righteous servant of God; or a Pharisee sitting in the seat of Moses. Ye have heard concerning these too: all whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works. Thou hast no means whereby to excuse thyself, when the word of God speaketh unto thee. Because thou couldest not slay the word of God, thou seekest to accuse those through whom the word of God speaketh unto thee. Seek as far as thou wilt, speak as far as thou wilt, blaspheme as far as thou wilt. Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up, now may Israel say,

many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. Usurers even dare to say: I have no other means of livelihood. This a robber might also say, when caught in a hollow way; this a housebreaker might say, caught about another man's wall; this a pander might tell me, in the act of buying girls for prostitution; this an enchanter uttering curses, and selling his iniquity, might say: whatsoever of this sort we should endeavour to prohibit, all might answer that they had no other means of life, and that they lived on this resource; as if this very thing were not a chief cause for punishment in them, that they chose a wicked trade to support their life by, and that they choose to feed themselves by means offensive to Him by Whom all are fed.

7. But when thou hast cried and spoken thus, they answer, If it be thus, we come not hither; if it be thus, we enter not into the Church. Let them come, let them enter, let them hear. Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. But they could not prevail against me. upon my back have sinners built; that is, they could not prevail upon me to consent; they have given me somewhat to bear. How admirably is it said, how excellently hath he signified this: They could not prevail against me; upon my back have the sinners built. They endeavour to prevail with us, first to consent unto them to do evil deeds: if we consent not, suffer us, they say. Since therefore thou hast not prevailed against me, mount upon my back: I can carry thee until the end come: for thus it is commanded me, to bring forth fruit with patience. I chasten thee not, I suffer thee: or perchance, when I suffer thee, thou chastenest thyself. If thou chastenest not thyself unto the end, I suffer thee unto the end; and unto the end thou shalt be upon my back, even to the time. Wilt thou ever be upon my back? No: one will come who will shake thee off: harvest season will come, the end of the world will come; God will send in the reapers. The reapers are the angels: they separate the wicked from the midst of the righteous, as the tares from the wheat; they will store the corn in the barn, but the chaff they will burn with unquenchable fire. I have carried as far as I could, now with joy do I pass into the Lord's barn, and securely sing, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up.

8. What could they do unto me, in that they have fought against me from my youth up? They have exercised me, they have not crushed me. They

have been to me what fire is to gold, not what fire is to hay. For fire when it approacheth gold, removeth dross: when it approacheth hay, turneth it into ashes. For they could not prevail against me; for I consented not, for they have not made me what they are themselves. The sinners have built upon my back; they have made their iniquity afar off. They have given me what to endure, and have not prevailed upon me to consent to them. Their injustice therefore is afar from me. The evil are mingled with the good, not only in the world, but within the Church herself the evil are mingled with the good. Ye know, and ye have proved this: and ye will still further prove it, if ye are good. For when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. There seem to be none evil in the Church, save unto the good man. Ye know therefore that they are mingled, and always and every where Scripture saith they shall not be separated, except in the end. Thus, as they are mingled, they are afar from one another. Lest then any man should suppose, that because evil are mingled among good men, therefore wickedness is near unto righteousness, he saith, They could not prevail against me; that is, they said, and wickedly said, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. Evil communications corrupted not good manners: in that which I heard from God, I have not yielded to the discourses of men. Sinners have given me what to carry, not what I must mingle with, and their iniquity hath been made afar from me. For what is so near, as two men in one Church? what is so distant, as iniquity from righteousness? For where there is consent there is neighbourhood. Two men are handcuffed together, and brought before a judge; one is a robber, one is merely in bonds: the one wicked, the other innocent, bound with one chain, and far from one another. How far are they from one another? As far as wickedness is from innocence. Behold these are far from one another. One robber perpetrates his crimes in Spain, his next neighbour is the robber who doth the same in Africa. How near? As near as crime and crime are joined, as near as robbery is to robbery. Let no man fear therefore evil men mingled with him in the body. Let him be afar from them in heart, and he beareth safely what he feareth not: They have made their iniquity afar off.

9. What is the result? They who reign unjustly flourish, and, to use the vulgar phrase, the unrighteous thunder, and are puffed up unto vain airs and calumnies. What then? Will this be alway? No. Hear what followeth: (ver.

4.) The righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners. Listen, my beloved. The righteous Lord, he saith, shall hew the necks of the sinners. Who would not tremble? For who hath not sinned? The righteous Lord will hew the necks of the sinners. In all that hear, there entereth a trembling of heart, if they believe God's Scripture. For if men beat their breasts without cause, they lie in that they beat their breasts; if they be righteous, even in that they lie unto God, they become sinners. If therefore they truly beat their breasts, they are sinners. And which of us doth not beat his breast? And which of us doth not fix his eyes upon the earth, like the Publican, and say, Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner? If therefore all are sinners, and none is found without sin; all must fear the sword that hangs above their neck, because the righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners. I do not imagine, my brethren, of all sinners; but in the member which He striketh, He marks what sinners He striketh. For it is not said, The righteous Lord will hew the hands of the sinners; or their feet; but because proud sinners were meant to be understood, and all proud men carry lofty necks, and not only do evil deeds, but even refuse to acknowledge them to be such, and when they are rebuked, justify themselves: (Behold thou hast done this; at least acknowledge thine act: God hateth a sinner, do thou also hate one; join thyself unto God: persecute with Him thy sin. No, he replieth: I have done well, God hath done ill. What is this? I, he saith, have done no evil; for Saturn did this, Mars did it, Venus did it; I have done nothing, the stars have done it. Thou justifiest thyself, thou accusest God Who made the stars, Who adorned the heaven:) therefore since thou justifiest thy sin, and art proud against God, because thou placest thyself out of fault, and God in fault, and hast only raised thy neck, and hast run against God, as it is written in Job, (he was speaking of an ungodly sinner,) he runneth against God, even upon his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers; and he here nameth the neck, because it is thus thou exaltest thyself, and dost not fix thine eyes upon the ground, and beat thy breast, and say, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, but boastest thyself in thy deserts, and wishest, saith God, to plead with Me, to enter into judgment with Me; while thou shouldest in thy guilty state atone unto God, and cry unto Him, as it is cried in another Psalm, If Thou, Lord, art extreme to mark what is amiss, who may abide it? shouldest cry unto Him, as it is cried in another Psalm, I said, Lord, be merciful unto me, for I have sinned against Thee: since thou dost not choose to say this,

but justifiest thy deeds against the Word of God; what followeth in Scripture cometh upon thee: the righteous Lord shall hew the necks of sinners.

10. Ver. 5. Let them be confounded and turned backward, as many as have evil will at Sion. They who hate Sion, hate the Church: Sion is the Church. And they who hypocritically enter into the Church, hate the Church. They who refuse to keep the Word of God, hate the Church: Upon my back have they built: what will the Church do, save endure the burden even unto the end?

11. Ver. 6, 7. But what saith he of them? The next words are, Let them be even as the grass of the house tops: that withereth before it be plucked up. The grass of the house tops is that which groweth on house tops, on a tiled roof: it is seen on high, and hath not a root. How much better would it be if it grew lower, and how much more joyfully would it bloom? As it is, it riseth higher to a quicker withering. It hath not yet been plucked up, yet hath it withered: not yet have they received sentence from the judgment of God, and already they have not the sap of bloom. Observe their works, and see that they have withered. But they live, and are here: not as yet therefore have they been plucked up. They have withered, but have not as yet been plucked up: they have become as the grass of the house tops: which withereth afore it be plucked up.

12. But the reapers will come, but they fill not their sheaves from these. For the reapers will come, and will gather the wheat into the barn, and will bind the tares together, and cast them into the fire. Thus also is the grass of the house tops cleared off, and whatever is plucked from it, is thrown into the fire; because it had withered even before it was plucked up. The reaper filleth not his hands thence. His next words are, (ver. 7.) Whereof the reaper filleth not his hand; neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom. And, the reapers are the angels, the Lord saith.

13. Ver. 8. So that they who go by say not so much as, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we have blessed you in the name of the Lord. For ye know, brethren, when men pass by others at work, it is customary to address them, The blessing of the Lord be upon you. And this was especially the

custom in the Jewish nation. No one passed by and saw any one doing any work in the field, or in the vineyard, or in harvest, or any thing of the sort; it was not lawful to pass by without a blessing. They who bind the sheaves, are different from the passers by on the way. They who gather the sheaves, do not fill their hands with them; because the grass of the house tops is not gathered for the barn. Who are they who gather together the sheaves? The reapers. Who are the reapers? The Lord hath said, The reapers are the angels. Who are the passers by? They who have already passed hence to their country through this road, that is, through this life: the Apostles were passers by in this life, the Prophets were passers by. Whom did the Prophets and Apostles bless? Those in whom they saw the root of charity. But those whom they found lifted on high on their house tops, and proud in the bosses of their bucklers, they declared against these what they were doomed to become, but they gave them no blessing. Ye therefore who read in the Scriptures, find all those wicked men whom the Church beareth, who are declared cursed, pertain unto Antichrist, pertain unto the devil, pertain to the chaff, pertain to the tares. Innumerable things are said through figures of them: for not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Ye find no passage of Scripture which speaketh well of them, because they who passed by on the way blessed them not. The Prophets who passed by said all evil things of them. Behold, he also whom we hold in our hand, David, passed along the way; ye have heard what he said of them: The righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners. Let them be confounded, and turned backward, as many as have evil will at Sion. Let them be even as the grass of the house tops, which withereth afore it be plucked up; whereof the mower filleth not his hand, neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom. Thus he hath spoken of them. David then, when he passed by, blessed not these, and even through him was fulfilled what he himself said, So that they who go by say not so much as, We have blessed you in the name of the Lord. These men, when they passed by, whether Prophets, or Patriarchs, or Apostles, whoever passed by, if we live well, brethren, have blessed us in the name of the Lord. When, thou askest, did Paul bless me? When did Peter bless me? Observe in the Scriptures, see if thou livest well, and see that thou hast therein been pronounced blessed. They have blessed all who live well. And how have they blessed? In the name of the Lord; not in their own names, as heretics.

For they who say, What we give, this is holy; wish to bless in their own name, not in the name of the Lord. But they who say, None save God sanctifieth, nor is any man good save by the gift of God; they bless in the name of the Lord, not in their own name: because they are the friends of the bridegroom, they refuse to be adulterers of the bride.

PSALM 130

Exposition

A Sermon to the People.

1. Ver. 1–3. Since we presume that ye are watchful not only with the eyes of the body, but also with the heart, we must sing with understanding: Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. For this is the voice of one ascending, belonging to the ‘Song of Degrees.’ Each of us ought therefore to see in what deep he is, out of which he crieth unto the Lord. Jonas cried from the deep; from the whale’s belly. He was not only beneath the waves, but also in the entrails of the beast; nevertheless, those waves and that body prevented not his prayer from reaching God, and the beast’s belly could not contain the voice of his prayer. It penetrated all things, it burst through all things, it reached the ears of God: if indeed we ought to say that, bursting through all things, it reached the ears of God, since the ears of God were in the heart of him who prayed. For where hath not he God present, whose voice is faithful? Nevertheless, we also ought to understand from what deep we cry unto the Lord. For this mortal life is our deep. Whoever hath understood himself to be in the deep, crieth out, groaneth, sigheth, until he be delivered from the deep, and come unto Him Who sitteth above all the deeps and above Cherubim, above all things He hath created, not only bodily, but also spiritual things; until the soul come unto Him, until His own image be liberated by Him, that image which is man, which in this deep tossed by constant billows, hath thereby been worn away; and except it be renewed and repaired by God, Who impressed it when He formed man, (man could be equal to his own fall, he is not equal to his own rising again,) he is always in the deep; unless, as I have said, he be freed, he is ever in the deep. But when he crieth from the deep, he riseth from the deep, and his very cry suffereth him not to be long at the bottom. For they are very deep in the deep, who do not even cry from the deep. The

Scripture saith, When the wicked hath reached the depth of evils, he despiseth. Now consider, brethren, what sort of deep that is, where God is despised. When each man seeth himself overwhelmed with daily sins, pressed down by heaps and weights, so to speak, of iniquities: if it be said unto him, Pray unto God, he laughs. In what manner? He first saith, If crimes were displeasing unto God, should I live? If God regarded human affairs, considering the great crimes which I have committed, should I not only live, but be prosperous? For this is wont to happen to those, who are far in the deep, and are prosperous in their iniquities: and they are the more plunged in the deep, in proportion as they seem to be more happy; for a deceitful happiness is itself a greater unhappiness. Then men are also wont to say this: Since I have now committed many crimes, and condemnation is hanging over me, I lose by foregoing the opportunity of doing whatever I can; and, From henceforth I am lost, why do I not do whatever I have the power to do? What is the usual language of desperate robbers? The judge will put me to the same death for ten murders as for five, as for one: why then do I not take advantage of every fresh opportunity? This is, The wicked, when he hath reached the depth of evil deeds, despiseth. But our Lord Jesus Christ, Who despised not even our deeps, Who hath deigned to descend to this life, promising remission of all sins; He raised man even from the deep, that he might cry from the deep beneath the weight of his sins, and that the sinner's voice might reach unto God; crying whence, save from the depth of evils?

2. See also that the voice of the sinner crieth from the deep: Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. Whence doth he cry? From the deep. Who is it then who crieth? A sinner. And with what hope doth he cry? Because He who came to absolve from sins, gave hope even to the sinner down in the deep. What therefore followeth after these words: If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? So, he hath disclosed from what deep he cried out. For he crieth beneath the weights and billows of his iniquities. He hath looked round about himself, he hath looked round upon his own life; he hath seen it every where covered with excesses and crimes: wherever he looketh round, he findeth nothing good in himself, none of the calmness of righteousness can meet his

gaze. And when he seeth so many and so great sins, and such troops of his own crimes, he crieth out, as if terror-struck, If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? He said not, I may not abide it: but, who may abide it? For he saw that nigh the whole of human life on every side was ever bayed at by its sins, that all consciences were accused by their thoughts, that a clean heart trusting in its own righteousness could not be found. If therefore a clean heart cannot be found, that can trust in its own righteousness; let the heart of all trust in the mercy of God, and say, If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, who, O Lord, may abide it?

3. Ver. 4–6. But wherefore is there hope? For there is propitiation with Thee. And what is this propitiation, except sacrifice? And what is sacrifice, save that which hath been offered for us? The pouring forth of innocent blood blotted out all the sins of the guilty: so great a price paid down redeemed all captives from the hand of the enemy who captured them. With Thee, then, there is propitiation. For if there were not mercy with Thee, if Thou chocest to be Judge only, and didst refuse to be merciful, Thou wouldest mark all our iniquities, and search after them. Who could abide this? Who could stand before Thee, and say, I am innocent? Who could stand in Thy judgment? There is therefore one hope: For with Thee there is propitiation: for the sake of Thy law have I borne Thee, O Lord. What law? That which made men guilty. For a law holy, just, and good, was given to the Jews; but its effect was to make them guilty. A law was not given that could give life, but which might shew his sins to the sinner. For the sinner had forgotten himself, and saw not himself; the law was given him, that he might see himself. The law made him guilty, the Lawgiver freed him: for the Lawgiver is the Supreme Power. A law was given that should terrify and bind unto guiltiness; and the law doth not release from sins, but sheweth sins, and perchance placed beneath this law, he observeth in the deep how great transgressions he hath been guilty of against the law, and crieth out thus, If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? There is therefore a law of the mercy of God, a law of the propitiation of God. The one was a law of fear, the other is a law of love. The law of love giveth forgiveness to sins, blotteth out the past, warneth concerning the future; forsaketh not its companion by the way,

becometh a companion to him whom it leadeth on the way. But it is needful to agree with the adversary, whilst thou art with him in the way. For the Word of God is thine adversary, as long as thou dost not agree with it. But thou agreest, when it has begun to be thy delight to do what God's Word commandeth. Then he who was thine adversary becometh thy friend: so, when the way is finished, there will be none to deliver thee to the Judge. Therefore, For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord, because thou hast condescended to bring in a law of mercy, to forgive me all my sins, to give me for the future warnings that I may not offend: if I perchance have slipped after these warnings, Thou hast given me a remedy, whereby I may pray Thee, in these words, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. Thou hast decreed this law for me, that, as I forgive, so I may be forgiven. For the sake, therefore, of this law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. I have waited until Thou mayest come and free me from all need, for in my very need Thou hast not forsaken the law of mercy.

4. Hear what law he speaketh of, if thou hast not yet understood that he is now speaking of the law of love; hear the Apostle; Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Who bear one another's burdens, save they who have love? They who have not love, are offensive to one another; but they who have love, bear with one another. Some one hath injured thee, he asketh thy pardon: if thou forgive him not, thou bearest not thy brother's burden; if thou dost forgive, thou bearest the weak: and if perchance thou hast fallen into any infirmity, as a man, he also should bear with thee, as thou didst with him. Hear what went before: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. And lest perchance, since he had warned the spiritual, they might seem to themselves secure, he at once added, Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. He then subjoins what I have just quoted, Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ: whence saith David, For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. Stags are said, when they cross straits to the nearest islands, for the sake of pasture, to lay their heads one upon the other; but one, who goes before, carries his head alone, and doth not lay it upon another: but when he himself also faints, he retreats from his position in front and retires behind, that he also

may rest upon another: and thus all bear their own burdens, and reach what they desire; and suffer not shipwreck, because love is as a ship unto them. Love therefore beareth burdens: but let it not fear lest it be overwhelmed by such burdens: let it heed, lest each man be overpowered by his own sins. For when thou bearest thy brother's infirmity, his sins do not burthen thee. Certainly if thou consent, then thine own sins overwhelm thee, not another's. For every man who hath consented to a sinner, is oppressed by another's sins, not his own. For consent to another's sin becometh thine own sin; and there is no room for thee to complain that another's sins weigh thee down. For it is said unto thee, Sins do weigh thee down, but thine own. When thou sawest a thief, thou didst run with him. What is this? With thy feet thou didst walk to a theft; yea, thou didst join thyself in mind to the thief: what was his deed alone, has become thine too: because it pleased thee. But if it displeased thee, and thou didst pray for him, and when entreated freely forgavest, so that thou mayest with a free countenance say in thy prayers, which the heavenly Counsellor hath dictated to thee, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; thou hast learnt to bear thy brother's burdens: so that another also may bear any there may be of thine, and the words of the Apostle may be realised in you, Bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Thus thou securely singest the words we have just read, For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord.

5. But he who keepeth not this law, neither doth he wait for the Lord; nor, if he should wish to wait for Him, is there a reason why he should wait; he waiteth fruitlessly. For the Lord will come, and will discover thy sins. But that thou hast lived in perfect righteousness,—He will not perhaps discover murders, for these are heavy and extreme offences; He will not discover adultery, He will not discover thefts, He will not discover robbery, He will not discover enchantments, He will not discover idolatry; none of these will He perchance discover. Will He therefore discover nothing? Hear the words of the Gospel: He who saith to his brother, Thou fool. Who abstaineth from these most minute sins of the tongue? But perhaps thou sayest, They are slight. He shall be in danger, saith our Lord, of hell fire. If it seemed but a slight or no very great thing to thee to say unto thy brother, Thou fool, at least let the fire of hell seem great to thee; if thou didst little regard the sin,

at least be deterred by the magnitude of the punishment. But thou sayest, These things are slight, they are trivial: this life cannot be without them. Heap together slight things, and they constitute a great heap. For grains are minute, and yet they make a lump: and drops are minute, yet they fill rivers, and drag masses with them. He therefore considering how many minute sins man daily committeth, if nothing else, at least by his thoughts and his tongue, heeds how many they be; and if he heed how minute they be, he seeth that by many minute sins a great heap is produced; and, not thinking of his own former sins, but of human weakness itself, now rising saith, Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? I can avoid murders, adulteries, robberies, perjuries, enchantments, idolatry; can I avoid sins of the tongue also? Can I avoid sins of the heart also? It is written, Sin is the transgression of the law. Who then may abide, if Thou wilt be extreme to mark transgressions? If Thou wilt deal with us as a severe judge, not as a merciful father, who shall stand before Thine eyes? But with Thee there is propitiation: for the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. What is the nature of this law? Bear each other's burdens, and so shall ye fulfil the law of Christ. Who bear each other's burdens? They who say faithfully, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

6. Ver. 6. My soul hath waited for Thy word. No man waiteth, save he who hath not as yet received what hath been promised; for what doth he, who hath already received, wait for? We have received remission of sins; but the kingdom of heaven is promised us; our debts have been blotted out; but our reward is still to come; we have received pardon, but we hold not as yet everlasting life. But He Who gave pardon, Himself promised also everlasting life. If it were our own word, we ought to fear: because it is the word of God, it deceiveth not. We therefore trust (ver. 5.) without fear on the word of Him Who cannot deceive. My soul hath trusted in the Lord, from the morning watch even unto night. What is that he saith? hath he hoped in the Lord for one day, and hath all his hope terminated? From the morning watch even unto night hath my soul trusted in the Lord. This morning watch is the end of night; hence my soul hath trusted in the Lord

even unto night. We must therefore understand it so that we may not suppose we are to trust in the Lord for one day only. What do you conceive to be the sense, then, brethren? The words, My soul hath trusted in the Lord from the morning watch unto night, mean this: that the Lord, through Whom our sins have been remitted, arose from the dead at the morning watch, so that we may hope that what went before in the Lord will take place in us. For our sins have been already forgiven: but we have not yet risen again: if we have not risen again, not as yet hath that taken place in us which went before in our Head. What went before in our Head? Because the flesh of that Head rose again; did the Spirit of that Head die? What had died in Him, rose again. Now He arose on the third day; and the Lord as it were thus speaketh to us: What ye have seen in Me, hope for in yourselves; that is, because I have risen from the dead, ye also shall rise again.

7. But there are who say, Behold, the Lord hath risen again; but must I hope on that account that I also may rise again? Certainly, on that account: for the Lord rose again in that which He assumed from thee. For He would not rise again, save He had died; and He could not have died, except He bore the flesh. What did the Lord assume from thee? The flesh. What was He that came Himself? The Word of God, Who was before all things, through Whom all things were made. But that He might receive something from thee, The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. He received from thee, what He might offer for thee; as the priest receiveth from thee, what he may offer for thee, when thou wishest to appease God for thy sins. It hath already been done, it hath been done thus. Our Priest received from us what He might offer for us: for He received flesh from us, in the flesh itself He was made a victim, He was made a holocaust, He was made a sacrifice. In the Passion He was made a sacrifice; in the Resurrection He renewed that which was slain, and offered it as His first-fruits unto God, and saith unto thee, All that is thine is now consecrated: since such first-fruits have been offered unto God from thee; hope therefore that that will take place in thyself which went before in thy first-fruits.

8. Since He then rose with the morning watch, our soul began to hope from hence: and how far? Even unto night; until we die; for all our carnal death is as it were sleep. Thou hast begun to hope since the Lord rose again, fail not

to hope until thou goest forth from this life. For if thou hope not even unto night, all that thou hadst hoped is destroyed. For there are men who begin to hope, but persevere not unto night. They begin to suffer some tribulations, they begin to suffer temptations, they see wicked and unrighteous men flourish in temporal prosperity: and since they hoped for such things from the Lord, that they might here be happy, they observe that those who have committed crimes, possess what they desired to possess themselves; and their feet fail, and they cease to hope. Why? Because they began not to hope from the morning watch. They did not begin to hope this thing of the Lord, which went before in the Lord from that morning watch: but they hoped from the Lord, that if they were Christians, they might have a house full of corn, wine, oil, gold, silver: none of them would die prematurely; if any had not children, he would obtain them; if he had not married a wife, he would marry one: not only no woman in his house, but not even his cattle would miscarry; his vats would not turn sour, his vineyard would not suffer from hail storms. He who thus trusted in the Lord, observed that they who worship not the Lord abound with these things, and his feet slipped, and he hoped not until night; because he commenced not to hope from the morning watch.

9. Who then beginneth thus to hope from the morning watch? He who hopeth that from the Lord, which He began to shew from the morning watch in which He rose again. For before no man had arisen to live for ever. Listen, my beloved. The dead were raised again before our Lord's advent: for Elias also raised a dead man, and Elisæus, but they rose again doomed to die again. They whom the Lord Himself raised, rose to die again; whether that youth the widow's son, or the girl of twelve years of age, the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, or Lazarus: they were raised by different ways, but all doomed to die; once they were born, but twice they died. No man had risen again never to die, except the Lord. But when did the Lord rise again never to die? From the morning watch. Do thou also hope this from the Lord, that thou wilt rise again, not as Lazarus rose, not as the widow's son and the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue rose, not as they rose whom the Prophets of old raised; but hope that thou wilt rise again as the Lord rose, so that after thy resurrection thou mayest no more

fear that thou wilt die: and thou hast begun to hope from the morning watch.

10. But hope even until night, until this life be finished, until the night of the whole human race come on at the sunset of the world. Why is this, until? Because after this night, there will no longer be hope, but reality. For the hope that is seen is not hope, saith the Apostle: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. If therefore we ought patiently to wait for that we see not, let us hope even unto night, that is, even to the end of this life or of the world. But when this night shall have passed over, that will come at last which we hoped for; and we shall no longer hope, nor shall we be in despair. For we blame men who despair, and sometimes we detest a man, and say, He hath no hope. It is not always an evil not to have hope. When we are in this life, it is an evil not to have hope: for he who hath not hope now, will not have the reality afterwards. We ought therefore to have hope now. But when the reality is come, will there be hope? For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? The Lord our God will come, first to shew to the human race that form wherein He was crucified and rose again, that the godly and the ungodly may see: let those see, and be thankful that they have discovered what they believed before they saw; and let these blush not to have believed what they will see. They who are ashamed will be condemned, and they who are thankful will be crowned. It will be said to them that are confounded, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: it will be said to them that rejoice, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, which when they shall have received, hope will be no longer, because the reality will be theirs. When hope therefore is done, that night will pass by; but until this happen, let our soul hope in the Lord from the morning watch.

11. And he returns to this, From the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. From the morning watch even unto night hath my soul hoped in the Lord. But what hath it hoped? From the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. Not only let Israel hope in the Lord, but from the morning watch let Israel hope. Do I then blame the hope of the world, when it is placed in

the Lord? No; but there is another hope belonging to Israel. Let not Israel hope for riches as his highest good, not for health of body, not for abundance of earthly things: he will indeed have to suffer tribulation here, if it should be his lot to suffer any troubles for the sake of the truth. For the Martyrs lacked not hope in God, and yet they suffered such things as do robbers, as do wicked men: cast before beasts, burnt with fires, stricken with the sword, mangled with instruments of torture, bound in chains, worn to death with prisons, suffering all these evils, did they not hope in the Lord? or was their hope this, that they should be freed from these evils, and enjoy this life? Certainly not: because they hoped from the morning watch. What meaneth this? They considered that morning watch, wherein their Lord arose, and they saw that before He rose again, He Himself also had suffered such things, as they were now suffering, and they despaired not that they also should rise again after such sufferings unto life eternal. Israel hath trusted in the Lord, from the morning even unto night.

12. Ver. 7, 8. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. Admirable! This could not have been better said in its own place, on account of the words, From the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord. Wherefore? Because the Lord rose again from the morning watch; and the body ought to hope for that which went before in the Head. But, lest this thought should be suggested: The Head might rise again, because It was not weighed down with sins, there was no sin in Him; what shall we do? Shall we hope for such a resurrection, as went before in the Lord, whilst we are weighed down by our sins? But see what followeth: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins. Though therefore he was weighed down with his sins, the mercy of God is present to him. For this reason, He went before without sin, that He may blot out the sins of those that follow Him. Trust not in yourselves, but trust from the morning watch. See that your Head hath risen again, and hath ascended into heaven. In Him there was no fault, but through Him your faults will be blotted out; He shall redeem Israel from all his sins. Because Israel could sell himself, and become a bondsman under sin; he cannot redeem himself from his sins. He could redeem, Who could not sell Himself: He Who committed no sin, He is the Redeemer from sin. He will redeem Israel. From what will He redeem him? From this sin,

or from that? From all his sins. Let him not therefore, when about to come before God, fear any of his sins: let him only come with a full heart, and cease to do any more what he before did, and not say, That sin is not forgiven me. For if he saith this, on account of that very sin which he supposeth not to be forgiven him, he converteth not himself, and by doing the rest, not even that which he feared not is forgiven him. As I have committed, he saith, a great crime, and it cannot be forgiven me; I will now do the rest also: for I lose this which I do not do. Fear not: thou art in the deep, scorn not to cry unto God from the depths, and to say, If Thou, O Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? Think of Him, and wait for Him, and endure on account of His law. What law hath He given thee? Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Hope that thou wilt rise again, and that thou wilt be there altogether without sin, since He rose again Who first was without sin. Hope from the morning watch. Say not, I am not worthy on account of my sins. Thou art not worthy: but, with Him there is plenteous redemption: and He will redeem Israel from all his sins.

PSALM 131

Exposition

A Sermon to the Common People.

1. In this Psalm, the humility of one that is a servant of God and faithful is commended unto us, by whose voice it is sung; which is the whole body of Christ. For we have often warned you, beloved, that it ought not to be received as the voice of one man singing, but of all who are in Christ's Body. And since all are in His Body, as it were one man speaketh: and he is one who also is many. For they are many in themselves, but one in Him Who is one. Now this is the very temple of God, of which the Apostle saith, The temple of God is holy, which are ye; that is, all who believe in Christ, and so believe as to love. For this is to believe in Christ, to love Christ: not as the devils believed, but loved not; and therefore, although they believed, said, What have we to do with Thee, Thou Son of God? But let us so believe, that we may believe on Him, loving Him, and may not say, What have we to do with Thee? but may rather say, Unto Thee we belong; Thou hast redeemed us. All therefore who thus believe, are as living stones, whereof the temple of God is built; and as timber that doth not decay, whereof that ark was made, which could not be overwhelmed in the deluge. This is the temple, that is, the men themselves, wherein God is prayed to, and heareth. For whosoever beside the temple of God prayeth God, is not heard unto that peace of the heavenly Jerusalem, although He is heard for certain temporal things, which God hath given to the heathen also. For the devils themselves were heard, that they might enter into the swine. To be heard unto everlasting life is another thing, nor is it granted save unto him who prayeth in the temple of God. Now he prayeth in the temple of God, who prayeth in the peace of the Church, in the unity of Christ's Body; which Body of Christ consisteth of many who believe in the whole world: and therefore he who prayeth in the temple, is heard. For he prayeth in the

spirit and in truth, who prayeth in the peace of the Church; not in that temple, wherein was the figure.

2. For according to a figure our Lord shut out men from the Temple, those who sought their own, that is, who resorted to the temple for the sake of selling and buying. But if that Temple was a figure, it is clear that the Body of Christ also, which is the true Temple whereof that was the image, hath mingled with it buyers and sellers, that is, such as seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ. Now they are driven out thence with a whip of cords. For a cord signifieth sins, as is said through the Prophet: Woe unto them that draw sin as it were with a long rope. They who add sins to sins, draw a long rope of sin; they who when they have committed one sin, commit another, to cover it. For as yarn is added to yarn, to make a rope; and it doth not progress in a straight line, but is twisted: so all evil deeds, which are sins when added one to another, when sin cometh from sin, and sin is annexed to sin, become a long rope. Whose paths are crooked, and their ways are full of windings. What is the use of this rope, save that by it each man's hands and feet are to be bound, and he is to be cast forth into outer darkness? For ye remember it is said of a certain sinner in the Gospel, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. There would be no means of binding his hands and feet, had he not made for himself a rope. Whence it is most openly said in another passage, The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his sins. Since therefore men are beaten by means of their own sins, therefore did the Lord make a whip of cords, and with it drove out of the Temple all who sought their own, not the things that are of Jesus Christ.

3. It is therefore the voice of this Temple in the Psalm. In this Temple, as I have said, God is prayed unto: and heareth in Spirit and in Truth; not in that bodily Temple. For there was the shadow, wherein might be shewn what was to come: therefore that Temple hath already fallen. Hath therefore the house of our prayer fallen? God forbid! For that temple which fell could not be called the house of prayer, whereof it is said, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. For ye have heard what our Lord Jesus Christ said, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. Did they who wished to make the house of

God a den of thieves, effect the ruin of the Temple? So they also who live ill in the Catholic Church, as far as in them is, wish to make the house of God a den of thieves; yet they do not on that account overthrow the Temple. For a time will come, when they will be cast out of doors with the rope of their sins. But this Temple of God, this Body of Christ, this Congregation of the faithful, hath one voice, and singeth in the Psalm as one man. We have already heard its voice in many Psalms; let us also hear it in this. If we will, it is our voice; if we will, we hear it with the ear singing, and we sing in heart. But if we refuse, we shall be in that Temple as buyers and sellers, that is, seeking our own things: we enter the Church, not for those purposes that please the eyes of God. Let therefore any one among you consider in what manner he heareth, whether he hear and laugh, whether he hear and cast it behind him, whether he hear and respond, that is, perceive his own voice here, and join the voice of his own heart to the voice of this Psalm. Yet the voice of this Psalm is not mute; let them who are able, nay, who wish, be instructed; they who wish not, let them not hinder. Let humility be recommended unto us; thence he beginneth.

4. Ver. 1. Lord, my heart is not lifted up. He hath offered a sacrifice. Whence do we prove that he hath offered a sacrifice? Because humility of heart is a sacrifice. It is said in another Psalm, If Thou hadst desired a sacrifice, surely I would have given it Thee. He wished to atone unto God for his sins, he wished to propitiate Him, that he might receive pardon for his sins: and, as it were, seeking by what means he might propitiate Him; If thou hadst desired, he saith, a sacrifice, I would have given it Thee; but Thou delightest not in burnt offerings. It was superfluous therefore for him to seek either rams, or bulls, or any such victim, wherewith he might appease God. What then? Since God is not pleased with burnt-offerings, doth He not receive a sacrifice, and is He appeased without a sacrifice? If there is no sacrifice, there is no Priest. But if we have a High Priest in Heaven, Who intercedeth with the Father for us, (for He hath entered into the Holy of Holies, within the veil, where the priest in figure entered not save once in the year, as the Lord also in the whole of time was once offered. He offered Himself, the High Priest Himself, Himself the Victim, and entered once into the Holy of Holies, and now dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him. We are safe, for we have a Priest; let us

offer our sacrifice there. Let us consider what sacrifice we ought to offer; for God is not pleased with burnt offerings, as ye have heard in the Psalm. But in that place he next sheweth what he offereth; The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise. If therefore a humbled heart be the sacrifice of God, he who said, O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, offered a sacrifice. See him in another passage thus offering: Look upon mine humility and my misery, and forgive me all my sin.

5. Lord, my heart was not lifted up, neither were mine eyes raised on high; I have not exercised myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things which are too high for me. Let this be more plainly spoken and heard. I have not been proud: I have not wished to be known among men as for wondrous powers; nor have I sought any thing beyond my strength, whereby I might boast myself among the ignorant. Observe, beloved, a great matter is set before you. As that Simon the sorcerer wished to advance into wonders above himself, on that account the power of the Apostles more pleased him, than the righteousness of Christians. But when he saw the imposition of hands by the Apostles, and that God gave the Holy Ghost to the faithful through their prayers; and since then the Advent of the Holy Ghost was shewn through a miracle, so that they spoke with tongues, which they had not learnt, that is, all upon whom the Holy Ghost descended. (Not that the Holy Ghost is not given now, because believers speak not with tongues. For they then needs must speak with tongues, to signify that all tongues should believe in Christ. When what was signified was fulfilled, the miracle was taken away.) When therefore Simon saw this, he wished to do the like, not to be like the Apostles; and ye are aware that he even imagined that the Holy Ghost might be gained with money. He therefore was one of those that enter into the temple to buy and sell; he wanted to buy what he designed to sell: and truly, my brethren, it was thus, because he was such an one, and had in such wise come amongst them. The Lord cast forth from the temple the sellers of doves; now a dove signifieth the Holy Spirit; Simon therefore wished to buy the dove, and to sell the dove. Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who dwelt in Peter, came up, and with a whip of cords drove forth the ungodly trader.

6. There are then men whom it pleaseth to perform a miracle, and they exact a miracle from those who have grown in grace in the Church; and they who seem to themselves far advanced, wish to do the like, and suppose they belong not to God, if they can not do it. But the Lord our God, Who knoweth what He giveth and to whom, and how the framework of the body may be preserved in peace, addresses the Church through the Apostle: The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? ye see then, brethren, how in our members each hath its own office. The eye seeth, and heareth not: the ear heareth, and seeth not; the hand worketh, but it neither heareth nor seeth; the foot walketh, but it heareth not, nor seeth, nor doth what the hand doth. But if there be health in one body, and the members contend not against one another, the ear seeth in the eye, the eye heareth in the ear; nor can it be objected to the ear that it seeth not, so as to say to it, You are nothing, you are inferior; can you see and discern colours, as the eye doth? For the ear answereth from the peace of the body, and saith, I am where the eye is, I am in that body; in myself I see not, in that wherewith I exist I see. So when the ear saith, My eye seeth; the eye saith, My ear heareth; the eyes and ears say, Our hands work for us: the hands say, The eyes and the ears see and hear for us: the eyes and ears and hands say, The feet walk for us: while all members do their work in one body, if there be health therein, and the members agree, they rejoice, and rejoice with each other. And if there be any trouble in any member, they forsake not each other, but suffer with one another. Because in the body the foot seemeth far from the eyes, (for they are placed aloft, the feet below,) if the foot happen to tread upon a thorn, do the eyes forsake it? and is not, as we see, the whole body contracted, so that the man sitteth, the spine of the back is curved, that the thorn which hath stuck in the foot may be sought? All the members do all they can, that the thorn which had stuck in may be drawn forth from that lowest and diminutive part.

Thus then, brethren, whosoever in the body of Christ cannot restore to life the dead, let him not seek this power, but let him seek that he may not disagree in the body; as if the ear should seek to see, it may disagree. For what it hath not received it cannot do. But if it be objected to him and said,

If thou wert righteous, thou wouldest raise again a dead man, as Peter raised them. (For the Apostles seem to have wrought greater works in Christ, than the Lord Himself. But how could it be that the shoots should have more power than the root? Yet how do they appear to have wrought greater works than He? At the voice of the Lord the dead arose, at the shadow of Peter as he passed by a dead man arose. The latter seemeth greater than the former. But Christ could work without Peter, Peter could not, save in Christ: for without Me, saith He, ye can do nothing.) When therefore a man who is gaining grace heareth this, as it were a calumny cast in his teeth by ignorant heathens, by men who know not what they speak of; in the membership of the Body of Christ let him answer and say, Thou who sayest, Thou art not righteous, because thou dost not work miracles; thou mightest also say to the ear, Thou art not in the body, for thou seest not. You, he saith, should do what Peter did. But Peter did it for me also, since I am in the body, wherein Peter wrought it: in him I can do what he can, from whom I am not divided; in that I can do less, he suffereth together with me, and in that he can do more, I rejoyce with him. The Lord Himself cried from above concerning His Body, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? and no man touched Him; but the Head cried from heaven for the Body suffering on earth.

7. If therefore, brethren, each doeth righteously what he can, and in that wherein another can do more envieth not, but rejoiceth with him as if set in one body with him: these words of the Psalm relate to him, Lord, my heart is not lifted up, neither are mine eyes raised on high; nor have I exercised myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things which are too high for me. What is above my strength, he saith, I have not sought; I have not stretched myself out there, I have not chosen to be magnified there. How deeply this self-exaltation in the abundance of graces is to be feared, that no man may pride himself in the gift of God, but may rather preserve humility, and may do what is written: The greater thou art, the more humble thyself and thou shalt find favour before the Lord: how deeply pride in God's gift should be feared, we must again and again impress upon you, beloved brethren, especially as the shortness of this Psalm alloweth of our speaking. Although the Apostle Paul became a preacher from a persecutor, he gained more abundant grace in every Apostolic labour, than the rest of the Apostles; so that God might the more shew that what He giveth is His own, not man's.

As physicians are wont to display the power of their art in those that are despaired of, so our Lord Jesus Christ, our Physician and Saviour, in one despaired of, who had been a persecutor of the Church, displayed the greatness of His art, in that He not only made him a Christian, but an Apostle also: nor an Apostle only, but, as he himself saith, one who toiled more than all of them. He had therefore transcendent grace. And ye see, brethren, that at present in the Church the Epistles of the Apostle Paul flourish more than those of his fellow Apostles. For some wrote not, but only spoke in the Church: for what are alleged by those who are in error under their name, are not their own, and therefore are reprobated, and not received by the Church. While others who have written, have neither written so much, nor with so great grace. Since he then had great grace, and had received great gifts from God, what saith he in a certain passage? Lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations. Heed me: I am speaking to you of a subject of awe: Lest, he saith, I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. What is this, brethren? That he might not be exalted as a grown man, he was buffeted as a boy. And by whom? By a messenger of Satan. What is this? He is said to have been violently afflicted with some bodily pain: now bodily pains are generally sent by messengers of Satan; but they cannot do this, save they be allowed. For the holy Job also was thus proved. Satan was allowed to prove him, and struck him with a wound, which caused him to rot with worms. For the unclean had the permission, but the holy was put to proof. The devil knoweth not how great blessings are wrought through him, even when he rageth. Raging he entered into the heart of Judas, raging he betrayed Christ, raging he crucified Him: and by the crucifixion of Christ, the whole world was redeemed. Behold, the rage of the devil was an hindrance to the devil, but a profit unto us. For by raging, he lost those whom he held, redeemed by the Lord's blood, which He shed while he raged. If he had known that he would suffer so great a loss, he would not have poured upon the earth a ransom whereby the human race was redeemed. Thus therefore that messenger of Satan was, of his own will as it were, permitted to buffet the Apostle; but nevertheless the Apostle was treated for his cure. And because what the physician had applied was troublesome to the sick one, he prayed the Physician to take it away. Just as a physician applieth to the body some

painful and burning plaster, whereby nevertheless he whose inner parts were swollen must be cured; when the patient begins to burn and be tormented with the remedy, he begs the physician to take it off: but the physician consoleth him, recommendeth him patience, because he knoweth how useful is the remedy he hath applied. Thus the Apostle goeth on to say, after saying, There was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. (He had already given us the reason: Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me.) For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it away from me. That is to say, I begged the physician to take away from me the troublesome plaster which he had applied. But hear the reply of the physician, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I know what I have applied, I know the cause of thy sickness, I know the means of thy cure.

8. If therefore, most beloved, the Apostle Paul could be lifted up with the greatness of the revelations, except he received a messenger of Satan to buffet him; who can feel secure about himself? He who hath received less, seemeth to walk more safely; but if he do not perversely seek for what he hath justly not received, let him seek that without which he cannot be in Christ's Body, or without which he is there to his own hurt. For a sound finger is safer in the body, than a blear eye. The finger is a small thing; the eye a great thing, it hath great power: yet it is better to be the finger and be sound, than to be the eye and to be disturbed, to be bleared, to be blind. Let therefore every man seek nothing in the Body of Christ, save soundness. According to soundness let him have faith; by means of faith his heart is cleansed, by the cleansing of his heart he will see that face of which it hath been said, Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Both he who hath wrought miracles, and he who hath not wrought miracles in the Body of Christ, ought not to rejoice, save in the Presence of God. The Apostles returned, and said to the Lord, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name. The Lord saw that they were tempted by pride arising from the power of miracles; and He Who had come as a Physician to cure our swellings, and to bear our infirmities, at once replied, In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice because

your names are written in heaven. Not all good Christians cast out devils; yet the names of all are written in heaven. He wished them not to rejoice in the peculiar gift they possessed, but in this, that they had salvation in common with the rest: He wished the Apostles to rejoice whence thou also dost rejoice. Heed me, beloved. No believer hath hope, if his name be not written in heaven. The names of all the faithful who love Christ, who walk humbly in His way, which He, humble Himself, taught, are written in heaven. The name of every mean person in the Church, who believeth in Christ, and loveth Christ, and loveth the peace of Christ, is written in heaven; of every one whom thou scornest. And in what is such an one like the Apostles, who wrought so great miracles? Yet the Apostles are censured because they rejoiced in their own special gifts, and are ordered to rejoice thence whence every such mean person rejoiceth.

9. Ver. 2. It is not without cause, my brethren, that he speaketh so humbly, Lord, my heart is not lifted up, nor mine eyes raised on high. I do not exercise myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things above me. If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, as one taken from his mother's breast, such the reward for my soul. He seemeth as it were to have bound himself by a curse. As in another passage he saith in the Psalm, O Lord, my God, if I have done any such thing, or if there be any wickedness in my hands; if I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me; then let me deservedly fall back empty from mine enemies: and so forth; in the same spirit he seemeth to say here also, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul. Look, as though he had been going to say, Let it so happen to me. As there also, If I have returned evil to them that dealt friendly with me, let it so happen to me. How? Let me deservedly fall back from mine enemies empty. So also here, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, as one taken away from his mother's breast, may be my soul's reward. The condition and the imprecation in the respective clauses answer to one another. Attend. Ye know that the Apostle saith to some weak brethren, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. There are weak persons who are not fit for strong meat; they wish to grasp at that which they cannot receive: and if they ever do receive, or seem to themselves to receive what they have not received, they are puffed up

thereby, and become proud thereupon; they seem to themselves wise men. Now this happeneth to all heretics; who since they were animal and carnal, by defending their depraved opinions, which they could not see to be false, were shut out of the Catholic Church. I will explain to you, beloved, as far as I am able. Ye know that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word of God, according to these words of John, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. He therefore is bread: thence the Angels live. Behold, the bread is prepared for thee; but grow by means of the milk, that thou mayest come to the bread. And how, thou sayest, do I grow from milk? That which Christ became for thee for thy weakness, this first believe, and steadily hold. As then the mother when she seeth her child unfit for taking meat, giveth him meat, but meat that hath passed through her flesh: for the bread upon which the infant feeds, is the same bread as that whereupon the mother feeds; but the infant is not fit for the table, he is fit for the breast, and therefore bread is passed from the table through the mother's breast, that the same aliment may thus reach the little infant; thus our Lord Jesus Christ, when He was the Word with the Father, through Whom all things were made; Who since He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; such as the Angels might receive according to their degree, and whence the Powers and Virtues, intellectual spirits, might feed; while man lay weak and wrapped in flesh on the earth, and the heavenly bread could not reach him; that man might eat the bread of Angels, and that manna might descend to the truer people of Israel, The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

10. On which account the Apostle Paul saith this to the weak, those whom he calleth natural and fleshly. Did I say that I knew any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? For there was Christ, and not crucified: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And because the Word was made flesh, the Word was also crucified: but was not changed into man; man was changed in Him. Man was changed in Him, that he might become better than he was, not that he might be turned into the very Substance of the Word. In that therefore He was Man, God died; and in that He was God, Man was raised, and arose,

and ascended into heaven. Whatever the Man suffered, God cannot be said not to have suffered, because He was God when He took upon Himself man; but He was not changed into man: just as thou canst not say that thou hast not suffered injury, if thy garment be torn. And when thou complainest either to thy friends, or in a court of law, thou sayest this to the judge, He tore me; thou sayest not, He tore my robe. If thy garment can be and deserveth to be called thyself, though it is not thyself, but thy garment; how much the more hath the flesh of Christ deserved to be called Himself, the Temple of the Word one with the Word, so that whatever the Word suffered in the flesh, God Himself should suffer: although the Word could neither die, nor be corrupted, nor be changed, nor be slain; but whatever of these He suffered, He suffered in the flesh? Marvel not that the Word suffered nothing: even the soul cannot suffer any thing when the flesh is slain, as the Lord Himself saith, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. If the soul cannot be killed, could the Word of God be killed? Yet what saith he? He hath scourged me, he hath buffeted me, he hath smitten me, he hath lacerated me: all this happeneth not in the soul; nevertheless, he useth no other word than me, on account of the unity of this alliance (consortii).

11. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the bread, made Himself milk for us, being incarnate and appearing in mortal shape, that in Him death might be finished, and that we might not wander from the Word, believing on the flesh which the Word was made. Hence let us grow, by this milk let us be nourished; before we are strong enough to receive the Word, let us not depart from faith in our milk. But the heretics, anxious to discourse concerning what they could not understand, declared that the Son is inferior to the Father, and that the Holy Ghost is inferior to the Son; they have created degrees, and have introduced into the Church Three Gods. For they cannot deny that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Ghost is God. But if God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost be unequal, and not of the same substance; there is not One God, but Three Gods. Discoursing therefore on what they could not understand, they were puffed up with pride, and what is said in this Psalm took place in them, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul; as one taken from his mother's breast, so may be my soul's reward. For our mother the Church is

of God, from Whom they are cut off: they ought to have been suckled and nourished there, that they might grow so as to receive the Word, God with God, in the form of God equal with the Father.

12. Another opinion indeed hath been entertained by those who have treated these points before ourselves, and another sense in these words, which I will not leave untold to you, Beloved Brethren. They spoke thus: Every proud man displeaseth God, and the human soul ought to humble itself, that it may not displease God, and ought to contemplate with its whole heart the words, The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shalt find favour before the Lord. But again, there are some men who, when they have heard that they ought to be humble, neglect themselves, wish to learn nothing, imagining that if they learn any thing they will be proud; and they abide in milk alone. These the Scripture blameth, saying, Ye are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For God wisheth us to be so suckled with milk, that we abide not therein; but, by growing through milk, we may arrive at strong meat. Man therefore ought not to raise his heart unto pride, but to raise it unto the teaching of the Word of God. For if the soul were not to be lifted up, it would not be said in another Psalm, Unto Thee, Lord, will I lift up my soul. And except the soul overflow herself, she reacheth not unto the sight of God, and unto the knowledge of that immutable Substance. For while it is still in the flesh, it is thus addressed: Where is thy God? But the soul's God is within, and is within spiritually, and is lofty spiritually; not as it were by intervals of places, as places are higher through intervals. For if such an altitude is to be sought, the birds surpass us in approaching God. God is therefore lofty within, and spiritually lofty; nor doth the soul reach Him, save it hath passed itself. For whatever thou thinkest concerning God according to the body, thou erreth much. Thou art indeed an infant, if thou thinkest concerning God even after the human soul, so that God may either forget, or be wise so as that He may be unwise, or do any thing and yet repent of it: for all these things are said in the Scriptures, that God may be commended unto us yet unweaned; not that we may hear these expressions literally of Him and understand them as if God repented, and were now learning something that He knew not, and understanding what He understood not, and remembering what He had forgotten. Such things belong to the soul, not unto God. Unless therefore he

hath passed the measure of his own soul, he will not see that God is what He is; Who said, I am That I am. What then did he reply, to whom it was said, Where is thy God?—My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me, Where is thy God? But that he might find his God, what did he do? Now when I thought thereupon, he saith, I poured out my heart beyond myself. That he might find God, he poured out his heart beyond himself. It is not therefore said unto thee, be humble, with a view that thou mayest not be wise. Be humble, in respect of pride: be high, in respect of wisdom. Hear a plain sentence in this matter. Become not children in your understandings; howbeit in malice be ye children, that ye may be perfected in your understandings. It has been evidently explained, my brethren, where God would have us to be humble, where lofty. Humble, in order to provide against pride; lofty, to take in wisdom. Feed upon milk, that thou mayest be nourished; be nourished, so that thou mayest grow; grow, so that thou mayest eat bread. But when thou hast begun to eat bread, thou wilt be weaned, that is, thou wilt no longer have need of milk, but of solid food. This he seemeth to have meant: If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul: that is, if I was not an infant in mind, I was in wickedness. In this sense, he said before, Lord, my heart was not lifted up, nor mine eyes raised on high: I do not exercise myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things above me. Behold, in wickedness I am an infant. But since I am not an infant in understanding, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, may that reward be mine which is given unto the infant that is weaned from his mother, that I may at length be able to eat bread.

13. This interpretation, also, brethren, displeaseth me not, since it doth not militate against the faith. Yet I cannot but remark that it is not only said, As one taken away from milk, such may be my soul's reward; but with this addition, As one taken away from milk when upon his mother's breast, such may be my soul's reward. Here there is somewhat that induces me to consider it a curse. For it is not an infant, but a grown child that is taken away from milk; he who is weak in his earliest infancy, which is his true infancy, is upon his mother's breast: if perchance he hath been taken away from the milk, he perisheth. It is not without a reason then that it is added, Upon his mother's breast. For all may be weaned by growing. He who

groweth, and is thus taken away from milk, it is good for him; but hurtful for him who is still upon his mother's breast. We must therefore beware, my brethren, and be fearful, lest any one be taken away from milk before his time. For every fullgrown child is separated from milk. But let none be taken away from milk, when he is upon his mother's breast. But while he is carried in his mother's hands, who hath been carried in her womb, (for he was carried in her womb, that he might be born; he is carried in her arms, that he may grow,) he hath need of milk; he is still upon his mother's breast. Let him not therefore wish to lift up his soul, when perchance he is not fit to take meat, but let him fulfil the commandments of humility. He hath wherein he may exercise himself: let him believe in Christ, that he may understand Christ. He cannot see the Word, he cannot understand the equality of the Word with the Father, he cannot as yet see the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Word; let him believe this, and suck it. He is safe, because, when he hath grown, he will eat, which he could not do before he grew by sucking: and he hath a point to stretch towards. Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, and search not the things that are above thy strength; that is, things which thou art not as yet fit to understand. And what am I to do? thou repliest. Shall I remain thus? But what things the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereupon always. What hath the Lord commanded thee? Do works of mercy, part not with the peace of the Church, place not thy trust in man, tempt not God by longing for miracles. If there be fruit in thee, thou knowest that thou endurest tares together with the good until the harvest; that thou canst be with the wicked for a season, not for evermore. The chaff is here mingled during this season on the floor; it will not be with thee in the barn. Here, What the Lord hath commanded, think thereupon always. Thou shalt not be taken away from the milk as long as thou art upon thy mother's breast; lest thou perish from hunger, before thou art fit to eat bread. Grow: thy powers will be strong, and thou wilt see what thou couldest not, and wilt receive what thou receivedst not.

14. What then? When I shall see what I could not see, and shall receive what I could not receive, shall I then lay aside apprehension? shall I then be perfect? No, not as long as thou livest. Our very perfection is humility. Ye have heard the conclusion of the reading from the Apostle, if it hath been retained in your memory; how he who received a buffet that he might not be

exalted by the revelations (how great things were revealed to him!) on account of the very magnitude of those revelations, because he might have been exalted, except he had received the messenger of Satan: nevertheless, what doth he, to whom so great things were revealed, say? Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. Paul saith, Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; he who received the buffeting messenger of Satan that he might not be exalted above measure by the greatness of the revelations. Who dareth to say that he apprehendeth? Lo, Paul hath not apprehended, and saith, I count not myself to have apprehended. And what sayest thou, Paul! I follow after, he saith, if that I may apprehend. Paul is still on the path, and dost thou think thyself at thy home? This one thing I do; forgetting, he saith, those things which are behind. This do thou also do, and forget thy past wicked life. If at one time vanity pleased thee, let it please thee no more. Forgetting those things, he saith, which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I hear the voice of God from above, and I run that I may apprehend. For He hath not left me to abide in the path, since He ceaseth not to address me. God therefore, my brethren, ceaseth not to address us. For if He ceaseth, what are we doing? What is the use of inspired lessons and inspired Psalms? Forget therefore what is behind, and reach forth unto the things that are before. So suck in milk, that ye may grow unto meat. When therefore ye shall have come into your home, ye will rejoice. And still observe, that the Apostle followeth unto the prize of his heavenly calling. For he saith, Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded. I speak not, he saith, to the imperfect, unto whom as yet I cannot speak wisdom, who still must be nourished with milk, and are not fed with strong meat; but unto them I speak, who are now eating strong meat. They seem now to be perfect, because they understand the equality of the Word with the Father: still as yet they see not, as we must see, face to face; still in part only, in a mystery. Let them run therefore, since, when our path shall have been ended, we then return unto our home; let them run, let them reach forth. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal this unto you. If perchance thou errest in any thing, why returnest thou not unto thy mother's milk? For if ye be not exalted, if ye raise not your heart on high, if ye tread not in great matters

that are too high for you, but preserve humility, God will reveal unto you what ye are otherwise minded in. But if ye choose to defend this very thing, which ye are otherwise minded about, and with pertinacity assert it, and against the peace of the Church; this curse which he hath described is entailed upon you; when ye are upon your mother's breast, and are removed away from the milk, ye shall die of hunger apart from your mother's breast. But if ye continue in Catholic peace, if perchance ye are in any thing otherwise minded than ye ought to be, God will reveal it to you, if ye be humble. Wherefore? Because God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble.

15. Ver. 3. This Psalm therefore concludeth to this purpose: O Israel, trust in the Lord, from this time forth and even unto eternity. The Greek words, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν καὶ ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος, are rendered in the Latin, ex hoc nunc et usque in seculum. But the word seculum doth not always mean this world, but sometimes eternity; since eternity is understood in two ways; until eternity, that is, either evermore without end, or until we arrive at eternity. How then is it to be understood here? Until we arrive at eternity, let us trust in the Lord God; because when we have reached eternity, there will be no longer hope, but the thing itself will be ours.

PSALM 132

Exposition

A Sermon to the common People.

1. Ver. 1, 2. It was right indeed, most beloved, that we should rather hear our Brother, my colleague, when present before all of us. And just now he refused not, but put us off; and I tell you this, Beloved, that with me ye may claim the promise. It could not, however, seem strange to you, Beloved, that I first came forward in obedience to his invitation: for he extorted from me that he might now listen to me, on the condition that I also may listen to him, for in charity itself we are all listening unto Him, Who is our One Master in heaven. Attend therefore to the Psalm, which, as ye know, we have to treat of next in order. This is also entitled, A Song of Degrees; and is considerably longer than the rest under the same title. Let us not therefore linger, save where necessity shall compel us: that we may, if the Lord permit, explain the whole. For ye also ought not to hear every thing as men untaught; ye ought in some degree to aid us from your past listenings, so that it may not be needful that every thing should be declared to you as though new. New indeed we ought to be, because the old man ought not to creep upon us; but we must grow also and advance. Of this very advancement the Apostle saith Though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. Let us not so grow as to become old after being new, but let the newness itself grow.

2. Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob. David according to the truth of history was one man, king of Israel, son of Jesse. He was indeed meek, as the Divine Scriptures themselves mark and command him, and so meek that he did not even render evil for evil to his persecutor Saul. He preserved towards him so great humility, that he acknowledged him a

king, and himself a dog: and answered the king not proudly nor rudely, though he was more powerful in God; but he rather endeavoured to appease him by humility, than to provoke him by pride. Saul was even given into his power, and this by the Lord God, that he might do to him what he listed: but since he was not commanded to slay him, but had it only placed in his power;—now a man is permitted to use his power;—he rather turned towards mercy what God gave him. If he had chosen to slay him, he would have been rid of an enemy; but how could he then say, Forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me? Saul entered into a cavern where David was, not knowing that David was there. He went in for the occasions of the body. David arose privily, and cut off the skirt of his robe, that he might shew it to him, to convince him that he had him in his power; and that he had spared him not of compulsion but of free-will, and chose not to slay him. He perhaps was commending this very act of meekness in the words, Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. This is according to the truth of history, which Holy Writ, as I have said, containeth. But our practice is in the Psalms not to heed the letter, as in all prophecy, but to search mysteries through the letter. You remember, Beloved, that we are wont to hear the voice of one Man in all the Psalms; that One Who hath Head and body. The Head is in heaven, the body on the earth: but the body also will follow whither the Head hath gone before. I no longer explain who is the Head, who the body; because I am speaking to those that know.

3. The humility of David is therefore commended, the meekness of David is commended; and it is said to God, Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. For what purpose saith he, Lord, remember David?—How he swore unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob. Therefore remember for this, that he may fulfil what he hath promised. David himself vowed as though he had it in his power, and he prayeth God to fulfil his vow: there is devotion in the vow, but there is humility in the prayer. Let no one presume to think he fulfilleth by his own strength what he hath vowed. He who exhorteth thee to vow, Himself aideth thee to fulfil. Let us therefore see what he vowed, and hence we comprehend how David should be understood in a figure. ‘David’ is interpreted, ‘Strong of hand,’ for he was a great warrior. Trusting indeed in the Lord his God, he

despatched all wars, he laid low all his enemies, God helping him, according to the dispensation of that kingdom; prefiguring nevertheless some One strong of hand to destroy His enemies, the devil and his angels. These enemies the Church warreth against, and conquereth. And how conquereth she? by meekness. For by meekness, our King Himself overcame the devil. The devil raged: He endured; he who raged was overcome; He who endured conquered. With this meekness the body of Christ, which is the Church, conquereth her enemies. Let her be strong of hand, let her overcome by working. But since the Body of Christ is both a temple, and a house, and a city; and He Who is the Head of the Body, is also the Dweller in the House, and the Sanctifier of the temple, and the King of the city: as the Church is all those things, so Christ is all these. What therefore have we vowed unto God, save to be His temple? We cannot offer unto Him any thing more acceptable, than in saying with Isaiah, Lord, possess us. In earthly possessions indeed a benefit is given to the master of a house, when possession is given him: not thus is it with that possession which is the Church; the benefit is given the possession itself, that it may be possessed by such a one.

4. What then doth he mean, How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the God of Jacob? Let us see what vow is this? We can offer God nothing more pleasing than to swear. Now to swear is to promise firmly. Consider this vow, that is, with what ardour he vowed what he vowed, with what love, with what longing; nevertheless, he prayeth the Lord to fulfil it in these words, O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. In this temper he vowed his vow, that there should be a house of God: I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into my bed; I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep. This seemeth not enough; he adds, nor mine eyelids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take any rest, until I find out a place for the Lord; an habitation for the God of Jacob. Where did he seek a place for the Lord? If he was meek, he sought it in himself. For how is one a place for the Lord? Hear the Prophet: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even upon him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My words. Dost thou wish to be a place for the Lord? Be thou poor in spirit, and contrite, and trembling at the word of God, and thou wilt thyself be made what thou seekest. For if what thou seekest be not realized

in thyself, what doth it profit thee in another. God indeed sometimes worketh the salvation of another through the preacher only, if he preach and do not; and through his tongue there is made in another a place for the Lord, but he becometh not himself a place for the Lord. But he who doth well what he teacheth, and teacheth well also, becometh a place for the Lord, together with him whom he teacheth, because all believers constitute one place for the Lord. For the Lord hath His place in the heart; for the heart of all joined together in love is one.

5. How many thousands believed, my brethren, when they laid down the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet! But what saith Scripture of them? Surely they are become a temple of God; not only each respectively a temple of God, but also all a temple of God together. They have therefore become a place for the Lord. And that ye may know that one place is made for the Lord in all, Scripture saith, They were of one heart and one soul toward God. But many, so as not to make a place for the Lord, seek their own things, love their own things, delight in their own power, are greedy for their private interests. Whereas he who wisheth to make a place for the Lord, should rejoice not in his private, but the common good. They did this with their private goods; they made them common. Did they love what they had of their own? If they held their goods alone, and each man had his own, he would have that only which he had of his own; but when he made that which was his special property common, those things also which belonged to others were made his own. Consider this, beloved; that on account of private possessions exist lawsuits, enmities, discords, wars among men, riots, dissensions against one another, offences, sins, iniquities, murders. On account of what? On account of what we each possess. Do we litigate in behalf of what we possess in common? In common we inhale this air, in common we all behold the sun. Blessed then are they who so make a place for the Lord, as not to rejoice in their private goods. Such a one indeed the Psalmist describes in the words, I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house. This was private. He knew that he was hindered by what was his own only, so that he could not make a place for the Lord; and he mentions what belonged to himself: I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, until I find out: what? when thou hast found a place for the Lord, wilt thou come within thy tabernacle? Or will itself be thy tabernacle,

when thou shalt have found a place for the Lord? Wherefore? Because thou wilt thyself be the place of the Lord, and thou wilt be one with those who shall be the Lord's place.

6. Let us therefore, brethren, abstain from the possession of private property; or from the love of it, if we may not from its possession; and we make a place for the Lord. It is too much for me, saith some one. But consider who thou art, who art about to make a place for the Lord. If any senator wished to be entertained at your house, I say not senator, the deputy of some great man of this world, and should say, something offends me in thy house; though thou shouldest love it, thou wouldest remove it, nevertheless, lest thou shouldest offend him, whose friendship thou wast courting. And what doth man's friendship profit thee? Perchance thou wouldest find there not merely no aid, but even danger. For many were not endangered before they combined with greater men; they earnestly desired the friendship of the great, but to incur greater dangers. Desire the friendship of Christ without fear: He wishes to be entertained at thy house; make room for Him. What is, make room for Him? Love not thyself, love Him. If thou love thyself, thou shuttest the door against Him; if thou love Him, thou openest unto Him: and if thou open and He enter, thou shalt not be lost by loving thyself, but shalt find thyself with Him Who loveth thee.

7. Ver. 3. I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into the couch of my bed. For private property of itself, where a man yields to its influence, makes him proud: therefore he said, I will not climb up. In any property which any man possesses of his own, he must needs be proud; for on that account man stretches himself before man, though both be flesh. What is a man, brethren? Flesh? And what is the other man? Another piece of flesh. Nevertheless, the rich flesh stretcheth out itself against the poor flesh; as if that flesh brought any thing when it was born, or taketh away any thing when it dieth. It had more only to swell the more. But the Psalmist who wisheth to find a place for the Lord, saith, I will not climb up into the couch of my bed.

8. Ver. 4. I will not give sleep to mine eyes. For many when they sleep, make not a place for the Lord. Such the Apostle arouseth: Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light; and in

another passage, Ye are all the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness; therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. Meaning by the night iniquity, wherein they go to sleep because they desire these earthly things. And all these seeming sources of worldly happiness, are the dreams of sleepers. And as he who seeth treasures in his sleep, while he sleeps is rich; but will sometimes awake, and be poor; thus it is in sleep that men rejoice in all those vanities of this world that please them; but they will awake when they would not, if they wake not now when it is profitable for them; and they will find those to have been dreams, that have passed away, as Scripture saith, As a dream when one awaketh; and in another passage, They have slept their sleep, and all the men whose hands are mighty have found nothing. They have slept their sleep, their sleep is over, and they have found nothing in their hands; because they beheld transitory riches in their sleep. The Psalmist therefore, wishing to find a place for the Lord, saith, I will not give sleep to mine eyes. But there are some who sleep not, but slumber. They in a great degree draw themselves off from the love of temporal things, and are again rolled back into it; like slumberers, they often nod their heads. Awake, shake off sleep; by slumbering thou wilt fall. The Psalm wisheth not that he who desires to find a place for the Lord, should give sleep to his eyes or slumber to his eyelids.

9. Ver. 5. Neither rest, he saith, to the temples of my head. From the rest of the temples sleep cometh to the eyes. The temples are around the eyes. Heaviness of the temples is as it were impending sleep. For when men are about to sleep, their temples begin to feel heavy; and when they feel their temples heavy, then sleep commenceth: if sleep is to be imparted to the eyes, they give their temples rest, and sleep cometh; if they give not rest to their temples, sleep cometh not. When therefore any temporal pleasure beginneth to delight thee unto sin, already thy temples are heavy. Dost thou wish to keep awake, and not to sleep, nor to slumber? Trust not thyself to such pleasure; it will give greater pain than sweetness. Rubbing thy forehead as it were with this thought, thou shakest off sleep, and preparast a place for the Lord.

10. Until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord, a tabernacle for the mighty God of Jacob. Although the tabernacle of God is sometimes called the house of God, and the house of God the tabernacle of God; yet in a more definite sense, dearest brethren, the tabernacle means the Church of this world; the 'house' the Church of the heavenly Jerusalem, whither we shall go. For a tabernacle applies rather to soldiers in the field: tabernacles are used for soldiers ready for action, on an expedition; whence they are called contubernales, as having the same tents and dwelling in them. As long therefore as we have an enemy with whom to fight, we make a tabernacle for God. But when the time for fighting hath passed by, and that peace hath come which passeth all understanding, as the Apostle saith, the peace of Christ which passeth all understanding; for how much soever thou mayest reflect upon that peace, the mind is scarce able to conceive it while set amid the heaviness of the body; when that country hath come, then it will be the house, which no adversary will attempt, so as to cause it to be stiled a tabernacle. We shall not sally forth to conflict, but we shall abide for praise-giving. For what is said of that house? Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee. In the tabernacle we as yet groan: in the house we shall praise. Why? Because groaning is for pilgrims, praise for those who have reached their country. Here first be there sought a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

11. Ver. 6. Lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata. What? A place for the Lord. We heard of it at Ephrata: and found it in the plains of the forests. (We hear those things in Ephrata, we find them in the woodland plains.) Did he hear it where he found it? or did he hear it in one place, find it in another? Let us therefore enquire what Ephrata is, where he heard it; let us also enquire what mean the plains of the forests, where he found it. Ephrata, a Hebrew word, is rendered in Latin by Speculum, as the translators of Hebrew words in the Scriptures have handed down to us, that we might understand them. They have translated from Hebrew into Greek, and from Greek we have versions into Latin. For there have been who watched in the Scriptures. If therefore Ephrata meaneth a mirror, that house which was found in the woodland plains, was heard of in a mirror. A mirror hath an image: all prophecy is an image of things future. The future house of God, therefore, was declared in the image of prophecy. For we have heard of it in the

mirror, that is, we have heard of it in Ephrata. We have found it in the plains of the forests. What are the plains of the forests? ‘Saltus’ is not here used in its common sense, as a plot of ground of so many hundred acres; saltus properly signifies a spot as yet untilled and woody. For some copies read, in the plains of the wood. What then were the woodland plains, save nations yet untilled? what were they, save regions yet covered with the thorns of idolatry? Thus, though there were thorns of idolatry there, still we find a place for the Lord there, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. What we heard of in Ephrata, we found in the plains of the forests; what was declared in the image to the Jews, was manifested in the faith of the Gentiles.

12. Ver. 7. We will go into His tabernacles. Whose? Those of the Lord God of Jacob. They who enter to dwell therein, are the very same who enter that they may be dwelt in. Thou enterest into thy house, that thou mayest dwell therein; into the house of God, that thou mayest be dwelt in. For the Lord is better, and when He hath begun to dwell in thee, He will make thee happy. For if thou be not dwelt in by Him, thou wilt be miserable. That son who said, Father, give me the portion of the goods that falleth to me, wished to be his own master. It was well kept in his father’s hands, that it might not be wasted with harlots. He received it, it was given into his own power; going to a far country, he squandered it all with harlots. At length he suffered hunger, he remembered his father; he returned, that he might be satisfied with bread. Enter therefore, that thou mayest be dwelt in; and mayest be not thine own, so to speak, but His: We will go into His tabernacles.

13. We will worship on the spot where His feet stood. Whose feet? The Lord’s, or those of the house of the Lord itself? For that is the Lord’s house, wherein he saith He ought to be worshipped. We will worship on the spot where His feet stood. Beside His house, the Lord heareth not unto eternal life; for he belongeth to God’s house, who hath in charity been built in with living stones. But he who hath not charity, falleth; and while he falls, the house stands. Let no one then threaten the house, where he beginneth to be as a stone, as if, should he choose to fall, he injureth the house in any way. Such had been the pride of the first nation of the Jews, who said, God will surely not deceive our father Abraham, to whom He promised so great things from his seed: and they did all evil deeds as though safe in the

promise of God, because He spared them, not for their own merit, who committed crimes, but for the merit of Abraham, and would gather together all the wicked children of Abraham into His own house unto everlasting life. But what saith John? O generation of vipers! When these very children of Abraham came unto him to be baptized in the water of repentance, he said not unto them, Generation of Abraham, but, of vipers. Such were they, as were those whom they imitated: not the children of Abraham, but children of the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Gergesite, the Jebusite, and of all who offended God: they were their children, because they followed their deeds. O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say to yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for God is able out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. There were certain stones then which he saw in the 'woodland plains,' out of which children were raised up to Abraham. For they are rather children who imitated his faith, than they who were born of the flesh. Let no man therefore threaten the house of God, as much as to say, I withdraw myself, and the house will fall. For it is good for him that he be built up together, and that he have charity. For if he himself fall, the house will stand. Therefore, brethren, the house of God is in those whom He hath predestined, and who He foreknew would persevere: of these it was said, Where His feet stood. For there are those who persevere not, and His feet stand not in them. They therefore are not the Church; they belong not to that which is now a tabernacle, but will then be the house. But where did His feet stand? Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Among those in whom love waxeth cold, His feet stand not. But what doth He proceed to say? But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Lo, in whom His feet have stood: on that spot worship thou, that is, be thou among those in whom the Lord's feet have stood.

14. But if ye incline to understand it of the house itself, where the feet of that house have stood; let thy feet stand in Christ. They will then stand, if thou shalt persevere in Christ. For what is said of the devil? He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth. The feet of the devil therefore stood not. Also what saith he of the proud? O let not the foot of pride come against me; and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me

down. There are they fallen, all that work wickedness: they are cast down, and were not able to stand. That then is the house of God, whose feet stand. Whence John rejoicing, saith: what? He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth him. If he stand not, he heareth him not. And rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Justly he standeth, because he rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom's voice: for if he rejoiced because of his own voice, he would fall. Now therefore ye see why they fell, who rejoice because of their own voice. That friend of the Bridegroom said, The same is He Which baptizeth. Some say, We baptize: rejoicing in their own voice, they could not stand; and belong not to that house of which it is said, where His feet stood.

15. Ver. 8. Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place. He saith unto the Lord sleeping, Arise. Ye know already Who slept, and Who rose again. For He Himself saith in a certain passage of the Psalms, I slept disturbed. Well is it said unto Him, Arise, O Lord, unto Thy resting place. No more wilt Thou be disturbed, since Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more, and death shall no more have dominion over Him. It is His voice in another Psalm that saith, I laid me down and slept, and rose again, for the Lord shall sustain me. He Himself slept; unto Him is said, Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification: that is, Arise, that the ark of Thy sanctification, which Thou hast sanctified, may arise also. He is our Head; His ark is His Church: He arose first, the Church will arise also. The body would not dare to promise itself resurrection, save the Head arose first. O Lord, arise into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification. The Body of Christ, that was born of Mary, hath been understood by some to be the ark of sanctification; so that the words, Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification, mean, Arise with Thy Body that they who believe not may handle. Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification.

16. Ver. 9. Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Thy saints sing with joyfulness. When Thou risest from the dead, and goest unto Thy Father, let that royal Priesthood be clothed with faith, since the righteous liveth by faith; and, receiving the pledge of the Holy Spirit, let the members

rejoice in the hope of resurrection, which went before in the Head: for to them the Apostle saith, Rejoicing in hope.

17. Ver. 10. For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed. These words are addressed unto God the Father. For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed. The Lord was crucified in Judæa; He was crucified by the Jews; harassed by them, He slept. He arose to judge those among whose savage hands He slept: and He saith elsewhere, Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall reward them. He both hath rewarded them, and will reward them. The Jews well know themselves how great were their sufferings after the Lord's death. They were all expelled from the very city, where they slew Him. What then? have all perished even from the root of David and from the tribe of Judah? No: for some of that stock believed, and in fact many thousands of men of that stock believed, and this after the Lord's resurrection. They raged and crucified Him: and afterwards began to see miracles wrought in the Name of Him Crucified; and they trembled still more that His Name should have so much power, since when in their hands He seemed unable to work any; and pricked at heart, at length believing that there was some hidden divinity in Him Whom they had believed like other men, and asking counsel of the Apostles, they were answered, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since then Christ arose to judge those by whom He had been crucified, and turned away His Presence from the Jews, turning His Presence towards the Gentiles; God is, as it seemeth, besought in behalf of the remnant of Israel; and it is said unto Him, For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the presence of Thine Anointed. If the chaff be condemned, let the wheat be gathered together. May the remnant be saved, as Isaiah saith, And the remnant hath clearly been saved: for out of them were the twelve Apostles, out of them more than five hundred brethren, to whom the Lord shewed Himself after His Resurrection: out of their number were so many thousands baptized, who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet. Thus then was fulfilled the prayer here made to God: For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the presence of Thine Anointed.

18. Ver. 11. The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not repent. What meaneth, hath made an oath? Hath confirmed a promise through Himself. What meaneth, He shall not repent? He will not change. For God suffereth not the pain of repentance, nor is He deceived in any matter, so that He would wish to correct that wherein He hath erred. But as when a man repents of any thing, he wisheth to change what he hath done; thus where thou hearest that God repenteth, look for an actual change. God doth it differently from thee, although He calleth it by the name of repentance; for thou dost it, because thou hadst erred; while He doth it, because He avengeth, or freeth. He changed Saul's kingdom, when He repented, as it is said: and in the very passage where the Scripture saith, It repented Him; it is said a little after, for He is not a man that He should repent. When therefore He changeth His works through His immutable counsel, He is said to repent on account of this very change, not of His counsel, but of His work. But He promised this so as not to change it. Just as this passage also saith: The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec; so also since this was promised so that it should not be changed, because it must needs happen and be permanent; he saith, The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not repent; Of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat. He might have said, 'of the fruit of thy loins,' wherefore did He choose to say, 'Of the fruit of thy body?' Had He said that also, it would have been true; but He chose to say with a further meaning, 'Ex fructu ventris,' because Christ was born of a woman without the man.

19. Ver. 12. What then? The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not shrink from it; Of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat. If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall learn them, their children also shall sit upon thy seal for evermore. If thy children keep My covenant, their children also shall sit for evermore. The parents establish a desert on behalf of their children. What if his children should keep the covenant, and their children should not keep it? Why is the happiness of the children promised in relation to their parents' deservings? For what saith He, If thy children will keep My covenant, their children also shall sit for evermore—He saith not, if thy children keep My covenant, they shall sit upon thy seat; and if their children keep My covenant, they also

shall sit upon thy seat: but he saith, If thy children keep My covenant, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore—except because He here wished their fruit to be understood by their children? If thy children, He saith, will keep My covenant, and if thy children shall keep My testimonies that I shall learn them; their children also shall sit upon thy seat: that is, this will be their fruit, that they sit upon thy seat. For in this life, brethren, do all of us who labour in Christ, all of us who tremble at His words, who in any way endeavour to execute His will, and groan while we pray His help that we may fulfil what He commandeth; do we already sit in those seats of bliss which are promised us? No: but holding His commandments, we hope this will come to pass. This hope is spoken of under the figure of sons; because sons are the hope of man living in this life, sons are his fruit. For this reason also men, when excusing their avarice, allege that they are reserving for their children what they hoard up; and, unwilling to give to the destitute, excuse themselves under the name of piety, because their children are their hope. For all men who live according to this world, declare it to be their hope, to be fathers of children they may leave behind them. Thus then He describes hope generally under the name of children, and saith, If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall learn them, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore: that is, they shall have such fruits, that their hope shall not deceive them, that they may come there where they hope to come. At present therefore they are as fathers, men of hope for the future; but when they have attained what they hope, they are children; because they have brought forth and produced in their works that which they gain. And this is preserved unto them for the future, because futurity itself commonly signifieth children.

20. Or if thou understand actual men to be meant by children, the words, If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall teach them, may mean, If thy children will keep My covenant and testimonies that I shall teach them, and their children also; that is, if they too keep My covenant; so that here thou must make a slight pause, and then infer that they shall sit upon thy seal for evermore; that is, both thy children and their children, but all if they keep My covenant. What then, if they keep it not? Hath the promise of God failed? No: but it is said and promised for this reason, that God foresaw: what, save that they would believe? But that no

man should as it were threaten God's promises, and prefer to place in his own power the fulfilment of what God promised: for this reason he saith, He made an oath: whereby he sheweth that it will without doubt take place. How then hath He said here, If they will keep my covenant? Glory not in the promises, and leave out thy failing to keep the covenant. Then wilt thou be the son of David, if thou shalt keep the covenant; but if thou dost not keep it, thou wilt not be David's son. God promised to the sons of David. Say not, I am David's son, if thou degenerate. If the Jews, who were born of this very stock, say not this, (nay, they say it, but they are under a delusion. For the Lord saith openly, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. He thereby denied them to be children, because they did not the works,) how do we call ourselves David's children, who are not of his race according to the flesh? It follows then that we are not children, save by imitating his faith, save by worshipping God, as he worshipped. If therefore what thou hopest not through descent, thou wilt not endeavour to obtain by works; how shall the sitting upon David's seat be fulfilled in thee? And if it shall not be fulfilled in thee, thinkest thou that it shall not be fulfilled at all? And how hath He found it in the woodland tracts? and how did His feet stand? Whatsoever then thou mayest be, that house will stand.

21. Ver. 13. For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for Himself. Sion is the Church Herself; She is also that Jerusalem unto whose peace we are running, who is in pilgrimage not in the Angels, but in us, who in her better part waiteth for the part that will return; whence letters have come unto us, which are every day read. This city is that very Sion, whom the Lord hath chosen.

22. Ver. 14. This shall be My rest for ever. These are the words of God. My rest: I rest there. How greatly doth God love us, brethren, since, because we rest, He saith that He also resteth! For He is not sometimes Himself disturbed, nor doth He rest as we do; but He saith that He resteth there, because we shall have rest in Him. Here will I dwell: for I have a delight therein.

23. Ver. 15. I will bless her widow with blessings, and will satisfy her poor with bread. Every soul that is aware that it is bereft of all help, save of God alone, is widowed. For how doth the Apostle describe a widow? She that is

a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God. He was speaking of those whom we all call Widows in the Church. He saith, She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth; and he numbereth her not among the widows. But in describing true widows, what saith he? She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. Here he addeth, but she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth. What then makes a widow? That she hath no aid from any other source, save from God alone. They that have husbands, take pride in the protection of their husbands: widows seem desolate, and their aid is a stronger one. The whole Church therefore is one widow, whether in men or in women, in married men or married women, in young men or in old, or in virgins: the whole Church is one widow, desolate in this world, if she feel this, if she is aware of her widowhood: for then is help at hand for her. Do ye not recognise this widow in the Gospel, my brethren, when the Lord declared that men ought always to pray and not to faint? There was in a city a judge, He said, which feared not God, neither regarded man. And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him day by day, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. The widow, by daily importunity, prevailed with him: for the judge said within himself, Though I fear not God, neither regard man, yet because this woman troubleth me, I will avenge her. If the wicked judge heard the widow, that he might not be molested; heareth not God His Church, whom He exhorteth to pray?

24. Also, I will satisfy her poor with bread; what meaneth this, brethren? Let us be poor, and we shall then be satisfied. Many who trust in the world, and are proud, are Christians; they worship Christ, but are not satisfied; for they have been satisfied, and abound in their pride. Of such it is said, Our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy, and with the despitefulness of the proud: these have abundance, and therefore eat, but are not satisfied. And what is said of them in the Psalm? All such as be fat upon the earth have eaten and worshipped. They worship Christ, they venerate Christ, they pray unto Christ; but they are not satisfied with His wisdom and righteousness. Wherefore? Because they are not poor. For the poor, that is the humble in heart, the more they hunger, the more they eat; and the more empty they are of the world, the more hungry they are. He who is full refuseth whatsoever thou wilt give him, because he is full. Give me one

who hungereth; give me one of whom it is said, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled: and these will be the poor of whom he hath just said, And will satisfy her poor with bread. For in the very Psalm where it is said, All such as be fat upon the earth have eaten and worshipped; this is said of the poor also, and exactly in the same manner as in this Psalm, The poor shall eat, and be satisfied: they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him. Where it is said, All such as be fat upon earth have eaten and worshipped: it is said, The poor shall eat, and be satisfied. Why, when the rich are said to have worshipped, are they not said to be satisfied; yet when the poor are mentioned, they are said to be satisfied? And whence are they satisfied? What is the nature, brethren, of this satisfying? God Himself is their bread. The bread came down upon the earth, that He might become milk unto us; and said to His own, I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. Hence these words in the Psalm, The poor shall eat, and be satisfied. From what source shall they be satisfied? Hear what followeth: And they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him.

25. Be ye therefore poor, be ye among the members of that widow, let your help be solely in God alone. Money is nought; not thence will ye have aid. Many have been cast headlong down for money's sake, many have perished on account of money; many for the sake of their riches have been marked out by plunderers; they would have been safe, had they not had what made men hunt for them. Many have presumed in their more powerful friends: they in whom they presumed have fallen, and have involved in their ruin those who trusted in them. Look back upon the instances to be seen in the human race. Is it any thing singular that I am telling you? We speak these things not only from these Scriptures; read them in the whole world. Take heed that ye presume not in money, in a friend, in the honour and the boasting of the world. Take away all these things: but if thou hast them, thank God if thou despisest them. But if thou art puffed up by them; think not when thou wilt be the prey of men; already art thou the Devil's prey. But if thou hast not trusted in these things, thou wilt be among the members of that widow, who is the Church, of whom it is said, I will bless her widow with blessings; thou wilt also be poor, and one of those of whom it is said, And will satisfy her poor with bread.

26. Sometimes, however, and we must not pass over this without mention, thou findest a poor man proud, and a rich man humble: we daily endure such persons. Thou hearest a poor man groaning beneath a rich man, and when the more powerful rich man presseth upon him, then thou seest him humble: sometimes not even then, but even then proud; whence thou seest what he would have been, had he any property. God's poor one is therefore poor in spirit, not in his purse. Sometimes a man goeth forth having a full house, rich lands, many estates, much gold and silver; he knoweth that he must not trust in these, he humbleth himself before God, he doth good with them; thus his heart is raised unto God, so that he is aware that not only do riches themselves profit him nothing, but that they even impede his feet, save He rule them, and aid them: and he is counted among the poor who are satisfied with bread. Thou findest another a proud beggar, or not proud only because he hath nothing, nevertheless seeking whereby he may be puffed up. God doth not heed the means a man hath, but the wish he hath, and judgeth him according to his wish for temporal blessings, not according to the means which it is not his lot to have. Whence the Apostle saith of the rich, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. What therefore should they do with their riches? He goeth on to say: That they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. And see that they are poor in this world: Laying up in store for themselves, he addeth, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. When they have laid hold of eternal life, then will they be rich; but since they have it not as yet, they should know that they are poor. Thus it is that God counteth among His poor all the humble in heart, who are established in that twofold charity, whatever they may have in this world—among His poor, whom He satisfieth with bread.

27. Ver. 16, 17. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing. We are now at the end of the Psalm; attend for a short space, Beloved. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing. Who is our salvation, save our Christ? What meaneth, therefore, I will clothe her priests with salvation? "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."—And her saints shall rejoice and sing. Whence shall they rejoice and sing? Because they have been

clothed with salvation: not in themselves. For they have become light, but in the Lord; for they were darkness before. Therefore he hath added, There will I raise up the horn of David: this will be David's height, that trust be put in Christ. For horn signifieth height: and what sort of height? Not carnal. Therefore, while all the bones are wrapped up in flesh, the horn goeth beyond the flesh. Spiritual altitude is a horn. But what is spiritual loftiness, save to trust in Christ? not to say, It is my work, I baptize; but, He it is Who baptizeth. There is the horn of David: and that ye may know that there is the horn of David, heed what followeth; I have ordained a lantern for mine Anointed. What is a lantern? Ye already know the Lord's words concerning John; He was a burning and a shining light. And what saith John? He it is Who baptizeth. Herein therefore shall the saints rejoice, herein the priests shall rejoice: because all that is good in themselves, is not of themselves, but of Him Who hath the power of baptizing. Fearlessly therefore doth every one who hath received baptism come unto His temple; because it is not man's, but His Who made the horn of David to flourish.

28. Ver. 18. Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish. Upon whom? Upon Mine Anointed. For when He saith, Mine anointed, it is the voice of the Father, Who saith, I will bless her widow with blessings, and will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing. He Who saith, There will I raise up the horn of David, is God. He Himself saith, I have ordained a lantern for Mine Anointed, because Christ is both ours and the Father's: He is our Christ, when He saveth us and ruleth us, as He is also our Lord: He is the Son of the Father, but both our Christ and the Father's. For if He were not the Father's Christ, it would not be said above, For Thy servant David's sake, turn not Thou away the presence of Thine Anointed. Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish. It flourisheth upon Christ. Let none of men assume this to himself, that he himself sanctifieth: otherwise it will not be true, Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish. The glory of sanctification shall flourish. The sanctification of Christ therefore in Christ Himself, is the power of the sanctification of God in Christ. In that he saith, shall flourish, he refers to His glory: for when trees flourish, then are they beautiful. Sanctification therefore is in Baptism: thence it flourisheth, and is brightened. Why hath the world yielded to this beauty? Because it

flourisheth in Christ; for, put it in man's power, and how doth it then flourish? since all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the grass.

PSALM 133

Exposition

A Public discourse, in which he defends the Monks against the Donatists.

1. This is a short Psalm, but one well known and quoted. Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in unity. So sweet is that sound, that even they who know not the Psalter, sing that verse. Sweet is it even as charity is sweet, which causes brethren to dwell together in unity. This fact indeed, brethren, needs neither interpretation nor explanation, to wit, how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity; but that which follows contains somewhat that may open to them who knock. Yet that the comprehension of the entire substance of the Psalm may reach us from this verse, let us in the first place reflect over and over again, whether it be said of all Christians, ‘How good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in unity;’ or whether there be some special and perfect persons who dwell together, and that the blessing does not apply to all, but to some, from whom however it may descend upon the rest.

2. For these same words of the Psalter, this sweet sound, that honeyed melody, as well of the mind as of the hymn, did even beget the Monasteries. By this sound were stirred up the brethren who longed to dwell together. This verse was their trumpet. It sounded through the whole earth, and they who had been divided, were gathered together. The summons of God, the summons of the Holy Spirit, the summons of the Prophets, were not heard in Judah, yet were heard through the whole world. They were deaf to that sound, amid whom it was sung; they were found with their ears opened, of whom it was said, They shall see him, who were not told of him; they shall understand who heard not. Yet, most beloved, if we reflect, the very blessing hath sprung from that wall of circumcision. For have all the Jews

perished? and whence were the Apostles, the sons of the Prophets, the sons of the exiles? He speaks as to them who know. Whence those five hundred, who saw the Lord after His resurrection, whom the Apostle Paul commemorates? Whence those hundred and twenty, who were together in one place after the resurrection of the Lord, and His ascension into heaven, on whom when gathered into one place the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, sent down from heaven, sent, even as He was promised? All were from thence, and they first dwelt together in unity; who sold all they had, and laid the price of their goods at the Apostles' feet, as is read in the Acts of the Apostles. And distribution was made to each one as he had need, and none called any thing his own, but they had all things common. And what is 'together in unity?' They had, he says, one mind and one heart God-wards. So they were the first who heard, Behold how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren dwell together. They were the first to hear, but heard it not alone. It was not that that love and unity of the brethren extended no further than to them. The joyfulness of love and the vow to God reached them who came after. Something was vowed to God, as it is written, Vow and pay your vows to the Lord your God. For it is better not to vow, than to vow and not perform. But the mind should be ready so as both to vow and to perform; lest when it thinks itself ill fitted to perform, it prove too slow to vow. For he will surely never pay, whoever deems that he is about to pay of his own.

3. From the words of this Psalm was taken the name of Monks, that no one may reproach you who are Catholics by reason of the name. When you with justice reproach heretics by reason of the Circelliones, that they may be saved by shame, they reproach you on the score of the Monks. See to it yourselves, in the first place, whether they may be compared: if there be any need for your words, ye are already at a disadvantage. There is no need, except to warn every one that he attend, only attend and compare them. What need is there for your words? Let them compare the drunken with the temperate, the rash with the provident, the mad with the sane, them who wander with them who live together. Yet they are wont to say, What is the meaning of the name Monks? Much better may we say, What is the meaning of the word Circelliones? But they are not, say they, called Circelliones. Perhaps we call them by some corrupt form of their name.

Shall we say what is their proper name? Perchance they are called Circumcelliones, not Circelliones. Well, if they be so called, let them say why they are so. They are called Circumcelliones, because they ramble about the cells. For they are wont to go hither and thither, having no abiding place, and to do things which you know well of; and they know also, will they or not.

4. Moreover, beloved, there are they who are false Monks, and we know men of this kind; but the pious brotherhood is not annulled, because of them who profess to be what they are not. There are false Monks, as there are false men among the Clergy, and among the faithful. All these three kinds, whom we have before commended to you, and I think more than once, have their good and their bad. Of these very three kinds it has been said, Two shall be in the field, one shall be taken, one shall be left; two shall be in bed, one shall be taken, and one shall be left; and two women at a mill, one shall be taken, and one shall be left. They are in the field, who govern the Church. Hence the Apostle said, (see whether he were not in the field,) I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. By those who are in bed, he would have them understood who love quiet; for by the bed he would have quiet understood; them who do not mingle in the crowdings and tumult of mankind, serving God in peace; yet from these one shall be taken, one left. Among these are good, and reprobate also. Fear not, because reprobates are found there, for some men are hidden, who are not found, save at the end. Two women also at the mill. He spoke of them by a word of the feminine gender, for he would have bodies of people understood. And wherefore in the mill? Because they are in that world, which is understood to be the mill; because the world turns round as a mill: woe to them whom it grinds to powder. And so there are good [and bad] among the faithful in such wise, that one is taken to destruction, another is taken to God. For the lovers of this life, the dishonest, and the hypocrites, do certain deeds of the world. But others abide therein in the manner of which the Apostle speaks; And they who use this world, as though not using it, for the fashion of this world passeth away: I would have you be without care. Dost thou hear who shall be taken from the mill? For of a truth many sins seem to belong to the rich. For when they do much, and take on them much business, and their wealth grows more and more, it is hard for them not to commit more sins;

of whom it is said, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to go into the kingdom of heaven. And when the disciples were sorry for them, and now despaired on their account, the Lord consoled them, by saying, what is impossible with man, is easy for God. But how does God make that easy? Hear the Apostle, if thou despisest not what he commands. Charge, says he, them who are rich in this world, not to think proudly. You find the proud man poor, the humble Christian rich, because he carefully reflects, that all these things pass by and flow away; that he brought nothing into this world, can carry nothing from it; how that rich man, who was burning in fire in hell, desired that a drop of water should drop upon him from the finger of that man, who had desired the crumbs from his table. Thinking of this, they do as the Apostle says, not trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us all things abundantly to enjoy. Let them, he says, be rich in good works; let them freely give, communicate, lay up treasures. And what is their gain from this? Let them treasure up a good foundation for the time to come, that they may obtain true life. Behold the one who shall be taken from the mill. But the other shall be left, who is as that rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, and despised the poor man who lay at his gate. And so, one shall be taken from the mill, and one shall be left.

5. So Ezekiel speaks of three persons, in whom we may reasonably discern these three kinds. If the Lord send a sword upon the earth, though Noe, Daniel, and Job, were in the midst of them, they shall save neither sons nor daughters, but they alone themselves shall be saved. They have long ago been set free, but under these three names he signified three kinds. Noe signifies the rulers of the Church, because he steered the ark in the flood. But Daniel chose a quiet life, to serve God in celibacy, that is, not seeking a wife. He was a holy man, passing his life in divine longings, tried in many things, and found to be pure gold. How quiet was he, who was unmoved among lions. Thus under the name of Daniel, who was called a 'man of desires,' but those ever chaste and holy, are signified the servants of God, of whom it is said, Behold, how good and pleasant is it, that brethren dwell together in unity. Under the name of Job is signified, the one woman who will be taken from the mill. For he had a wife, he had sons, he had much

riches; and he had so much in this life, that the devil charged him with this, that he served God not for nought, but for what he got. With this the adversary charged the holy man, and in his temptations it was proved how entirely Job served God for nought, and not for that which he received, but for His sake Who had given. And so when all was lost, by sudden trial and affliction, his estate lost, his heirs lost, his wife alone left, not to console but to tempt him, he says as you know, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as the Lord pleased, so hath He done; blessed be the name of the Lord. There was fulfilled in him, that which we daily sing, if our lives do but agree with it, I will bless God at all times: his praise shall always be in my mouth. Thus under these three names are signified three kinds of men, and again in those three in the Gospel, whom I have mentioned.

6. What do they say then, who insult us with the name of Monks? Perchance they will say, Our people are not called Circumcelliones; you call them by a reproachful name, for we do not call them so. Let them say what they call them, and you shall hear. They call them Agnostics. An honest name we grant, if the facts agreed with it. Meanwhile let your holiness see to this. Let them who say to us, 'Shew us where the name of Monks is written,' themselves shew where the name of Agnostics is written. We call them so, say they, because of their striving. For they strive, and the Apostle says, I have fought a good fight. Because they are they who fight against the devil, and prevail, the soldiers of Christ are called Agnostics. Would they were soldiers of Christ, and not soldiers of the devil, whose 'Praises to God' is more fearful than the roaring of a lion. These venture to insult us, because the brethren, when they see men, say, 'Thanks to God.' What is the meaning, they say, of 'Thanks to God?' Are you so deaf as not to know what 'Thanks to God' means? He who says 'Thanks to God,' gives thanks to God. Consider whether a brother ought not to thank God, when he sees his brother. Is it not indeed cause for congratulation, when they who dwell in Christ, see one another? And yet you ridicule our 'Thanks to God,' men mourn at your 'Praises to God.' It is true, indeed, that you have given a reason for calling them Agnostics. Be it as you call them, be it so, we are quite willing. The Lord grant they may fight against the devil, and not against Christ, whose Church they persecute. Yet because they fight, ye call them Agnostics, and find why you call them so, because the Apostle has

said, I have fought a good fight. Why then should we not call Monks so, since the Psalm says, Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in one? For Monos is one, not one in any manner, for a man in a crowd is one, but though he can be called one along with others, he cannot be Monos, that is, alone, for Monos means ‘one alone.’ They then who thus live together as to make one man, so that they really possess what is written, one mind and one heart, many bodies, but not many minds; many bodies, but not many hearts; can rightly be called Monos, that is, one alone. And this is the cause why one only was healed in the pool. Let them who scoff at the name of Monks, answer us, and explain, why he who was found labouring under a disease for thirty-eight years, thus answered the Lord, When the water has been moved, I have no one who may put me in, another descends before me. One had descended, another did not descend then. One alone used to be healed, figuring the unity of the Church. Well do they scoff at the name of unity, who have cut themselves off from unity. Well do they dislike the name of Monks, because they will not live together with the brethren, but following Donatus, have rejected Christ. Your Charity has heard thus much concerning ‘one,’ and ‘one alone;’ now let us rejoice with the Psalm, that we may see what follows. It is short, we can run over it, as far as the Lord permits. I think from what has been said, that what follows will be plain, even though it seems obscure.

7. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, that brethren should dwell together in unity. He pointed, who said, ‘Behold.’ And we, brethren, see, and bless God, and pray, that we also may say, ‘Behold.’ Let the Psalm tell us what they are like. (Ver. 2.) As the ointment on the head, which descended to the beard, to Aaron’s beard, which descended to the fringe of his garment. What was Aaron? A priest. Who is a priest, except that one Priest, Who entered into the Holy of Holies? Who is that priest, save Him, Who was at once Victim and Priest? save Him Who when he found nothing clean in the world to offer, offered Himself? The ointment is on his head, because Christ is one whole with the Church, but the ointment comes from the head. Our Head is Christ crucified and buried; He rose again, and ascended into heaven; and the Holy Spirit came from the head. Whither? To the beard. The beard signifies the courageous; the beard distinguishes the grown men, the earnest, the active, the vigorous. So that when we describe

such, we say, he is a bearded man. Thus that ointment descended first upon the Apostles, descended upon those who bore the first assaults of the world, and therefore the Holy Spirit descended on them. For they who first began to dwell together in unity, suffered persecution, but because the ointment descended to the beard, they suffered, but were not conquered. For the sufferings of the head whence the ointment descended, had preceded theirs. With such an example going before it, who could vanquish that beard?

8. Of that beard was St. Stephen. This is what it is not to be conquered; that our love be not conquered by enemies. They who persecuted the saints, thought they had vanquished them. The one slew, the other were slain; the one killed, the other were killed. Who would not think the one victors, the other vanquished? But because their charity was not conquered, the ointment descended on the beard. Consider Stephen. His love burned within him, burned against them when they heard him, prayed for them when they stoned him. For what says he, when they heard him? Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye ever resist the Holy Spirit. Behold the beard! Did he flatter them at all? fear them at all? They, when they heard the words, which were said against them;—for Stephen seemed in a manner to rage against them; he raged in word, but loved in heart, nor was his charity overcome;—they, I say, hating the word, flying like darkness from the light, began to run for stones, and to stone Stephen. As the words of Stephen had stoned them, so afterwards their stones did Stephen. When should Stephen have been rather angry, when he was stoned, or when he was heard? Behold, he became gentle when he was stoned, and raged when he was heard. Why raged he when he was heard? Because he would convert them, by whom he was heard. His love was not overcome, when the stones fell on him, because the ointment from the head had descended to the beard; and he had heard from the Head Himself, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. He had heard from the Head Himself as He hung on the Cross, and said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And in this wise the ointment descended from the head upon the beard; for that he, when he was stoned, kneeled down and said, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

9. So they were as a beard. For many of them were brave, and endured many persecutions. Yet if the ointment had not descended below the beard, we should have had no monasteries. But since it descended to the edge of his garment, (as he says, which descended to the edge of his garment,) the Church followed, and begat monasteries from the garment of the Lord. For the sacerdotal garment denotes the Church. This is the garment, of which the Apostle speaks, That He might present to Himself a glorious Church, having neither spot nor wrinkle. It is cleansed, so it has no spot; it is spread out, so it has no wrinkle. Where does the fuller spread it, but on the cross? Every day we see garments as it were crucified by fullers; crucified, that they may have no wrinkle. What then is the edge of the garment? My brethren, what are we to understand by the edge of the garment? The edge is the extremity of the garment. What are we to understand by the extremity of the garment? Is it that at the end of time the Church shall have brethren dwelling together in unity? Or can we understand by the edge perfection, because the garment is perfected at the edge, and they are perfect who know how to dwell together in unity? They are perfect who fulfil the law. And how is the law of Christ fulfilled by them who dwell as brethren together in one? Hear the Apostle. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so ye will fulfil the law of Christ. This is the edge of the garment. And how, my brethren, can we understand which edge he means whither the ointment can descend? I do not think that he could have meant the edge on the sides. For there are edges on the sides. But the ointment could descend to that edge which is on the head, where the collar opens. Such are they who dwell together in one; and as the head of a man who dresses himself passes through these edges, so Christ enters in by brotherly amity Who is our Head, that He may be clothed, that the Church may cling to Him.

10. What else does he say? As the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the hills of Sion. He would have it understood, my brethren, that it is of God's grace that brethren dwell together in unity. Not of their own strength or of their own deservings, but of His gift, of His grace, as the dew from heaven. For the earth does not rain or not for itself: what it brings forth withereth, unless the rain descend from above. He says in a certain place in a Psalm, Thou, O God, wilt separate a free rain for Thine inheritance. Why says he, free? Because it is not of our merits, but His free grace. What good have we

sinner deserved? What good have we evil-doers deserved? From Adam comes Adam, and many sins are born into the world over and above Adam. Whoever is born is born Adam; accursed from accursed; and has added, by evil living, to Adam. What good did Adam deserve? Nevertheless, the Merciful One loved, the Bridegroom loved, not because she was beautiful, but that he might make her beautiful. So he calls the grace of God the dew of Hermon.

11. But ye should know what Hermon is. It is a mountain far distant from Jerusalem, that is, from Sion. And so it is strange that he says thus: As the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the mountains of Sion, since mount Hermon is far distant from Jerusalem, for it is said to be over Jordan. Let us then seek out some interpretation of Hermon. The word is Hebrew, and we learn its meaning from them who know that language. Hermon is said to mean, a light set on a high place. For from Christ comes the dew. No light is set on a high place, save Christ. How is He set on high? First on the cross, afterwards in heaven. Set on high on the cross when He was humbled; humbled, but His humiliation could not but be high. The ministry of man grew less and less, as was signified in John; the ministry of God in our Lord Jesus Christ increased, as was shewn at their birth. The former was born, as the tradition of the Church shews, on the 24th of June, when the days begin to shorten. The Lord was born on the 25th of December, when the days begin to lengthen. Hear John himself confessing, He must increase, but I must decrease. And the passion of each shews this. The Lord was exalted on the cross; John was diminished by beheading. Thus the light set on high is Christ, whence is the dew of Hermon. Ye then who would live together in unity desire that dew, be watered from thence. Otherwise ye will not be able to keep fast what ye profess; nor will ye dare to profess, unless He first thunder, nor will ye be able to be steadfast, unless His fatness descend upon you, for that fatness descended on the mountains of Sion.

12. And the mountains of Sion are the great in Sion. What is Sion? The Church. And what are the mountains there? The great ones. They who are signified by the mountains, are also by the beard, also by the edge of the garment. The beard is not understood of any except of full-grown men. None therefore grow together in one, save those in whom the love of Christ

is perfected. For they in whom the love of Christ is not perfected, even when they are together, are full of hatred, troublesome, turbulent, disturb others by their care, and seek what they may say of others; just as a restive horse in a team not only does not draw, but breaks with his hoofs that to which he is harnessed. But if he have the dew of Hermon, which fell on the hill of Sion, he is quiet, peaceable, humble, submissive, pouring forth prayer in place of murmuring. For murmurers are admirably described in a certain passage of the Scriptures, The heart of a fool is as the wheel of a cart. What is the meaning of the heart of a fool is as the wheel of a cart? It carries hay, and creaks. The wheel of a cart cannot cease from creaking. Thus there are many brethren, who do not dwell together, save in the body. But who are they who dwell together? They of whom it is said, And they had one mind and one heart towards God. And no man said that any thing was his own, but they had all things common. Here are pointed out, and described, those who belong to the beard, who belong to the edge of the garment, who are numbered among the mountains of Sion. And if there be others who are murmurers, let them remember the word of the Lord, One shall be taken, and one shall be left.

13. Because there the Lord commanded blessing. Where did He command it? Among the brethren who dwell together. There He enjoined blessing, there they who dwell with one heart bless God. For thou blessest not God in division of heart. In vain dost thou say that thy tongue uttereth the blessing of the Lord, if in thy heart thou dost not utter it. Thou blessest with thy mouth, and cursest in thy heart. They blessed with their mouth, and cursed with their heart. Are they our words? Some persons are signified. Thou blessest the Lord when thou prayest, and continuest in thy prayer, and cursest thy enemy. This is what thou hast from the Lord Himself, Love your enemies. But if thou doest so, and lovest thine enemy, and prayest for him, there the Lord has commanded His blessing; there thou wilt have life for ever, that is, for eternity. For many who love this life, curse their enemies; wherefore, but for this life, for the goods of this world? Where hath thine enemy so straitened thee, that thou must needs curse him? Art thou straitened on earth? Depart, have thy habitation in heaven. How shall I, a man clothed in flesh, enslaved to the flesh, thou wilt say, have my habitation in heaven. First go in heart, whither thou wouldest follow in the

body. Do not hear, 'Lift up your hearts,' with a deaf ear. Keep thy heart lifted up, and no one will straiten thee in heaven. And thus another Psalm suitably follows.

PSALM 134

commentary

Continuation of the former Discourse.

1. Behold, now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Why has he added, ‘in the courts?’ Courts mean the wider spaces of a house. He who stands in the courts is not straitened, is not confined, in some fashion is enlarged. Remain in this enlargement, and thou canst love thy enemy, because thou lovest not things in which an enemy could straiten thee. How canst thou be understood to stand in the courts? Stand in charity, and thou standest in the courts. Breadth lies in charity, straitness in hatred. Hear the Apostle. Wrath and indignation, tribulation and straitness, on every soul of man which doeth evil. But what sayeth he of the breadth of love? Since the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given to us. Where you hear of spreading abroad, understand breadth; where you hear of breadth, understand the courts of the Lord; and you will have the true blessing of God, when you curse not your enemies. For the Spirit addresses them who suffer tribulation, to the intent that they may glory in their tribulation; and says to them, Behold, now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. What means, ‘Behold, now?’ In this time. For after the tribulations are gone through, it is clear that we shall be at leisure to praise the Lord; as it is said, Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house; they shall praise Thee for ever and ever. They who will at that time bless without ceasing, begin here to bless God, here, I say, in tribulations, in temptations, in troubles, amid the trials of this life, amid the snares of the enemy, amid the deceits and assaults of the devil; this is the meaning of, Behold, now, bless ye the name of the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, ye who stand in the house of the Lord. What is the meaning of ‘ye who stand?’ Ye who persevere. For it is said of one who was an archangel, And he stood not in

the truth. And it is said of the friend of the Bridegroom, The friend of the Bridegroom standeth, and heareth Him, and rejoiceth with joy, because of the voice of the Bridegroom.

2. Therefore, Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, lift up your hands by night in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. It is easy to bless by day. What is 'by day?' In prosperity. For night is a sad thing, day a cheerful. When it is well with thee, thou dost bless the Lord. When thou longest for a son, and it is born, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy wife is freed from the danger of child-bearing, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy son was sick, and he is made whole, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy son was sick, perchance thou hast sought an astrologer, a soothsayer, perchance a curse against the Lord has come, not from thy tongue, but from thy deeds, from thy deeds and thy life. Boast not, because thou blessest with thy tongue, if thou cursest with thy life. For men look at thy life, and say, Behold a Christian, behold what these Christians are. Christ is blasphemed for thy sake. See, when thy life curseth, what profit is it that thy tongue blesseth? Wherefore bless ye the Lord. When? By night. When did Job bless? When it was a sad night. All was taken away which he possessed; the children for whom his goods were stored were taken away. How sad was his night! Let us however see, whether he blesseth not in the night. The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; it is as the Lord willed; blessed be the name of the Lord. And black was the night. He was smitten with boils from the head to the feet, he was ulcerated, and wasted away. Then his Eve dared to tempt him. Say something against thy God, and die. Hear him blessing by night. Thou hast spoken, says he, as one of the foolish women. If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not endure evil? See what is, Lift up your hands by night in the sanctuary, and praise the Lord. What said Job? 'Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women.' The Adam in his misery drove away Eve, as though he said, Enough is it for thee, that I am made mortal on thy account. Thou didst prevail in Paradise, thou art vanquished on the dunghill. Great is the grace of God. But how is this, save that the dew of Hermon had rained down on that soul, and the Lord had given a sweet savour, that our land might yield her fruit. By night lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

3. The Lord out of Zion bless thee, Who made heaven and earth. He exhorts many to bless, and Himself blesseth one, because He maketh one out of many, since it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in one. It is a plural number, brethren, and yet singular, to dwell together in one. Therefore, The Lord out of Zion bless thee, Who made heaven and earth. Let none of you say, It cometh not to me. Knowest thou of whom he speaks, the Lord bless thee out of Zion. He blessed one. Be one, and the blessing cometh to thee.

PSALM 135

commentary

A Discourse to the people.

Very pleasant ought it to be to us, and we should rejoice because it is pleasant, to which this Psalm exhorteth us. For it says, Praise the name of the Lord. And it forthwith appends the reason, why it is just to praise the name of the Lord. Praise the Lord, ye servants. What more just? what more worthy? what more thankful? Yea, if His servants praised not the Lord, they would be proud, unthankful, impious. And what will they get by not praising the Lord, except to feel the Lord's wrath. For even the thankless servant, if he will not praise his Lord, does not thereby cause himself not to be a servant. Praise Him or not, thou art still His servant; but if thou praise, thou wilt appease Him, if thou praise Him not, thou wilt displease Him. It is a good and useful exhortation, then, and hence we should occupy ourselves with the thought, how the Lord should be praised, rather than doubt whether He is to be praised. Therefore, praise the name of the Lord. The Psalm exhorts us, the Prophet exhorts us, the Spirit of God exhorts us, lastly, God Himself even exhorts us, to praise the Lord. For He increaseth not by our praises, but we do. God is neither the better, if you praise Him, nor the worse, if you reproach Him; but thou, by praising Him that is good, art the better, by reproaching, the worse; for He remaineth good, as He is. For if He teaches His own servants who have deserved well of Him, the preachers of His Word, the rulers of His Church, the worshippers of His name, the obeyers of His command, that in their own conscience they should possess the sweetness of their life, lest they be corrupted by the praise or disheartened by the reproach of men; how much the more is He above all, the unchangeable One, Who teacheth these things, neither the greater if thou praisest, or the less if thou reproachest. Yet as it is our gain to praise the Lord, in mercy He bids us praise Him, not for His own gain. Let us hear

then what he says. Praise the Name of the Lord, praise the Lord, ye servants. For ye will do nothing out of place, by praising your Lord, as servants. And if ye were to be for ever only servants, ye ought to praise the Lord; how much more ought ye servants to praise the Lord, that ye may hereafter gain the privilege of sons?

2. But since it is written in another Psalm, Praise befitteth the just; and also in another place, Praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner; and moreover in another place it is said, The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way in which I will shew him the salvation of God; and after, But to the sinner, saith God Why dost thou talk of My judgments, and takest My covenant in thy mouth? Whereas thou hatest instruction, and hast cast My precepts behind thee, therefore lest any should think, since it is said, Praise the Lord, ye servants, that though he be a bad servant in that great house, the praise of the Lord shall profit him, he forthwith goes on to explain who they are who should praise the Lord. Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Ye who stand, not, ye who fall. They are said to stand, who persevere in His commands, who serve God with unfeigned faith, with firm hope, and sincere charity; who honour His Church, and give no offence, by an evil life, to them who would come in, but find stones of offence in the way. Therefore, Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, praise ye the name of the Lord. Be thankful; ye were without, and ye stand within. Since then ye stand, is it a small thing for you to think where He should be praised, Who raised you when you were cast down, and caused you to stand in His house, to know Him, and to praise Him? Is it a small boon, that we stand in the house of the Lord? Here meanwhile, in this our sojourning, in this house, which is also called the tabernacle of our sojourning: since we stand here, ought we at all to fail of thankfulness? Must we not think of it, that we stand here? Must we not remember what we have been made? Must we not remember where we were cast down, and whither we have been gathered? Must we not remember that all the wicked sought not the Lord; that them who sought Him not, He sought; whom He found, He aroused; whom He aroused, He called; whom He called, He led in, and caused to stand in His house? If one thinks of this, and is not unthankful, he will utterly despise himself in comparison with the love of his Lord, Who hath done so great things for

him. And since he hath nothing wherewith to repay God for so great benefits, what remains for him but to give Him thanks, not to repay Him? It belongs to the very act of thanksgiving, to receive the cup of the Lord, and to call upon His name. For what can the servant repay the Lord for all that He hath given him? Therefore, Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, praise the Lord.

3. What reason shall I give why you should praise Him? Because the Lord is good. Briefly in one word is here explained the praise of the Lord our God. The Lord is good; good, not in the same manner as the things which He here made are good. For God made all things very good; not only good, but also very good. He made the sky and earth, and all things which are in them good, and He made them very good. If He made all these things good, of what sort is He Who made them? And yet since He made them good, and He who made is much better than the things which He made, you can find nothing better to speak of Him than that the Lord is good, if, however, you understand Him to be in a peculiar sense good, from whom other good things proceed. For He made all things good, He Himself is good, Whom no one made. He is good by His own goodness, not by any good derived from elsewhere. He by His own good, that is Himself, is good, not by attachment to some other good. But for me to attach myself to God is good; Him Who never needed one by whom He might be made good, but all other things needed Him, that they might be made good. Would you hear how He is good alone? The Lord when asked said, No one is good, save God alone. I would not briefly pass over this singularity of His goodness, and yet I am not able fitly to recommend it to you; I fear lest I should be found unthankful, if I pass over it rapidly; and withal I fear lest when I undertake to expound it, I may be oppressed by the vast burden of the Lord's praises. Yet so, my brethren, accept me, who praise, and yet am incompetent, that the worship of my praise may be accepted, though the exposition of His praise be not fulfilled. And may He approve of my will, and pardon my failure.

4. I am filled with ineffable delight, when I hear that The Lord is good, and after examining and surveying all things which I see without, since they are all from Him, although these things please me, yet I return to Him from

Whom they arise, to understand that the Lord is good. And when I penetrate toward Him as near as I can, I find Him deeper within, and higher than my reach, because the Lord is in such sort good, as to need in no wise these things to make Him good. Lastly, I do not praise these things apart from Him. Him however I find to be perfect without them, needing nothing, unchangeable, seeking no good of another whereby He may be increased; fearing no evil, whereby He may be diminished. And what more shall I say? I find in creation that the sky is good, the sun is good, the moon is good, the stars are good, the earth is good, the things which grow in the earth, and are fixed on roots, are good, those which walk and move are good, those which fly in the air and swim in the waters are good. I say that man is good, for the good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good. I say that an angel is good, who hath not fallen by pride and become a devil, but remains in obedience to Him by whom he was made. I say all these things are good, but I do so in connexion with their names, as the good sky, a good angel, a good man; but when I betake myself to God, I think I can say nothing better than good. For truly the Lord Jesus, who Himself said, A good man; said moreover, No one is good but God alone. Did He not urge us to seek and distinguish what is that good which is made good by another good, and that Good which is by itself good? How Good must that be, from which all good things proceed? You can find no good at all, which is not good from Him. As He is properly the Good which makes things good, so is He properly the Good. For neither is it true, that these things which He hath made are not, nor yet is any wrong done to Him when we say that the things which He made are not. Why then did He make them, if they are not when He has made them? Or what did He make, if that which He made is not? But since these things which He made have being, we come still to the comparison of Him with them; and as though He alone had being, He says, I Am That I Am, and, Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, He Who Is hath sent me unto you. He did not say, The Almighty Lord God, the merciful, the just, though He would have said what was quite true, had he so spoken. Every thing being taken away, by which God might be named and called, He answered that He is called Very Being, and as though this were His name. This thou shalt say to them, he says, He Who Is hath sent me. For He Is in such wise, that in comparison with Him, things which are, are not. If He be not compared with them, they are, because they are from

Him, but compared with Him they are not, because to Be truly is to Be unchangeably, and this He Is alone. For what is, is; just as the good of goods, is good. Reflect and see that whatever else ye praise, ye do praise, because it is good. He is mad, who praises what is not good. If thou praisest him who is unjust because he is unjust, wilt not thou too be unjust? If thou praisest a thief because he is a thief, wilt not thou too be a partaker? If thou praisest a just man because he is just, dost not thou too have thy part therein by praising him? For thou wouldest not praise the just, didst thou not love him; thou wouldest not love him, if thou hadst no part with him. If then whatever else we praise, we praise because it is good; thou couldest have no better or stronger or greater reason for praising God, than that He is good. Therefore, Praise the Lord, because He is good.

5. How far can we speak of His goodness? Who can conceive in his heart, or apprehend how good the Lord is? Let us however return to ourselves, and in us recognise Him, and praise the Maker in His works, because we are not fit to contemplate Him Himself. And in hope that we may be able to contemplate Him, when our heart hath been purified by faith, that hereafter it may rejoice in the Truth; now as He cannot be seen by us, let us look at His works, that we may not live without praising Him. So I have said, Praise the Lord, for He is good; sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet. Perchance He would be good and not sweet, if He had not given thee the power of taste. But such did He shew Himself to men, that He even sent bread from heaven; and the Son Who is equal to Him, Who is what He is, He gave to be made man, and to be slain for man, that by that which thou art, thou mightest taste what thou art not. It was meet for thee to taste the sweetness of God, because it is too remote and lofty, thou art too abject, and grovelling below. In this so great severance was sent a Mediator. Being man thou couldest not come to God; and God was made Man, that as, being man, thou mayest come to Man, but canst not come to God; by Man thou mightest come to God; and there was made a Mediator between God and Man, the man Christ Jesus. But if He were man alone, by following what thou art, thou wouldest never reach Him; if He were God alone, for lack of comprehending what thou art not, thou wouldest never reach Him. So God was made man, that by following man which thou canst, thou mayest reach God which thou couldest not. He is Mediator, and thereupon is sweet. What

is sweeter than angels' food? How can God not be sweet, since man ate angels' food? For men and angels live not on different meat. That is truth, that is wisdom, that is the goodness of God, but thou canst not enjoy it in like wise with the angels. For how do they enjoy it? As it is written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, by Whom all things were made. But how dost thou reach it? Because the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. That man might eat angels' food, the Creator of the angels was made man. Therefore, Sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet. If ye taste, sing praises; if ye have tasted how sweet the Lord is, sing praises; if that which ye have tasted has a good savour, praise it; who is so unthankful to cook or purveyor, as not to return thanks by praising what he tastes, if he be pleased by any food. If we are not silent on such occasions, shall we be silent concerning Him, Who has given us all things? Sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet.

6. Now hear of His works. Ye have striven perchance to see the Good of all good, the Good from which all good things come, the Good without which nothing else is good, and the Good which is good without other things; ye have striven to use it; and perchance in straining the sight of your minds, you have found yourselves wanting. For thus I gather from myself, such are my feelings. But if there be any one, as may be, and well may be, stronger in this mental sight than I, who fixes the gaze of his heart for long on that which is, let him praise as he can, let him praise as we are not able. Still, thanks be to Him, who hath tempered His own praise in this Psalm, so that both strong and weak may assay it. For in the mission of His servant Moses, when He said, I Am that I Am, and thou shalt say to the sons of Israel, He who Is hath sent me to you; since it is difficult for the human mind to conceive the fact of His special Being, and a man was sent to men, though not by man; forthwith God tempered His praise, and said this of Himself, which could sweetly be apprehended; He would not abide in that praise which the worshipper could not attain to. Go, said he, tell the sons of Israel, The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you. This is My Name for ever. Seeing, O Lord, Thou hast that former Name, because Thou hast also said, I Am: He Who Is, hath sent me to you; why didst Thou forthwith change Thy Name so as to say, The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? Does not the

force of it seem to you to answer and say, That I said, I Am that I Am, is true, but thou dost not comprehend it; that I said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, is true, and thou dost understand it? That I Am that I Am, belongs to Me; but that I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, belongs to thee. And if thou art unable to see what I am to Myself, understand what I am to thee. And that no one may think that what God said, I Am that I Am, and, He Who Is, hath sent me unto you, is His only Eternal Name, but that what He said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, is His temporal Name, God took not care when He said, I Am that I Am, and He Who Is hath sent me to you, to say that this His Name is eternal; for though He said not this, it would be so understood. For He is, and truly is, and for the very reason that He truly Is, He Is without beginning or end. But as for man He is, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; lest men should feel anxiety, because this is not eternal but temporal, He hath assured us, that He leads us to eternal life out of temporal things. This, He says, is My Name for ever, not because Abraham or Isaac or Jacob are eternal, but because God makes them eternal afterwards for ever. They had indeed a beginning, but shall have no end.

7. In Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, understand His whole church, understand the whole seed of Israel; but all the seed of Israel is not alone that of the flesh, but that also which is of faith. For the Apostle spake to the Gentiles, to whom he said, If then ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise. We then are all blessed in the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. He blessed indeed a certain tree, and created it an olive, as the Apostle has said, even the holy Patriarchs, from whence the people of God grew; but this olive was pruned, not cut down, and from thence the proud branches were broken off, that is, the blasphemous and impious people of the Jews. Yet good and useful branches remained, for from thence were the Apostles. And as some useful branches had been left, by God's mercy the wild olive of the Gentiles was grafted in, to whom the Apostle said, But thou when thou wast a wild olive wert grafted among them, and wert made a partaker of the fatness of the olive-tree. Boast not thyself against the branches. But if thou boastest, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. This is the one tree which belongeth to Abraham and Isaac

and Jacob, and, which is more, the grafted wild-olive belongeth more to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, than the branches which were broken off. They by reason of the breaking off are not there now; but the wild-olive was not once, and is now. They deserved to be broken off by reason of their pride; that gained grace to be grafted in by its humility. They lost the root, that retains it. Since then ye are called the Israel of God, the Israel who belongeth to God, do not thereafter make yourselves strange to Him. Ye were a wild-olive, but now ye are an olive, partakers of the fatness of the olive. For would ye know how the wild-olive has been grafted into Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; lest ye think yourselves not to belong to this olive, because ye belong not to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh? When the Lord wondered at the faith of that Centurion, who was not of the people of Israel, but of the people of the Gentiles; Wherefore, saith He, I tell you, that many shall come from the east and west. Behold now the wild-olive in the hand of the grafter. Many shall come from the east and the west. We see what bears that which is to be grafted in, let us see where He grafteth it. And they shall sit down, He says, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. We see both what He grafted, and where He grafted it. What saith He of the proud natural branches. But the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The fact was foretold, the fact was accomplished.

8. Therefore, Sing praises to the Lord, for He is sweet. And note what He hath done for us. For the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for His own possession. Praise Him, sing praises to Him, because He hath done these things. I say such words as ye can comprehend. The other nations He put under the Angels; the Lord chose Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own possession. He made His own people the field which He cultivated, which He sowed Himself; although He made all nations, He committed the others to the Angels; this He designed to be possessed and preserved by Himself, this people, this Jacob. By its merits, or of His own grace? He says of them who are not yet born, The elder shall serve the younger: so says the Apostle. What merit could they who are not yet born possess, before either of them had done either good or evil? Let not Jacob therefore extol himself, let him not boast himself, or ascribe it to his own merits. He was known before, predestinated before, elected before, not elected for his own merits,

but found out, and gifted with life by the grace of God. So with all the Gentiles; for how did the wild-olive deserve, that it should be grafted in, from the bitterness of its berries, the barrenness of its wildness? It was the wood of the wilderness, not of the Lord's field, and yet He of His mercy grafted the wild-olive into the (true) olive. But up to this time the wild-olive was not grafted in, since the Lord chose Jacob to Himself and Israel for His own possession.

9. And what says the Prophet? Because I have known that the Lord is great. With mind flying upward, raised above the flesh, passing beyond the creature, he knew that the Lord is great. Not all can know by seeing; let them praise what He hath done. (The Lord) is sweet, the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for His own possession. Hence too praise Him. For further, I have known that the Lord is great. The Prophet spoke who entered into the sanctuary of God, who heard by chance unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter; who said what could be said to man, who reserved to himself what could not be said. Let him then be heard as far as we can, and believed where we cannot. Let him be heard as far as we can, Because the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for his own possession; let him be believed as far as we cannot, because he himself knew that the Lord is great. If we should say to him, we ask thee, explain to us His greatness; would he not perchance answer us, He whom I see is not so very great, if He be able to be expounded by me. Let him then return to His works, and tell us. Let him hold in his conscience the greatness of God, which he has seen, which he has committed to our faith, whither he could not lead our eyes, and enumerate some of the things which the Lord hath done here; that unto us, who cannot see His greatness as he can, He may become sweet through the works of His which we can comprehend. Because, says he, I know that the Lord is great, and our God is above all gods. What gods? As the Apostle says, Though there be who are called gods in heaven and in earth, as there are gods many, and lords many; but to us there is one God, the Father, from Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him. Men may be called gods. For it is said, God stood in the congregation of gods. It is said, I have said, Ye are gods, and all the sons of the Highest; is not God above men? But what is there great in this, if God is above men? God is

also above Angels, because the Angels did not make God, but God made the Angels; and He Who made all things must needs be above all which He has made. He therefore knowing the greatness of the Lord, and seeing Him to be above every creature, not merely corporeal but spiritual, says, He is a great King above all gods, He is the highest God, Who has no god above Him. Let him tell us His works. They are understood.

10. All whatsoever the Lord willed, He made in the heaven, and in the earth, in the sea, and in all its deep places. Who can comprehend these things? Who can enumerate the works of the Lord in the heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places? Yet if we cannot comprehend them all, we should believe and hold them without question, because whatever creature is in heaven, whatever is in earth, whatever is in the sea and in all deep places, has been made by the Lord, because all that He willed, that He made, in heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places, as we have just now said. He was not forced to make all that He made, but all that He willed He made. His will was the cause of all things which He made. Thou makest a house, because if thou didst not make it, thou wouldest be left without habitation: necessity compels thee to make a home, not free-will. Thou makest a garment, because thou wouldest go about naked if thou didst not make it; thou art therefore led to making a garment by necessity, not by free-will. Thou plantest a mountain with vines, thou sowest seed, because if thou didst not do so, thou wouldest not have food; all such things thou doest of necessity. God has made things of His goodness. He needed nothing that He made; and therefore He hath made all things that He willed.

11. Dost thou think, ‘we too have what we do of free-will?’ The things we have spoken of, we do of necessity, because if we did not do them, we should be needy and helpless. Do we find any thing which we do of free-will? We do indeed, when we praise God, through loving Him. This indeed thou doest of free-will, when thou lovest that which thou praisest; for this is not of necessity, but because it pleaseth thee. Therefore God pleaseth the just and His saints even when He scourgeth them. When He displeaseth all the unjust, He pleaseth them; and though they are subject to his rod, though in toils, in labours, in wounds, in want, they praise God; He displeaseth them not, though He even torment them. This is free love, not for the

receipt of specified pay, because God Himself will be thy highest reward, Whom thou lovest freely, and so oughtest to love, as not to cease to desire Him for thy reward, as Him Who alone can satisfy thee; as Philip desired Him, when He said, Shew us the Father, and it satisfieth us. Rightly, because we do this of free-will, and we ought to do this of free-will, because we do so of our pleasure; we do so of our love, because though we be chastened by Him, He never ought to displease us, for He is always just. Thus spoke His worshipper, Upon me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will pay, of praise to Thee. And in another place, I will offer Thee free-will offerings. What means, I will offer Thee free-offerings? I will freely praise Thee. For He saith, The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. If thou wert compelled to offer thy Lord a sacrifice, pleasing and acceptable to Him, as formerly sacrifices were vowed for a shadow of things to come, perchance thou wouldest not find a fitting bull in thy herds, or a he-goat in thy goats worthy of the altar of the Lord, or a ram in thy sheepfolds a worthy victim for thy Lord; and not finding them, thou wouldest be troubled what to do, and wouldest perchance say to God, I would and had not. Canst thou say of praise, I would and had not? The very wish is praise. God seeketh not words from thee, but the heart. Lastly, thou mayest say, I had no tongue. If any one by sickness be dumb, he has no tongue, but he has praise. For if God had ears of flesh, and needed the sound of thy body, as long as thou remainest without a tongue, thou wouldest remain without praise. But now, as He seeketh for the heart, looketh into the heart, is the witness, the judge, the approver, the helper, the giver of the crown within, it is enough that thou open thy will. When thou canst, thou confessest with thy mouth to salvation; when thou canst not, thou believest with the heart to justification. Thou praisest with the heart, blessest with the heart; with the heart thou placest sacred victims on the altar of conscience, and the answer to thee is, Peace on earth to men of good will.

12. That God then, Who is omnipotent, did whatsoever He willed in the heaven and earth, thou doest not all thou willest in thine own house. He did whatsoever He willed in the heaven and earth: do thou do all that thou willest even in thy field. Thou willest many things, but canst not do all thou wishest in thy own house. Thy wife perchance gainsays thee, thy children gainsay thee, sometimes even thy slave contumaciously gainsays thee, and

thou doest not what thou willest. But thou sayest, I do what I will, because I punish the disobedient and gainsayer. Even this thou doest not when thou willest. Sometimes thou wouldest punish, and canst not; sometimes thou threatenest, and diest before thou doest what thou threatenest. Do we think thou doest in thyself what thou willest? Dost thou bridle all thy lusts? Perchance thou dost; dost thou even bring about, that the lusts thou bridlest do not rise up? Verily thou wishest this, not to be vexed with the importunity of thy lusts, and yet, the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. Thou doest not in thyself the things thou wouldest. But our God did whatsoever He would, in the heaven and earth. May He give thee grace, that thou mayest do in thyself what thou willest, for except by His help, thou doest not in thyself what thou willest. Moreover, when he could not do in himself what he would, who said, The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things ye would; when he bewailed himself, saying, I delight in the law of God, after the inner man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and making me captive to the law of sin, which is in my members; because, not only in his house, not only in his field, but in his flesh, and even in his spirit, he fulfilled not what he would; he cried to God, Who did whatsoever He would in heaven and earth; and said, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! And as if He Who is good, He Who is sweet, had answered him, straightway he adds, Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Love therefore this Sweetness, praise this Sweetness. Understand hereby God, Who did whatsoever He would in the heaven and earth; He will do in you also what ye will; by His help ye shall fulfil your will. But while ye cannot, confess to Him; when ye shall be able, give Him thanks; when ye fall, cry to Him; when ye are raised up, be not high-minded. He therefore did whatsoever He would in heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places.

13. Raising the clouds from the ends of the earth. We see these works of God in His creation. For the clouds come from the ends of the earth to the midst thereof, and rain; thou scanst not whence they arise. Hence the prophet signifies this, from the ends of the earth, whether it be from the bottom, or from the circumference of the ends of the earth, whencesoever

He wills He raises the clouds, only from the earth. He hath made lightnings into rain. For lightnings without rain would frighten thee, and bestow nothing on thee. He maketh lightnings unto rain. It lightens, and thou tremblest; it rains, thou rejoicest. He hath made lightnings unto rain. He Who terrified thee, Himself causest that thou shouldest rejoice. Who bringeth the winds out of His treasures, their causes are hidden, thou knowest not whence they come. When the wind blows, thou feelest it; why it blows, or from what treasure of His wisdom it is brought forth, thou knowest not; yet thou owest to God the worship of faith, for it would not blow unless He had bidden Who made it, unless He had brought it forth Who created it.

14. We see therefore these things in that work of His; we praise, we marvel at, we bless God; let us see what He has done among men for His people. Who smote the first-born of Egypt. But withal those divine doings are told which thou mightest love, those are not told which thou mightest fear. Attend, and see that also when He is angry, He doeth what He willeth. He smote the first-born of Egypt, from man even unto beast. He sent signs and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt! Ye know, ye have read what the hand of the Lord did by Moses in Egypt, to crush and cast down the proud Egyptians, on Pharaoh and on all his servants. Little did He in Egypt: what did He after His people was led out thence? Who smote many nations, who possessed that land, which God willed to give His people. And slew mighty kings, Sehon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan. All these things which the Psalm records simply, do we read likewise in others of the Lord's books, and there the hand of the Lord is great. When thou seest what has been done to the wicked, take heed lest it be done to thee. For such things were done to them, that thou mightest pass by and not follow them, and not suffer such things. Yet see that the rod of the Lord is over all flesh. Do not think that thou art not seen when thou sinnest; do not think thou art despised; do not think that the Lord sleepeth; take note of the examples of God's benefits; when thou thinkest of these things, and when thou thinkest on God's vengeance, fear. He is Almighty, both to comfort and to chastise. Therefore are these things useful when they are read. But when the good man sees what the wicked has suffered, let him cleanse himself from all iniquity, lest he fall into a like

punishment, a like chastisement. Then ye have thoroughly understood these things. What did God then? He drove out the wicked, And he gave their land for an inheritance, even an inheritance to Israel His servant.

15. Then follows the loud cry of His praise. Thy Name, O Lord, is for ever and ever, after all these things which Thou hast done. For what do I see that Thou hast done? I behold Thy creation which Thou hast made in heaven, I behold this lower part, where we dwell, and here I see Thy gifts of clouds, and winds, and rain. I regard Thy people; Thou leddest them from the house of bondage, and didst signs and wonders upon their enemies. Thou punishedst those who caused them trouble, Thou dravest the wicked from their land, Thou killedst their kings, Thou gavest their land to Thy people: I have seen all these things, and filled with joy have said, Lord, Thy Name is for ever and ever.

16. We see these things according to the literal meaning of what is written, we know and praise them. But if they have a further meaning, let me not be burdensome while I expound them according to my ability. For behold among men can I discern, that He did whatsoever He willed in the heaven and earth. By the sky of heaven, I understand spiritual men; by the earth, carnal; for of these two, heaven and earth, consists the Church of God, and preaching belongeth to spiritual men, obedience to carnal ones. For the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handy-work. For were not the people of God the earth of God, the Apostle would not have said, Ye are God's building, God's husbandry; as a wise architect, I lay the foundation, another buildeth upon it. Therefore we are the building of God, and the field of God. Who, says he, planteth a vineyard, and receiveth not of the fruit thereof? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So in His Church, among His preachers, among His people, just as in earth and heaven, He did whatsoever He willed. Not alone in them. He did whatsoever He willed in the sea, and in all deep places. The sea is all unbelievers, all who do not yet believe; and He hath done whatsoever He would among them; for unbelievers rage not, unless they be permitted, nor are they punished, when they are obstinate, unless He command Who has made all nations. Suppose it is sea, and not land, is it the less subject to the power of God Almighty? He did whatsoever He

would on the sea, and in all deep places. What are the deep places? The hidden hearts of mortals, the deep thoughts of men. And how does God do there what He willeth? Because the Lord trieth the just and the wicked; for he who loveth iniquity, hateth his own life. And where doth He try him? It is written elsewhere, For inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly. Therefore He hath done whatsoever He would in all deep places. The good heart lies hid, the evil heart lies hid; there is a deep place in the good heart, and in the bad; but these things are naked before God, from Whom nothing is hid. He cheers the good heart, He torments the evil. Therefore He hath done all that He would in the sky and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places.

17. Raising the clouds from the ends of the earth. What clouds? The preachers of the word of His Truth. Of which clouds in another place, when angry with His vineyard, He says, I will order My clouds that they rain no rain upon it. And it is a small thing that He raised the clouds from Jerusalem and Israel, which He sent to preach His Gospel in the whole world; of which clouds it is said, Their sound is gone out into every land, and their words into the ends of the world. This is a small thing; but since the Lord Himself saith, This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall be the end, He raiseth the clouds from the ends of the earth. For as the Gospel groweth, whence will be there preachers of the Gospel in the ends of the earth, unless He raise up clouds from the ends of the earth. But what doeth He with the clouds? He turned lightnings to rain. He changed threats into pity. After their terror, He watered them. How did He water them after their terror? When God threateneth thee by a Prophet or Apostle, and thou fearest, doth not the flashing frighten you? But when thou turnest in penitence, and admittest that this is done by mercy, the terror of His lightning changes to rain. Who bringeth the winds out of His treasures. I understand the same preachers both by clouds and winds, the former by reason of the flesh, the latter of the spirit. For clouds are seen, winds are felt and not seen. Lastly, since we see that flesh is of the earth, He bringeth, says He, the clouds from the ends of the world. He had declared, whence He brings the clouds. He cometh to the winds, and because we know not the spirit of man, whence it

cometh, Bringing, He says, the winds out of His treasures. Attend awhile, and ye shall see the rest.

18. Who smote the first-born of Egypt, from man even unto beast. Our first-born is safe by the Lord, because He has given it to us. For that punishment is harmful, that blow is too terrible, even the death of the first-born. What is our first-born? These moral powers of ours, by which we now serve God, are our first-born. We have faith as the first-fruits, whence we begin. For He saith to the Church, Thou shalt come and shalt pass through, from the beginnings of faith. And no one begins to live well, save by faith. Our faith therefore is in our first-born. When our faith is guarded, other things can follow. For since men are cleansed daily by growing better, and by living better, the inner man being renewed day by day, (as the Apostle says, And if our outer man perish, our inner man is renewed day by day,) hence it follows, that our first-born faith lives, of which first-born faith the Apostle speaks, but not only they, but we ourselves who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, that is, who give already to God the first-fruits of our spirit, that is, faith as our first-born; nevertheless, groan in ourselves, waiting our adoption, the redemption of our body. If then it is a great grace of God that our faith is preserved, it is a great punishment to slay the first-born, when men lose their faith being involved in the afflictions of the Church. For they afflict the Church when they lose their faith, for affliction is meant by Egypt. Whoever therefore afflicts the Church, whoever causes offences to the Church, though he be called a Christian, yet his first-born is dead. They will be infidel, worthless, they will have name and sign only, but they have buried their first-born in their hearts; so much so, that when thou shalt have said any thing to him about good living, about the hope of eternal life, about the fear of eternal fire, he will mutter to himself; or if he be such as to dare before thee, he turns his face and says, Who hath returned hither from thence? men say to themselves what they will. And yet he is a Christian; but because he afflicts us, his first-born is slain, his faith is dead, and this from man even unto beast. I will tell you, brethren, what I mean. I understand that men are spiritually meant to be the learned, on account of the rational mind which is man; beasts the unlearned, but yet having faith, else they would not have a first-born. It is the learned who afflict the Church, by creating schism and heresy. Wherefore ye find no faith in them, because

they are become Egypt, that is, an affliction to the people of God. Their first-born is slain, they draw after them an unlearned crowd, these are beasts. In this affliction then, wherewith the Church is afflicted, the faith of them who afflict her perishes. The first-born dies of the learned and unlearned, because God slew the first-born of Egypt from man even unto beast.

19. He sent signs and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants. Pharaoh is the king of the Egyptians. Observe the name, and note how God doeth these things. The king of every nation is the highest one. Egypt is affliction. Pharaoh is dispersion. Affliction therefore has dispersion for its king, because they who afflict the Church, are dispersed when they afflict it. For that they may afflict it, they are scattered, as the king leads, the people follow; dispersion goes before, affliction follows. Listen ye, listen ye to these names full of typical meaning and wisdom. You will find not one of these names, which means any good thing, where God hath displayed His wrath.

20. He smote many nations, and slew strong kings. Tell me, what kings and what nations? Sehon, king of the Amorites. Listen to names pregnant with sacramental meanings. He slew, says he, Sehon, king of the Amorites. Truly He killed them, and now may He slay them from the hearts of His servants, from the temptations of His Church; and may not His hand stop in slaying such kings and such people, for Sehon is interpreted the lust of the eyes; the Amorites mean, they who cause bitterness. And here see whether we can understand how these who cause bitterness, have for their king the lust of the eyes. The lust of the eyes cannot but be lying; it has a colour, it has no truth. And now why need we wonder, if they who cause bitterness have such a king, namely, a lying king? For except deceit and lying go before, there would be none to cause bitterness in the Church, for they cause bitterness in that they lie. The lust of the eyes goes before, bitterness follows, as it went before in the devil. For is not the lust of the eyes that which transforms him to an angel of light? God's right hand slay him and them; him lest he tempt, them that they may be purged. For so that king is slain in every man, when he condemneth deception, and loveth the truth. The hand of God ceaseth not to do this. For as He did then verbally, now He

doeth spiritually, that He may fulfil what he declared in prophecy. Moreover, He slew another king, and his people. And Og the king of Basan. How evil is this one? Og means shutting up, Basan means confusion. Evil is that king, who shuts up the road to God. For this the devil does; by always bringing forward his falsehoods, by bringing forward his idols, by introducing himself as a friend by means of his fanatical soothsayers, his augurs, diviners, magicians, rites sacred to demons, he shutteth up the way. Wherefore Christ is the means, that the way may be made open, which had been shut up, for by Him one of the redeemed saith, And in my God I will pass over a wall; so that the devil is busied in nothing else, but that he may shut up the way, lest men believe in God. For if they believe in God, the way is open, and Christ himself is the Way; but if men believe not in God, the way is shut up. But if it be shut up, because He is not believed, what remains, but that when He comes Who was not believed, they should be confounded who believed not? Why? Because the shutting up precedes, confusion follows. The shutting up, as the King goes before; the confusion, as the people follow. They whom he shuts up, that they believe not in Christ, when Christ appears, will all be confounded, and their iniquities will reprove them. Then the wicked in confusion shall say, what did our pride profit us? It is a great mystery, my brethren. Scattering is the king of afflictions, they are scattered that they may be afflicted. A great mystery. The lust of the eyes, that is, deceit, is the prince of them who cause bitterness, for they deceive that they may cause bitterness. Shutting up is the prince of confusion, for they are shut up, that they may not cross over to faith, and when they come before Him in Whom we believe, they will be confounded. And all the kingdoms of Chanaan God destroyeth. Chanaan means, Ready for Humbling; Humbling seemeth to mean something good, but only if it profit, for evil humbling is punishment. If humbling were not of the nature of punishment, it would not be said, that he who exalteth himself shall be humbled. For no benefit is conferred on him, since his punishment is to be humbled. Chanaan therefore is proud now. Every wicked man, every infidel, lifteth up his heart, will not believe in God. But this exaltation is prepared for humbling on the day of judgment; he will be humbled then, when he willeth not. For there are vessels of wrath, which are made ready for destruction. Let them exalt themselves now, babble, raise themselves above the faithful, scoff at the faithful, revile Christians;

let them say, 'These are old wives' tales, which they prate of the day of judgment.' That haughtiness of theirs is prepared for humbling. When the Judge has come, whose advent was before laughed at, then he who now is proud shall be brought low, not to his good, but to his punishment. But he is not yet humbled, he is being made ready for it, that is, he is getting ready for damnation, getting ready for the slaughter.

21. All these things then did God overthrow, in the body at that time, when our fathers were led out of the land of Egypt, in the spirit now. Nor does His Hand cease until the end. Therefore deem not that these mighty deeds of God were then finished and have ceased. Thy Name, O Lord, he says, is for ever. That is, Thy loving-kindness ceaseth not, Thy hand ceaseth not for ever from doing these things, which then Thou didst afore declare in a figure. For all these things happened unto them in a figure, but they are written for our admonition, on whom the end of the ages is come. O Lord, Thy Memorial is from generation to generation. One generation and another generation; the generation by which we are made the faithful, and are born again by baptism; the generation by which we shall rise again from the dead, and shall live with the Angels for ever. Thy Memorial, O Lord, is above this generation, and above that; for neither doth He now forget to call us, nor then will He forget to crown us. Thy Memorial, O Lord, is from generation to generation.

22. For the Lord hath judged His people. Verily He hath fulfilled all these things upon the people of the Jews. Have His works at all remained, after He brought His people into the land of promise? Manifestly He will yet judge them. The Lord hath judged His people, and will be called upon among His servants. Already hath He judged the people. Save the final judgment, the people of the Jews is judged. What is judged? The just are taken away, the unjust are left. But if I lie, or am thought to lie, because I have said, it is already judged, hear the Lord saying, I have come for judgment into this world, that they who see not may see, and they who see may be made blind. The proud are made blind, the lowly are enlightened. Therefore, He hath judged His people. Isaiah spake the judgment. And now, thou house of Jacob, come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord. This is a small matter; but what follows? For He hath put away His people, the house

of Israel. The house of Jacob is the house of Israel; for he who is Jacob, the same is Israel. Ye know the holy Scriptures, and I think you remember, that the same Jacob, when he saw an Angel wrestling with him, received the name of Israel. It is therefore one man, whether it be Jacob or Israel, and one person: the house of Jacob and the house of Israel, one nation, one people; this he invites, that sends away. And of a surety already thou hast killed Christ, thou house of Jacob, thou hast killed Christ; already thou hast wagged thy head before the cross; hast marked Him as He hung there; hast said, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. Already the Physician has prayed for the madmen, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Surely already thou hast done all these things; and now believe on Him Whom thou hast slain, drink the Blood which thou hast poured out. And now, thou house of Jacob, I would expound the witness of Isaiah, which he hath said here, For the Lord hath judged His people, and He will be called upon among His servants. For He is understood to judge His people, by separating in that very people of His the good from the bad, the faithful from the unfaithful, the Apostles from the lying Jews. He signified this, as I began to say, when He spake by the Prophet, now after all these ill-doings of thine, O thou house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Wherefore do I say to you, Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord? Lest by remaining in Judaism, ye come not to Christ. But why? Did not Christ always prophesy there? But now He hath sent away His people, the house of Israel. Come, O house of Jacob, for He hath sent away His people the house of Jacob; come, O house of Israel, for He hath sent away His people the house of Israel. Who hath come, who hath been sent away, save that this is the judgment, that they who see not may see, and they who see may become blind? Therefore the Lord hath judged His people. Therefore He hath separated them, and will He not find there them whom He may restore to His kingdom? Surely He will find, and He shall be called upon among His servants. He cast not away, says the Apostle, His people whom He knew. And how does he prove this? For I also am an Israelite. Therefore God had judged His people, by separating the evil and the good; that is to say, He shall be called upon among His servants. By whom? By the Gentiles. For how vast are the nations who have come in by faith. How many farms and desert places now come in to us? They come thence no one can tell how numerously; they would believe. We say to

them, What will ye? They answer, To know the glory of God. Believe, my brethren, that we wonder and rejoice at such a claim of these rustic people. They come I know not whither, roused up by I know not whom. How shall I say, I know not by whom? I know indeed by whom, because He says, No one cometh to Me, save whom the Father draweth. They come suddenly from the woods, the desert, the most distant and lofty mountains, to the Church; and many of them, nay, near all hold this language, so that we see of a truth that God teacheth them within. The prophecy of Scripture is fulfilled, when it says, And they shall all be taught of God. We say to them, What do ye long for? And they answer, To see the glory of God. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. They believe, they are sanctified, they will to have clergy ordained for them. Is it not fulfilled, and He will be called upon among His servants?

23. Lastly, after all that arrangement and dispensation, the Spirit of God turns itself to reproaching and ridiculing those idols, which are now ridiculed by their very worshippers. The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold. As God made all these things, Who made whatever He would in heaven and earth, Who hath judged His people, and will be called upon by His servants, what can any thing that man maketh be, but an object of ridicule, not adoration? Was He perchance about to speak of the idols of the Gentiles, that we might despise them all? was He about to speak of the idols of the heathen, stones and wood, plaster and pottery? I say not these, they are mean materials. I speak of that which they specially love, that which they specially honour. The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold. Surely it is gold, surely it is silver: because silver glitters, and gold glitters, have they therefore eyes, or do they see? As it is silver, as it is gold, it is useful not to the religious, but to the covetous; nay not even useful to the covetous, but useful to him who useth it well, and who gains by spending it celestial treasure. But as these things are senseless, why make ye men of silver and gold to be gods? See ye not that the gods which ye make see not? They have eyes, and will not see; they have ears, and will not hear; they have nostrils, and will not smell; they have a mouth, and will not speak; they have hands, and will not work; they have feet, and will not walk. All these things could the carpenter, the silversmith, the goldsmith make, both eyes, and ears, and nostrils, and mouth, and hands, and feet, but he could give

neither sight to the eyes, nor hearing to the ears, nor speech to the mouth, nor smell to the nostrils, nor motion to the hands, or going to the feet.

24. And man, thou laughest doubtless at what thou hast made, if thou knowest by Whom thou art made. But of them who know not, what is said? All they who make them, and all they who trust in them, are like them. And ye believe, brethren, that there is a likeness to these idols expressed not in their flesh, but in their inner man. For they have ears, and hear not. God calls to them indeed, He who hath ears to hear, let him hear. They have eyes, and see not, for they have the eyes of the body, and not the eyes of faith. Lastly, this prophecy is fulfilled among all the nations. See how it hath been said by the prophet. It is nothing allegorical or figurative I mention. Listen to a peculiar, express, simple, plain prophecy, behold its fulfilment. The Lord, says he, hath prevailed against them: so saith the prophet Zephaniah. Against the gainsayers, and rebellious, and them who make martyrs by the murder of the faithful, but know not, against them the Lord hath prevailed. And how hath He prevailed? We shall see in His Church that He hath prevailed. They wished to slay, to destroy a few Christians; they poured out their blood; from the blood of the slain so many rose up, that by them they, the murderers of the Martyrs, were overcome. And now they ask where they may hide their idols, who of yore killed Christians for the sake of their idols. Hath not the Lord prevailed against them? See whether He does what follows. The Lord hath prevailed against them. And what did He do? He hath destroyed all the gods of the Gentiles, and every man shall worship Him in his own place, all the isles of the Gentiles. What is this? Was it not prophesied? Is it not fulfilled? Is it not seen, as it is written? And they who remain have eyes, and see not; have nostrils, and smell not. They perceive not that savour. We are a good savour of Christ, as the apostle says every where. What profiteth it, that they have nostrils, and smell not that so sweet savour of Christ? Truly it is done in them, and truly it is said of them, All they who make them, and all they who trust in them, are like to them.

25. But daily do men believe through the miracles of Christ our Lord; daily the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf are opened, the nostrils of the senseless are breathed into, the tongues of the dumb are loosed, the hands of

the palsied are strengthened, the feet of the lame are guided; sons of Abraham are raised up of these stones, to all of whom be it said, Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel. All are sons of Abraham; and if sons of Abraham are raised up from these stones, it is plain that they are rather the house of Israel who belong to the house of Israel, the seed of Abraham, not by the flesh, but by faith. Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel. But even granting that it is said of that house, and the people of Israel is meant, from thence did the Apostles and thousands of the circumcised believe? Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel; bless the Lord, ye house of Aaron; bless the Lord, ye house of Levi. Bless the Lord, ye nations, this is, the house of Israel generally; bless Him, ye leaders, this is, the house of Aaron; bless Him, ye servants, this is, the house of Levi. What of the other nations? Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.

26. Let us also with one voice say what follows: Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, who dwelleth in Jerusalem. Out of Zion is Jerusalem too. Zion is 'watching,' Jerusalem the 'vision of peace.' In what Jerusalem will He dwell now? In that which has fallen? Nay, but in that which is our mother, which is in the heavens, of which it is said, The desolate hath more children than she which hath a husband. For now the Lord is from Zion, because we watch when He will come; now as long as we live in hope, we are in Zion. When our way is ended, we shall dwell in that city which will never fall, because the Lord dwelleth in her, and keepeth her, which is the vision of peace, the eternal Jerusalem; for the praise of which, my brethren, language sufficeth not; where we shall find no enemy, either within the Church or without the Church, neither in our flesh, nor in our thoughts. For death shall be swallowed up in victory, and we shall be free to see God in eternal peace, being made citizens of Jerusalem, the city of God.

PSALM 136

Exposition

1. Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever. This Psalm contains the praise of God, and all its verses finish in the same way. Wherefore although many things are related here in praise of God, yet His mercy is most commended; for without this plain commendation, he, whom the Holy Spirit used to utter this Psalm, would have no verse be ended. I remember, in the hundred and fifth Psalm, which begins in the same way, because the manuscript which I read had not for ever, but, for ages His mercy, that I enquired what we had better understand. For, in the Greek language, it is written, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, which may be interpreted, for ages, and, for ever. But it would be tedious to renew the enquiries I made as best I could in that place. But in this Psalm, the same manuscript has not for ages, which most have, but, for ever His mercy. Although after the judgment, by which at the end of the world the quick and the dead must be judged, the just being sent into life eternal, the unjust into everlasting fire, there will not afterwards be those, whom God will have mercy on, yet rightly may His future mercy be understood to be for ever, which He bestows on His saints and faithful ones, not because they will be miserable for ever, and therefore will need His mercy for ever, but because that very blessedness, which He mercifully bestows on the miserable, that they cease to be miserable, and begin to be happy, will have no end, and therefore His mercy is for ever. For that we shall be just from being unjust, whole from being unsound, alive from being dead, immortal from being mortal, happy from being wretched, is of His mercy. But this that we shall be, will be for ever, and therefore His mercy is for ever. Wherefore, give thanks to the Lord; that is, praise the Lord by giving thanks, for He is good: nor is it any temporal good you will gain from this confession, for, His mercy endureth for ever; that is, the benefit which He bestows mercifully

upon you, is for ever. The expression, for He is good, in the Greek is ἀγαθός; not as in the hundred and fifth Psalm, for there ‘He is good,’ in Greek is χρηστός. And so some have expounded the former, ‘Since He is sweet.’ For ἀγαθός is not good any how, but good most excellently.

2. Then follows, Give thanks to the God of gods, for His mercy endureth for ever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His mercy, endureth for ever. We may well enquire, Who are these gods and lords, of whom He Who is the true God is God and Lord? And we find written in another Psalm, that men even are called gods; as it is, God stood in the congregation of the gods, He discerneth between the gods. And a little afterwards, I have said, Ye are gods, and all children of the High One; but ye shall die like men, and fall as one of the princes. The Lord even takes note of this testimony in the Gospel, saying, Is it not written in your Law, I have said, Ye are gods? If He called them gods, for whom the word of God was sent, and the Scriptures cannot be broken, how say ye, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? It is not therefore because they are all good, but because the word of God came to them, that they were called gods. For were it because they are all good, He would not thus distinguish between them. For when He said, God standeth in the congregation of gods, He does not say, He distinguishes between God and men, as if He shewed what was the difference between gods and men; but He saith, He judgeth between the gods. Then follows, How long do ye judge iniquity! and the rest, which He says certainly not to all, but to some, because He saith it in distinguishing, and yet He distinguisheth between the gods.

3. But it is asked, If men are called gods to whom the word of the Lord came, are the Angels to be called gods, when the greatest reward which is promised to just and holy men is the being equal to Angels? In the Scriptures I know not whether it can, at least easily, be found, that the Angels are openly called gods; but when it had been said of the Lord God, He is terrible, above all gods, he adds, as by way of exposition why he says this, for the gods of the heathen are devils. Over such gods as these, he says, that the Lord is terrible among His holy places, the heavens which He hath made, from which the devils are frightened. For so it follows. But the Lord made the heavens. It is not therefore the gods without addition; but the gods

of the Gentiles are devils; but above He says, He is terrible above all gods. He does not say, above all the gods of the Gentiles, although He would have this understood, by adding what follows, For the gods of the Gentiles are devils. It is said that this is not the reading in Hebrew, but the gods of the Gentiles are idols. If this be true, much the more must the Seventy be believed to have interpreted by the Divine Spirit, the same Spirit as He by whom these things were said in the Hebrew. For by the working of the same Spirit this also should be said which was said, The gods of the Gentiles are devils, that we might understand what had been expressed in the Hebrew, the gods of the Gentiles are idols, meaning rather the devils which dwell in the idols. For as regards images, which in Greek are called idols, a name we now use in Latin, they have eyes and see not, and all the other things which are said of them, because they are utterly without sense; wherefore they cannot be frightened, for nothing which has no sense can be frightened. How then can it be said of the Lord, He is terrible above all gods, because the gods of the Gentiles are idols, if the devils which may be frightened are not understood to be in these images. Whence also the Apostle says, We know that an idol is nothing. This refers to its earthy senseless material. But that no one may think, that there is no living and sentient nature, which delights in the Gentile sacrifices, he adds, But what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: I would not have you partakers with devils. If therefore we never find in the divine words that the holy Angels are called gods, I think the best reason is, that men may not be induced by the name to pay that ministry and service of religion (which in Greek is called λειτουργία or λατρία) to the holy Angels, which neither would they have paid by man at all, save to that God, Who is the God of themselves and men. Hence they are much more correctly called Angels, which in Latin is 'Nuntii,' that by the name of their function, not their substance, we may plainly understand that they would have us worship the God, Whom they announce. The whole then of that question the Apostle has briefly expounded, when he says, For though there be who are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there are gods many and lords many; yet we have one God the Father, from Whom are all, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him.

4. Let us therefore give thanks to the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, for His mercy endureth for ever. Who alone did wonderful things. As at the last part of every verse, it is written, For His mercy endureth for ever, so we must understand at the beginning of each, though it be not written, Give thanks. Which indeed in the Greek is very plain. It would be so in Latin, if our translators had been able to make use of that expression. Which indeed they could have done in this verse, if they had said, ‘To Him Who doeth wonderful things.’ For where we have, Who did wonderful things, the Greek has τῷ ποιήσαντι, where we must necessarily understand, give thanks. And I would they had added the pronoun, and said to Him, Who did, or to Him Who doeth, or to Him Who made sure; because then one might easily understand, let us give thanks. For now it is so obscurely rendered, that He who either knows not or cares not to examine a Greek manuscript may think, Who made the heavens, Who made sure the earth, Who made the luminaries, for His mercy endureth for ever, has been so said, because He did these things for this reason, because His mercy endureth for ever: whereas they, whom He has freed from misery, belong to His Mercy: but not that we should believe that He makes sky, earth, and luminaries, of His Mercy; since they are marks of His Goodness, Who created all things very good. For He created all things, that they might have their being; but it is the work of His Mercy, to cleanse us from our sins, and deliver us from everlasting misery. And so the Psalm thus addresses us, Give thanks unto the God of Gods, give thanks unto the Lord of Lords. Give thanks to Him, Who alone doeth great wonders; give thanks to Him, Who by His wisdom made the heavens; give thanks to Him, Who stretched out the earth above the waters; give thanks to Him, Who alone made great lights. But why we are to praise, he setteth down at the end of all the verses, for His mercy endureth for ever.

5. But what meaneth, Who alone doeth great wonders? Is it because many wonderful things He hath done by means of angels and men? Some wonderful things there are which God doeth alone, and these he enumerates, saying, Who by His wisdom made the heavens, Who stretched out the earth above the waters, Who alone made great lights. For this reason did he add alone in this verse also, because the other wonders which he is about to tell of, God did by means of man. For having said, Who alone

made great lights, he goes on to explain what these are, the sun to rule the day, the moon and stars to govern the night; then he begins to tell the wonders which He did by means of angels and men; Who smote Egypt with their first-born, and the rest. The whole creation then God manifestly made, not by means of any creature, but alone; and of this creation he hath mentioned certain more eminent parts, that they might make us think on the whole; the heavens we can understand, and the earth we see. And as there are visible heavens too, by mentioning the lights in them, he has bid us look on the whole body of the heavens as made by Him.

6. However, whether by what he saith, Who made the heavens in understanding, or, as others have rendered it, in intelligence, he meant to signify, the heavens we can understand, or that He in His understanding or intelligence, that is, in His wisdom made the heavens, (as it is elsewhere written, in wisdom hast Thou made them all,) implying thereby the only-begotten Word, may be a question. But if it be so, that we are to understand that God by His wisdom made the heavens, why saith He this only of the heavens, whereas God made all things by the same wisdom? Is it that it needed only to be expressed there, so that in the rest it might be understood without being written; so that he means to say, Who by His wisdom made the heavens: Who laid out the earth above the waters, here understanding, by His wisdom: Who alone made great lights; the sun to rule the day, the moon and stars to govern the night, that is, by His wisdom. How then could it be alone, if in understanding or in intelligence means by His wisdom, that is, by the only-begotten Word? Is it that, inasmuch as the Trinity is not three Gods, but one God, he states that God made these things alone, because He made not creation by means of any creature?

7. But what is, Who laid out the earth above the waters? For it is a difficult question, because the earth seemeth to be the heavier, so that it should be believed not so much to be borne on the waters, as to bear the waters. And that we may not seem contentiously to maintain our Scriptures against those who think that they have discovered these matters on sure principles, we have a second interpretation to give, that the earth which is inhabited by men, and contains the living creatures of the earth, (which in another way is called the dry land, as it is written, Let the dry land appear; and God called

the dry land earth,) is laid out above the waters because it stands out above the waters which surround it. For when we speak of a city on the sea being built above the waters, it is not meant that the sea is under it in the same way as the waters are under the chambers of caverns, or under ships sailing over them; but it is said to be above the sea, because it stands up above the sea below it. Thus Pharaoh is said to have gone out over the water, (for so it is in the Greek, where some Latin versions have, to the water,) and the Lord sat on the well, because both were higher than the river and the well, the one beside the river, the other beside the well.

8. But if these words further signify something else which more closely concerns us, God by His wisdom made the heavens, that is, His saints, spiritual men, to whom He has given not only to believe, but also to understand things divine; those who cannot yet attain to this, and only hold their faith firmly, as being beneath the heavens, are figured by the name of earth. And because they abide with unshaken belief upon the baptism they have received, therefore it is said, He laid out the earth above the waters. Further, since it is written of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and that these two, wisdom and knowledge, differ somewhat from one another is testified by other utterances of Scripture, especially in the words of holy Job, where both are in a manner defined; (for he saith, But unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding;) not unsuitably then do we understand wisdom to consist in the knowledge and love of That Which ever is and abideth unchangeable, Which is God. For where he saith, piety is wisdom, in Greek is θεοσέβεια, and to express the whole of this in Latin, we may call it 'Dei cultus,' (worship of God.) But to depart from evil, which he calls knowledge, what else is it but to walk cautiously and heedfully in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in the night, as it were, of this world, that each one by keeping himself from iniquity may avoid being confounded with the darkness, distinguished by the light of his proper gift. And so, when in a certain place the Apostle would shew the harmonious variety of graces in men of God, he placed these two in the front rank, saying, To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; this I suppose is, the sun to rule the day: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; this, the moon. And then I imagine the stars

to be in a certain sense mentioned in what follows, To another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gift of healing, by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; for there is none of these which is not necessary in the night of this world; but when it is passed, they will not be necessary, and therefore it is said, to govern the night. To govern the day and the night, he says, that there might be the power of shining either by day or by night; and in regard of spiritual gifts, this means that He gave them power to become the sons of God. Who smote Egypt with their first-born. He smote too the world, with the things which are held chief in the world.

9. Who brought out Israel from the midst of them. He brought out also His saints and faithful ones from the midst of the wicked. With a mighty Hand and stretched-out Arm. What more powerful, what more out-stretched, than that of which is said, To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed? Who divided the Red Sea in two parts. He divided also in such wise, that the same baptism should be to some unto life, to others unto death. And brought out Israel through the midst of it. So too He brings out His renewed people through the laver of regeneration. And overthrew Pharaoh and his power in the Red Sea. He quickly destroyeth both the sin of His people and the guilt thereof by baptism. Who led His people through the wilderness. Us too He leadeth through the drought and barrenness of this world, that we perish not therein. Who smote great kings, and slew famous kings. From us too He smites and slays the deadly powers of the devil. Sehon king of the Amorites, an ‘useless shoot,’ or ‘fiery temptation,’ for so is Sehon interpreted: the king of ‘them who cause bitterness,’ for such is the meaning of Amorites. And Og, the king of Basan. The ‘heaper-together,’ such is the meaning of Og, and, king of ‘confusion,’ which Basan signifies. For what else doth the devil heap together but confusion? And gave away their land for an heritage, even an heritage unto Israel His servant. For He giveth them, whom once the devil owned, for an heritage to the seed of Abraham, that is, Christ. Who remembered us in our low estate, and redeemed us from our enemies by the Blood of His only-begotten Son. Who giveth food to all flesh, that is, to the whole race of mankind, not Israelites only, but Gentiles too; and of this Food is said, My Flesh is meat indeed. Give thanks unto the

God of Heaven, for His mercy endureth for ever. Give thanks unto the Lord of lords, for His mercy endureth for ever. For what he here says, the God of Heaven, I suppose that he meant to express in other words what He had before said, the God of gods. For what there he subjoined, he has here also repeated. Give thanks unto the Lord of lords. But though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him; to Whom we confess that His mercy endureth for ever.

PSALM 137

A Sermon to the People.

I think ye have not forgotten, that I brought to your notice, or rather to your recollection, that every one who is trained in the holy Church ought to know of what place we are citizens, and where we are wandering, and that the cause of our wandering is sin, the gift of our return, the remission of our sins, and our justification by the grace of God. Ye have heard and know that there are two cities, for the present outwardly mingled together, yet separated in heart, running together through the course of time until the end; one whose end is everlasting peace, and it is called Jerusalem; the other whose joy is peace in this world, and it is called Babylon. The meanings of these names too ye remember, that Jerusalem means ‘vision of peace;’ Babylon, ‘confusion.’ Jerusalem was held captive in Babylon, but not all, for the Angels too are its citizens. But as regards men predestined to the glory of God, to become by adoption joint-heirs with Christ, whom He has redeemed from this very captivity by His own Blood, that this part, I say, of the citizens of Jerusalem are held captive in Babylon on account of sin, but first begin to go forth from thence in spirit by confession of sin and love of righteousness, and then afterwards at the end of the world are to be separated in body also; this we set before you in that Psalm, which we first handled here with you, beloved, which begins thus: For Thee, O God, a hymn is meet in Sion, and to Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem. But to-day we have sung, By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion. Observe, that in the former it is said, For Thee, O God, a hymn is meet in Sion; but here, By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion, that Sion where a hymn is meet for God.

2. What then are the waters of Babylon? and what is our sitting and weeping in remembrance of Sion? For if we be citizens of Sion, we not only

chant this, but do it. If we are citizens of Jerusalem, that is Sion, and in this life, in the confusion of this world, in this Babylon, do not dwell as citizens, but are detained as captives, it befits us not only to chant these things, but also to do them, with affectionate regard, with religious longing for our everlasting city. This city too which is called Babylon hath its lovers, who look for peace in this world, and hope for nothing beyond, but fix their whole joy in this, end it in this, and we see them toil exceedingly for their earthly country: but whosoever live faithfully even therein, if they seek not therein pride, and perishable elation, and hateful boasting, but exhibit true faith, such as they can, as long they can, to whom they can, so far as they see earthly things, and understand the nature of their citizenship, God suffereth them not to perish in Babylon; He hath predestinated them to be citizens of Jerusalem. He understandeth their captivity, and sheweth to them another city, for which they ought truly to sigh, for which they ought to use every endeavour, to win which they ought to the utmost of their power to urge their fellow-citizens, now their fellow-wanderers. Therefore saith the Lord Jesus Christ, He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and again He saith, If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who will give you that which is your own?

3. However, brethren, observe the waters of Babylon. The waters of Babylon are all things which here are loved, and pass away. One man, for example, loveth to practise husbandry, to grow rich thereby, to employ his mind therein, thence to gain pleasure: let him observe the issue, and see that what he hath loved is not a foundation of Jerusalem, but a stream of Babylon. Another saith, It is a grand thing to be a soldier: all husbandmen fear those who are soldiers, obey them, tremble at them: if I be a husbandman, I shall fear soldiers; if a soldier, farmers will fear me. Madman! Thou hast cast thyself headlong into another stream of Babylon, and that still more boisterous and sweeping. Thou wishest to be feared by thine inferior; fear Him that is greater than thou. He who fears thee may on a sudden become greater than thou, but never will He Whom thou oughtest to fear become less. To be a pleader, saith another, is a grand thing, ever to have clients hanging on the tongue of their eloquent advocate, and from his words looking for loss or gain, death or life, ruin or safety. Thou knowest not whither thou hast cast thyself; this too is another stream of Babylon, and

its loud sound is the din of the waters dashing against the rocks. Mark that it flows, it glides on; and if thou markest that it flows and glides on, mark also that it carries things along with it. To traverse the seas, saith another, and to trade, is a grand thing, to know many lands, to make gains from every quarter, never to be obnoxious in thy country to any powerful man, and to feed thy mind with the various habits of the nations thou visitest, and to return enriched with the increase of thy gains. This too is a stream of Babylon; when will thy gains stop? When wilt thou rely upon and be secure in the gains thou makest? The richer thou art, the more fearful wilt thou be. Once shipwrecked, thou wilt come forth stripped of all, and deservedly wilt thou bewail thyself in the rivers of Babylon, because thou wouldest not sit down and weep by the waters of Babylon.

4. But then other citizens of the holy Jerusalem, understanding their captivity, mark how the natural wishes and the various lusts of men hurry and drag them hither and thither, and drive them into the sea; they see this, and they throw not themselves into the waters of Babylon, but sit down by the waters of Babylon, and by the waters of Babylon weep, either for those who are being carried away by them, or themselves whose deserts have placed them in Babylon, but sitting, that is, humbling themselves. By the waters of Babylon then we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion. O holy Sion, where all stands firm and nothing flows! Who hath thrown us headlong into this? Why have we left thy Founder and thy society? Behold, placed where all things are flowing and gliding away, scarce one, if he can grasp the tree, shall be snatched from the stream and escape. Humbling ourselves then in our captivity, let us sit by the waters of Babylon, let us not dare to plunge ourselves in those streams, nor to be proud and lifted up in the evil and sadness of our captivity, but let us sit, and so weep. Let us sit by the waters, not beneath the waters, of Babylon; such be our humility, that it overwhelm us not. Sit by the waters, not in the waters, not under the waters; but yet sit, in humble fashion, talk not as thou wouldest in Jerusalem. There thou wilt stand; for of this very hope another Psalm speaketh, singing thus, Our feet shall stand in the courts of Jerusalem. There shalt thou be lifted up, if here by penitence and confession thou humble thyself. In the courts then of Jerusalem our feet shall stand, but by the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O

Sion. For this reason is it meet that thou weep, for the remembrance of Sion.

5. For many weep with the weeping of Babylon, because they rejoice also with the joy of Babylon. When men rejoice at gains and weep at losses, both are of Babylon. Thou oughtest to weep, but in the remembrance of Sion. If thou weepest in the remembrance of Sion, thou oughtest to weep even when it is well with thee in Babylon. Therefore is it said in a certain Psalm, I found trouble and sorrow; then called I upon the name of the Lord. What meaneth he by saying, I have found? He speaketh of some kind of tribulation, as though it were to be sought; he found it, as though he had sought it. And when he had found it, what gained he by finding it? He called upon the name of the Lord. Much doth it matter, whether thou findest tribulation, or art found by tribulation. For he saith in another place, The sorrows of hell found me. What is, The sorrows of hell found me? What is, I found trouble and sorrow? When sadness suddenly overtaketh thee, through trouble in thy worldly affairs, wherein thou didst delight, when suddenly sadness of her own accord findeth thee, befalleth thee from some point, whence thou didst not think thou couldest be saddened, and thou art made sad, then the sorrows of hell have found thee. For thou thoughtest thyself aloft, whereas thou wast beneath; there hast thou found thyself beneath, where thou thoughtest thyself aloft. For thou hast found thyself grievously afflicted with sorrow, through sadness at some evil from a quarter where perchance thou hadst presumed thou wouldest not be made sad: the sorrows of hell have found thee. But when it is well with thee, when all earthly things smile on thee, none of thy loved ones hath died, no drought or hail or barrenness hath assailed thy vineyard, thy cask hath not grown sour, thy cattle have not failed, thou hast not been dishonoured in any high position of this world wherein thou hast been placed, thy friends all around thee live and preserve their friendship for thee, dependents are not wanting, thy children obey thee, thy slaves tremble before thee, thy wife liveth in harmony with thee, thy house is called happy,—then find tribulation, if in any way thou canst, that, having found tribulation thou mayest call on the name of the Lord. Perversely seemeth the word of God to teach that thou shouldest weep in joy, and rejoice in sorrow. Hear it rejoicing in sorrow, We glory, it saith, in tribulations. But see it weeping in

joy, if it have found tribulation. Let each one mark his own happiness, wherein his soul hath exulted and puffed itself up in a manner with joy and elated itself, and said, 'I am happy.' Let him mark whether that happiness floweth not on, if he can be sure of it that it remaineth for ever. But if he be not certain, but seeth that that wherein he rejoices floweth, it is a stream of Babylon; let him sit down by it, and weep. He will sit down and weep, if he remember Sion. O for that peace which we shall see in the presence of God! O for that holy equality with the Angels! O for that vision, that fair sight! Lo, in Babylon fair are the things which hold thee: let them not hold thee, let them not deceive thee. One thing is the solace of the captive, another the joy of the free. By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion.

6. On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments of music. The citizens of Jerusalem have their instruments of music, God's Scriptures, God's commands, God's promises, meditation on the life to come; but while they are dwelling in the midst of Babylon, they hang up their instruments of music on the willows thereof. Willows are unfruitful trees, and here so placed, that no good whatever can be understood of them: elsewhere perhaps there may. Here understand barren trees, growing by the waters of Babylon. These trees are watered by the waters of Babylon, and bring forth no fruit; just as there are men greedy, covetous, barren in good works, citizens of Babylon in such wise, that they are even trees of that region; they are fed there by these pleasures of transitory things, as though watered by the waters of Babylon. Thou seekest fruit of them, and no where findest it. When we suffer such men as these, we live among those who are in the midst of Babylon. For wide is the difference between the midst of Babylon and the outside of Babylon. There are some who are not in the midst of it, that is, are not buried entirely in the lust of the world and the delights thereof. But those who, to speak plainly and briefly, are thoroughly bad, are in the midst of Babylon, and are barren trees like the willows of Babylon. When we see them, and find them so barren, that with difficulty do we find in them ought whereby they may be led on to true faith and good works, or to hope of a future life, or to desire to be set free from captivity under mortality, then we know indeed the Scriptures which we should address to them; but, because we find in them no fruit upon which to begin,

we turn away our face from them, and say, ‘As yet they have no taste nor capacity for them; whatever we say to them, they will consider foolish and contrary.’ Therefore by deferring to apply the Scriptures to them, we hang up our instruments of music upon the willows. For we hold them not worthy to carry our instruments. We do not therefore insert our instruments into them and bind them to them, but defer to use them, and so hang them up. For the willows are the unfruitful trees of Babylon, fed by temporal pleasures, as by the waters of Babylon.

7. And see whether the Psalm do not agree with this. On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments of music. For there they that led us captive demanded of us words of songs, and they that led us away, an hymn. They demanded of us words of songs and an hymn, who led us captive. Who have led us captive, brethren? Whom have we at some time or other experienced as our capturers. Jerusalem of old experienced captivity at the hands of the Babylonians, the Persians, the Chaldeans, and the men of those nations and regions, and that afterwards, not when these Psalms were composed. But we have already told you, beloved, that all things, which according to the letter befel that city, were our examples, and it can easily be proved that we are captives. For we breathe not the air of that our true liberty: we enjoy not the purity of truth, and that wisdom, that remaining in herself maketh all things new. We are tempted by the delights of earthly things, and we struggle daily with the suggestions of unlawful pleasures; scarce do we breathe freely even in prayer: we understand that we are captives. But who led us captive? what men? what race? what king? If we are redeemed, we once were captives. Who hath redeemed us? Christ. From whom hath He redeemed us? From the devil. The devil then and his angels led us captive: and they would not lead us, unless we consented. We were led captive. Who our capturers were, I have said. For they are the thieves who wounded the traveller who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and left him wounded and half dead. Him He, our Keeper, that is, Samaritan, (for Samaritan meaneth ‘keeper,’) whom the Jews found fault with, and said, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? of which two objections, the one He rejected, the other He accepted: I, He answered, have not a devil: yet He said not, ‘I am not a Samaritan:’ for had He not been our Samaritan, our Keeper, verily we had perished:—this Samaritan

then, I say, passing by, saw the man left by the thieves hurt and wounded, and, as ye know, took care of him. Just as sometimes under the name of thieves are described those who have inflicted on us the wounds of sins, so, through our consenting to being made captives, are they also called our capturers.

8. Those then who have led us captive, the devil and his angels, when have they spoken unto us, and when have they asked of us the words of songs? what then do we understand? That, when those in whom the devil worketh ask such things of us, he is to be understood to ask, who worketh in them. The Apostle saith, And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past. He sheweth that, having been redeemed, he has already begun to come forth from Babylon. But still what saith he yet? That we contend with our enemies. And that we may not wax wroth with men, who attack us with persecutions, the Apostle has diverted our efforts from hatred of men, and guided them to struggle with certain spirits, whom we see not, and yet we contend with them. For he saith, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, that is, against men, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. What means he by 'this world?' The lovers of this world. These he also calleth darkness, that is, unjust, wicked, unbelievers, sinners; whom, when they have come to believe, he congratulateth after this fashion, saying, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. So then he has laid down that we wrestle with those principalities: they it is who have led us captive.

9. But, just as the devil entered into the heart of Judas, to make him betray his Lord, yet would not have entered, unless he had made room for him; so many evil men from the midst of Babylon, by making room in their hearts for the devil and his angels, so that he may work in them and through them, sometimes ask us, and say to us, 'Explain to us the reason.' So too the heathen generally ask us, 'Explain the reason why Christ came, and what benefit Christ hath been to the human race. Have not matters been worse upon earth since Christ came, and was it not better then with men than it is

now? Let the Christians tell us, what good Christ hath brought, wherein they think human affairs more happy, for that Christ hath come. For thou seest that if the theatres and amphitheatres and circuses were safe and standing, if no part of Babylon were falling, if men were surrounded by abundance of pleasures, and could sing and dance to lascivious strains, if the impure and whoremongers could indulge their rest in quiet and safety, if a man did not fear famine in his own house who cried out that the dancers should be clothed, if all this went on without discredit, without disturbance, and all these follies could be enjoyed without anxiety, these would be happy times, and Christ would have brought great happiness to human affairs.' But, forasmuch as wickednesses are now being destroyed, in order that that earthly desire being uprooted, the love of Jerusalem may be planted in; forasmuch as bitternesses are being mixed with this passing life, that men may long for the everlasting life; forasmuch as men are being disciplined with scourges, receiving a father's correction, that they may not hereafter receive a judge's sentence; Christ, they say, hath brought nothing good, Christ hath brought troubles. And thou beginnest to tell to one, how much good Christ hath done, and he receives it not. For thou settest before him the example of those who do as ye have just heard in the Gospel, who sell all that they have, and give to the poor, that they may have treasure in heaven, and follow their Lord. Thou sayest to him, 'See what Christ hath brought! How many do this, distribute their goods to the needy, and become poor not of necessity, but of free-will, following God, hoping for the kingdom of Heaven.' He mocketh at such men as fools, and saith, 'Is this the good which Christ hath brought, that man lose his own goods, and giving to the needy, remain needy himself?' What then wilt thou do? Thou takest not in the good things of Christ, for another hath filled thee who is the adversary of Christ, to whom thou hast given place in thine heart. Thou lookest back to former times, and those former times seem to thee to have been happier, which were like olives hanging on the tree, swayed by the wind, enjoying their wandering desires like a sort of liberty in the breeze. The time is come for the olive to be put into the press. For they ought not always to hang on the trees: now it is the end of the year. Not without reason are certain Psalms incised, 'For the presses:' on the tree is liberty, in the press, pressure. For when human affairs are being crushed and pressed, thou observest that avarice increaseth: observe also that self-denial

increaseth. Wherefore art thou so blind that thou seest the lees flowing down the streets, but not the oil flowing into the vats? Yet is not this without reason: for they who live ill, are generally known, they who turn to God and are cleansed from the filth of evil desires are hidden, for in the press, or rather out the press, the lees openly flow, the oil secretly strains off.

10. At this ye shout, at this ye rejoice, because now ye can sit down by the waters of Babylon and weep. But they who have led us captive, when they enter into the hearts of men, and ask us by the tongues of them whom they possess, and say to us, Sing us the words of songs, give us a reason for the coming of Christ; tell us what is another life: when they say, I will not believe, give me a reason why thou biddest me believe. Such an one I answer and say, ‘Man, how is it that thou willest not that I bid thee believe? Thou art full of evil desires; if I tell of those good things of Jerusalem, thou takest them not in; thou must be emptied of that wherewith thou art full, that thou mayest be filled with that whereof thou art empty.’

Be not then ready to say ought to such an one: he is willow: he is barren wood. Strike not the instrument of music that it sound; hang it up rather. But he will say, ‘Tell me, sing to me, shew me the reason. Art thou not willing for me to learn?’ Thou hearest not with good intent; thou knockest not so as to deserve that it be opened to thee. He hath filled thee who hath led me captive: he asketh of me by thee. He is cunning: he asketh craftily: he asketh not to learn, but to blame. Therefore I will not speak to him; I will hang up my instrument of music.

11. But what will he yet say? Sing us the words of songs: sing us a hymn: sing us one of the songs of Sion. What answer we? Babylon beareth thee, Babylon containeth thee, Babylon nourisheth thee, Babylon speaks by thy mouth, thou knowest not to take in save what glitters for the present, thou knowest not how to meditate on things of eternity, thou takest not in what thou askest. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? Truly, brethren, so it is. Begin to wish to preach the truth in such measure as ye know it, and see how needful it is for you to endure such mockers, persecutors of the truth, full of falsehood. Reply to them, when they ask of

you what they cannot take in, and say in full confidence of your holy song, How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land!

12. But take heed how thou dwellest among them, O people of God, O body of Christ, O high-born band of wanderers, (for thy home is not here, but elsewhere,) lest when thou lovest them who say to thee, Sing to us the words of songs, sing us an hymn, sing us one of the songs of Sion, and strivest for their friendship, and fearest to displease such men, Babylon begin to delight thee and thou forget Jerusalem. In fear then of this, see what the Psalmist subjoins, see what follows. For the man who sang thus, (and that man are we if we choose,) endured all around him men who asked these questions and allured him with flattery, who chid with biting words and falsely praised him, who asked what they took not in, were unwilling to empty themselves of that wherewith they were full; and being as it were in danger among crowds of such men, he lifted up his mind to the recollection of Sion, and his soul bound itself with a sort of oath, and said, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, amid the speeches of those who hold me captive, amid the speeches of treacherous men, amid the speeches of men who ask with ill intent, asking, yet unwilling to learn.

13. Behold, of this number was that rich man, who asked the Lord, Good Master, what shall I do that I may attain eternal life? Did he not in asking about eternal life, ask, as it were, for a song of Sion? Keep the commandments, said the Lord to him. And he in his pride, when he heard this, said, All these have I kept from my youth. And the Lord spake to him one of the songs of Sion, and knew that he took it not in; but He gave us an example how that many ask, as it were, counsel concerning eternal life, and praise us so long as we answer what they ask. He gave from him a lesson as though to bid us, that we should afterward say to such men, How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Behold, He saith, Wilt thou be perfect? Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in Heaven, and come, follow Me. That he may learn many of the songs of Sion, let him first cast out all hindrances, let him walk without encumbrance, that he may have no burden to weigh him down, and he shall learn somewhat of the songs of Sion. But he went away sorrowing. Let us say after him, How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? He

indeed went away, yet the Lord gave hope for the rich. For the disciples were saddened, and said, Who then can be saved? And He answered them, What is impossible for man, is easy for God: For the rich too have a sort of measure of their own, and have received a song of Sion, a song whereof the Apostle speaketh, Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. And adding what they ought to do, now he toucheth his instrument, and hangeth it not up: that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. Here is that one of the songs of Sion which the rich have received; first of all, not to be high-minded. For riches puff up; and whom they puff up, those streams sweep away. What then is enjoined to them? Above all, not to be high-minded. What riches do, that let them beware of in riches; in riches let them beware of pride. For that is the very evil which riches bring to men not on their guard. For gold is not evil, which God hath made: but the avaricious man is evil, who leaveth the Creator, and turneth to the creature. This then let him first take care, that he be not proud; let him sit by the waters of Babylon. For it is said to him, Be not high-minded; therefore let him sit: nor trust in uncertain riches; therefore let him sit by the waters of Babylon; for if he trust in uncertain riches, he is carried away by a stream of Babylon. But if he humble himself, and be not proud, and trust not in uncertain riches, he sits by the waters, he sighs for the everlasting Jerusalem, remembering Sion; and that he may reach Sion, he spendeth his riches. There thou hast the song which the rich have received from among the songs of Sion. Let them work, let them touch their instrument, let them not be idle. When they find one saying to them, ‘What art thou doing? Thou art wasting thy substance by spending so much: lay up store for thy children:’ when they see that he takes it not in, and understand that it is a willow, let them not readily say, why they do so, or what they do, let them hang up their instruments on the willows of Babylon. But beside the willows let them sing, let them not rest, let them work. For they lose not what they spend. They trust their riches to a slave, and they are safe: they trust them to Christ, and are they lost?

14. Thou hast heard the song of Sion for the rich: hear now the song of the poor. The same Paul saith, We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. These are waters of Babylon. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Are then these songs contradictory? They are not. See what is said to the rich: not to be high-minded; not to trust in uncertain riches; to do good; to distribute; to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation for the time to come. But what is said to the poor? They who will be rich fall into temptation. He said not, 'They who are rich,' but, they who will be rich: for if they were already rich, they should hear the other song. The rich is bid to spend, the poor not to desire.

15. But while ye live among such as these, who take not in a song of Sion, hang up, as I have said, your instruments upon the willows in the midst thereof: defer what ye are about to say. If they begin to be fruitful trees, if the trees are changed, and will bear good fruit; now then it is lawful for us to sing to the ears of them that listen. But while they among whom ye live drown you with clamour, ask with ill purpose, resist the truth, bind yourselves not to be willing to please them, lest ye forget Jerusalem. And let your one soul, made one out of many by the peace of Christ, let captive Jerusalem, dwelling here on earth, say, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me. Vehemently hath she bound herself, my brethren, let my right hand forget me, sternly hath she tied herself down. Our right hand is life everlasting, our left, life in this world. Whatsoever thou doest for the sake of life everlasting, thy right hand doeth. If in thy works thou mingle with the love of everlasting life desire for the life of this world, or man's praise, or any worldly advantage, thy left hand knoweth what thy right hand doeth. And thou knowest that it is enjoined in the Gospel, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. Therefore saith she, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me. And truly so it happens: it is a prophecy she has uttered, not a wish. To them who forget Jerusalem, this happeneth which she hath said, their right hand forgetteth them. For life

everlasting abideth in itself: they abide in delights of this world, and make that to be right to them, which is left.

16. Listen to this, brethren: for the right hand's sake let me press this upon you, for the salvation of all. Ye remember perhaps that I once spoke in this place of some who make what is left to be right, that is, who consider worldly goods of more value (than everlasting goods), and consider happiness to consist in these, not knowing what is true happiness, the true right hand. These Scripture calleth strange children, as though they were citizens not of Jerusalem, but of Babylon; for the Psalmist saith in a certain place, Lord, save me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth talketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. For he goeth on and saith, Their sons are like strong young vine trees, their daughters polished like unto the temple: their garners are full and plenteous with all manner of store, their sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: their oxen are strong to labour, there is no decay, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in their streets. Is it sin then to enjoy such happiness as this? No: but to make it the right hand when it is the left. And therefore what goeth he on to say? They called the people blessed that are in such a case. Behold how their month hath spoken vanity: they have called the people blessed that are in such a case. Thou indeed art a citizen of Jerusalem, who forgettest not Jerusalem, lest thy right hand forget thee: lo! they who have spoken vanity have called the people blessed who are in such a case; sing thou to me a song of Sion. Blessed, saith he, is the people that hath the Lord for their God. Ask your hearts, brethren, whether ye long for the good things of God, whether ye long for that city, Jerusalem, whether ye desire everlasting life. Let all that earthly happiness be to you on the left hand, let that be on the right which ye will have for ever: and, if ye have that which is left, presume not thereupon. Dost thou not chide him, who chooses to eat with the left hand? If thou thinkest that a wrong is done to thy table when a guest eats with the left, how can it but be a wrong to the Table of God, if thou makest what is right to be left, and what is left, right? What then? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me.

17. Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I remember not thee. That is, let me be dumb, he saith, if I remember not thee. For what word, what sound doth he utter, who uttereth not songs of Sion? That is our tongue, the song of Jerusalem. The song of the love of this world is a strange tongue, a barbarous tongue, which we have learnt in our captivity. Dumb then will he be to God, who forgetteth Jerusalem. And it is not enough to remember: for her enemies too remember her, desiring to overthrow her. ‘What is that city?’ say they; ‘who are the Christians? what sort of men are the Christians? would they were not Christians.’ Now the captive band hath conquered its capturers; still they murmur, and rage, and desire to slay the holy city that dwells as a stranger among them; just as Pharaoh desired to destroy the people, when he slew the male children, and left the female: he strangled, that is, the virtues; the lusts he nurtured. Not enough then is it to remember: take heed how thou rememberest. For some things we remember in hate, some in love. And so, when he had said, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me: let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I remember not thee; he added at once, if I prefer not Jerusalem in the height of my joy. For there is the height of joy where we enjoy God, where we are safe of united brotherhood, and the union of citizenship. There no tempter shall assail us, no one be able so much as to urge us on to any allurements: there nought will delight us but good: there all want will die, there perfect bliss will dawn on us. If I prefer not Jerusalem in the height of my joy.

18. Then he turneth to God in prayer against the enemies of that city. Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom. Edom is the same who is also called Esau: for ye heard just now the words of the Apostle read, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Two sons were there in one womb, both twins, in the womb of Rebecca, sons of Isaac, grandsons of Abraham: both were born; one to inheritance, the other to disinheritance. But Esau was his brother’s enemy, because he, the younger, forestalled his blessing, and the prophecy was fulfilled, the younger shall serve the elder. Who then the elder is, and who the younger, and who the elder that shall serve the younger, we now understand. Elder seemed to be the people of the Jews, younger in point of time the Christians. And see how the elder serveth the younger. They carry our Scriptures, we live by their Scriptures. But that ye

may understand the elder and younger generally of all mankind, the elder meaneth the carnal man, the younger the spiritual man, for first is the carnal, afterward the spiritual. Thou findest the Apostle saying clearly, The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. But above this he had said, Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. By natural he meaneth the same as he also calleth carnal. Man, when he is born, is at first natural, carnal. If he turn from his captivity in Babylon to return to Jerusalem, he is renewed, and there happeneth a renewal according to the new and inner man, which is younger in time, greater in power. Esau then signifieth all the carnal, Jacob all the spiritual: the younger the elect, the elder the reprobate. Doth he wish himself too to be of the elect? Let him become a younger son. Moreover, he is called Edom, from a certain red pottage of lentils, a red kind of food. Well boiled were the bruised lentils: Esau desired them of his brother Jacob, and, overcome by lust for eating those lentils, yielded to him his birthright. Jacob gave up the pleasant food, received the honour of preeminence. Hence, by a kind of bargain between them, it came to pass that the younger became the elder, the elder the younger, and the elder served the younger. And the elder was called Edom, which meaneth, according to them who know that language, ‘blood,’ for in Carthaginian too, blood is called ‘Edom.’ Wonder not: all carnal men belong to blood. Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God. To that Edom belongeth not: Jacob belongeth, who gave up fleshly food, and received spiritual honour. So the other became his enemy. All carnal persons are enemies to spiritual persons, for all such, desiring present things, persecute those whom they see to long for things eternal. Against these the Psalmist, looking back to Jerusalem, and beseeching God that he may be delivered from captivity, saith—what? Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom. Deliver us from carnal men, from those who imitate Esau, who are elder brethren, yet enemies. They were first-born, but the last-born have won the preeminence, for the lust of the flesh hath cast down the former, the contempt of lust hath lifted up the latter. The other live, and envy, and persecute.

19. Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem. The day of Jerusalem, wherein it was tried, wherein it was held captive, or the day of Jerusalem's happiness, wherein it is freed, wherein it reaches its goal, wherein it is made partaker of eternity? Remember, saith he, O Lord, forget not, the children of Edom. Which? Those who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof. Remember then, it means, that day wherein they willed to overthrow Jerusalem. For how great persecutions hath the Church suffered! How did the children of Edom, that is, carnal men, servants of the devil and his angels, who worshipped stocks and stones, and followed the lusts of the flesh, how did they say, 'Extirpate the Christians, destroy the Christians, let not one remain, overthrow them even to the foundation!' Have not these things been said? And when they were said, the persecutors were rejected, the martyrs crowned. They said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof. The sons of Edom say, 'Rase it, rase it.' God saith, 'Serve.' Whose words can prevail, save God's, Who saith, The elder shall serve the younger? Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.

20. Then he turneth himself to her, O daughter of Babylon, unhappy; unhappy in thy very exulting, thy presumption, thine enmity; unhappy daughter of Babylon! The city is called both Babylon, and daughter of Babylon: just as they speak of 'Jerusalem' and 'the daughter of Jerusalem,' 'Sion' and 'the daughter of Sion,' 'the Church' and 'the daughter of the Church.' As it succeedeth the other, it is called 'daughter;' as it is preferred before the other, it is called 'mother.' There was a former Babylon; did the people remain in it? Because it succeedeth to Babylon, it is called daughter of Babylon. O daughter of Babylon, unhappy thou! Happy shall he be that payeth thee; unhappy thou, happy he.

21. For what hast thou done, and how shalt thou be repaid? Listen: happy shall he be that repayeth thee, as thou hast served us. What repayment meaneth he? Herewith the Psalm closeth, Happy, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock. Her he calleth unhappy, but him happy who payeth her as she hath served us. Do we ask, what reward? Happy, saith he, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock. This is the repayment. For what hath that Babylon done to us? We have already sung in another Psalm, The words of the wicked have prevailed against us. For

when we were born, the confusion of this world found us, and choked us while yet infants with the empty notions of divers errors. The infant that is born destined to be a citizen of Jerusalem, and in God's predestination already a citizen, but meanwhile a prisoner for a time, when learneth he to love ought, save what his parents have whispered into his ears? They teach him and train him in avarice, robbery, daily lying, the worship of divers idols and devils, the unlawful remedies of enchantments and amulets. What shall one yet an infant do, a tender soul, observing what its elders do, save follow that which it seeth them doing. Babylon then has persecuted us when little, but God hath given us when grown up knowledge of ourselves, that we should not follow the errors of our parents. And this, as I then too mentioned, was foretold by the Prophet, The nations shall come to thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity which hath not profited them. So speak they, now grown up, who when little were slain by following these vanities, and then coming to life again increase in union with God, and repay Babylon. How shall they repay her? As she hath served us. Let her little ones be choked in turn: yea let her little ones in turn be dashed, and die. What are the little ones of Babylon? Evil desires at their birth. For there are, who have to fight with inveterate lusts. When lust is born, before evil habit giveth it strength against thee, when lust is little, by no means let it gain the strength of evil habit; when it is little, dash it. But thou fearest, lest though dashed it die not; Dash it against the Rock; and that Rock is Christ.

22. Brethren, let not your instruments of music rest in your work: sing one to another songs of Sion. Readily have ye heard; the more readily do what ye have heard, if ye wish not to be willows of Babylon fed by its streams, and bringing no fruit. But sigh for the everlasting Jerusalem: whither your hope goeth before, let your life follow; there we shall be with Christ. Christ now is our Head; now He ruleth us from above; in that city He will fold us to Himself; we shall be equal to the Angels of God. We should not dare to imagine this of ourselves, did not the Truth promise it. This then desire, brethren, this day and night think on. Howsoever the world shine happily on you, presume not, parley not willingly with your lusts. Is it a grown up enemy? let it be slain upon the Rock. Is it a little enemy? let it be dashed against the Rock. Slay the grown up ones on the Rock, and dash the little

ones against the Rock. Let the Rock conquer. Be built upon the Rock, if ye desire not to be swept away either by the stream, or the winds, or the rain. If ye wish to be armed against temptations in this world, let longing for the everlasting Jerusalem grow and be strengthened in your hearts. Your captivity will pass away, your happiness will come; the last enemy shall be destroyed, and we shall triumph with our King, without death.

PSALM 138

sermon

1. The title of this Psalm is brief and simple, and need not detain us; since we know whose resemblance David wore, and since in him we recognise ourselves also, for we too are members of that Body. Let us recognise then herein the voice of the Church, and at the same time let us rejoice that we have been thought worthy to be in her, whose voice we have heard chanting. The whole title is, 'To David himself.' Let us see then, what is to David himself.

2. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. The title of the Psalm is wont to tell us what is treated of within it: but in this, since the title informs us not of this, but tells us only to Whom it is chanted, the first verse tells us what is treated of in the whole Psalm, I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. This confession then let us hear. But first I remind you, that the term confession in Scripture, when we speak of confession to God, is used in two senses, of sin, and of praise. But confession of sin all know, confession of praise few attend to. So well known is confession of sin, that, wherever in Scripture we hear the words, I will confess to Thee, O Lord, or, we will confess to Thee, forthwith, through habitually understanding in this way, our hands hurry to beating our breast: so entirely are men wont not to understand confession to be of ought, save of sin. But was then our Lord Jesus Christ Himself too a sinner, Who saith in the Gospel, I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth? He goeth on to say what He confesseth, that we might understand His confession to be of praise, not of sin, I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. He praised the Father, He praised God, because He despiseth not the humble, but the proud. And such confession are we now going to hear, of praise of God, of thanksgiving. I

will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. My whole heart I lay upon the altar of Thy praise, an whole burnt-offering of praise I offer to Thee. A whole burnt-offering is a sacrifice where the whole is burnt, for the Greek word ὅλον meaneth 'whole.' See how he offereth a spiritual whole burnt-offering, who saith, I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. Let the flame of Thy Love, he saith, set on fire my whole heart, let nought in me be left to myself, nought wherein I may look to myself, but may I wholly burn towards Thee, wholly be on fire towards Thee, wholly love Thee, as though set on fire by Thee. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: for Thou hast heard the words of my mouth. What mouth, save my heart? For there have we the voice which God heareth, which ear of man knoweth not at all. They cried aloud indeed who accused Susanna, but lifted not up their eyes to heaven; she was silent, and cried with her heart; wherefore she was thought worthy to be heard, they to be punished. We have then a mouth within, there do we ask, thence do we ask, and if we have prepared a lodging or an house for God, there do we speak, there are we heard. For He is not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Nought maketh thee far off from God, save sin only. Cast down the middle wall of sin, and thou art with Him Whom thou askest. Thou hast heard, saith he, the words of my mouth; I will confess to Thee.

3. And before the Angels will I sing unto Thee. Not before men will I sing, but before the Angels. My song is my joy; but my joy in things below is before men, my joy in things above before the Angels. For the wicked knoweth not the joy of the just: There is no joy, saith my God, to the wicked. The wicked rejoiceth in his tavern, the martyr in his chain. In what did that holy Crispina rejoice, whose festival is kept to-day? She rejoiced when she was being seized, when she was being carried before the judge, when she was being put into prison, when she was being brought forth bound, when she was being lifted up on the scaffold, when she was being heard, when she was being condemned: in all these things she rejoiced; and the wretches thought her wretched, when she was rejoicing before the Angels.

4. I will worship toward Thy holy Temple. What holy Temple? That where we shall dwell, where we shall worship. For we hasten that we may adore. Our heart is pregnant and cometh to the birth, and seeketh where it may bring forth. What is the place where God is to be worshipped? What world? what building, what abode in heaven and among the stars? We search the holy Scriptures, and find Wisdom saying, I was with Him, I was she before whom He rejoiced daily. Then she telleth us what are His works, and discloseth to us her own abode. When He established the clouds above, when He set apart His abode above the winds. His abode is His Temple. Whither then shall we go? Are we to go above the clouds to worship? If He is worshipped above the clouds, the birds are better than we. But if by the winds we understand souls, I mean souls described under the name of winds,—(just as Scripture saith in a certain place, He came flying on the wings of wind, that is, on the virtues of souls; whence also the soul is called the breath of God, a sort of wind, not that we should understand thereby the wind which we feel as it propels our body, but that by the title thereof may be signified somewhat invisible, which can neither be seen with the eye, nor inhaled by the smell, nor tasted by the palate, nor handled by the hand; a sort of life, that is, whereby we live, which is called ‘soul,’)—if we understand these to be meant by winds, there is no reason why we should seek visible wings to fly up with the birds to worship at the Temple of God, but we shall find that God sitteth above us ourselves, if we choose to be faithful to Him. See whether it be not so: the Temple of God is holy, saith the Apostle, which Temple ye are. But assuredly, as is manifest, God dwelleth in the Angels. Therefore when our joy, being in spiritual things, not in earthly, taketh up a song to God, to sing before the Angels, that very assembly of Angels is the Temple of God, we worship toward God’s Temple. There is a Church below, there is a Church above also: the Church below, in all the faithful; the Church above, in all the Angels. But the God of Angels came down to the Church below, and Angels ministered to Him on earth, while He ministered to us; for, I came not, saith He, to be ministered unto, but to minister. What hath He ministered to us, save what to-day also we eat and drink? Since then the Lord of Angels hath ministered to us, let us not despair but that we shall be equal to the Angels. For He that is greater than the Angels came down to man; the Creator of the Angels took man’s nature upon Him; the Lord of Angels died for man. Therefore, I

will worship toward Thy holy Temple; I mean, not the temple made with hands, but that which Thou hast made for Thyself.

5. And I will confess to Thy Name in Thy mercy and Thy truth. In these two we confess, for so it is written in another Psalm also, All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. In these two do we confess, in Thy mercy and Thy truth. In Thy mercy Thou lookedst upon the sinner, in Thy truth Thou performedst Thy promise. In Thy mercy, therefore, and Thy truth will I confess to Thee. These also which Thou hast given to me, do I according to my power give to Thee in return: mercy, in aiding other; truth, in judging. By these God aideth us, by these we win God's favour. Rightly, therefore, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. No other ways are there whereby He can come to us, no other whereby we can come to Him.

6. For Thou hast magnified Thy holy Name over every thing. What sort of thanksgiving is this, brethren? He hath magnified His holy Name over Abraham; for, Abraham believed upon God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. But all other nations offered sacrifice to idols, served devils. Of Abraham was born Isaac; over that house God was magnified; then Jacob; God was magnified, Who said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: then came his twelve sons; then the people of Israel were freed from Egypt, led through the Red Sea, trained in the wilderness, placed in the promised land, while the Gentiles were driven out. The name of the Lord was magnified over Israel. Then came the Virgin Mary, then Christ our Lord, dying for our sins, rising again for our justification, filling the faithful with His Holy Spirit, sending forth men to proclaim throughout the Gentiles, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Behold, He hath magnified His holy Name above all things.

7. In what day soever I call upon Thee, do Thou quickly hear me. Wherefore, quickly? Because Thou hast said, While yet thou art speaking I will say, Lo, here I am. Wherefore, quickly? Because now I seek not earthly happiness, I have learnt holy longing from the New Testament. I seek not earth, nor earthly abundance, nor temporal health, nor the overthrow of my enemies, nor riches, nor rank: nought of these do I seek: therefore quickly hear me. Since Thou hast taught me what to seek, grant what I seek. Let us say to this man, Askest thou ought of this kind? Let us hear, let him speak

out his petition, let us see what he seeketh: let us learn of him to seek, that we may be thought worthy to receive. Thou camest to Church to-day, to ask for somewhat. What think we thou camest to ask? Thou camest with thy longing, whatsoever it were; would it may be innocent, yet, even then, carnal. Put away iniquity, put away carnal-mindedness: learn what it is thou seekest, take heed what it is thou celebratest. Thou art celebrating the birthday of a holy and blessed woman, and thou art desiring, it may be, earthly happiness. She for her holy longing gave up the happiness which she had on earth, gave up her children who wept and grieved for what they thought their mother's cruelty, that she seemed to have lost earthly pity, when she was hastening to an heavenly crown. Did she not know what she longed for, what she trampled on? Yea verily, she knew how to sing before the Angels of God, and to long for their society, their friendship holy and pure, where she should die no more, where she should know the Judge before Whom no lie could prevail. What then? are there no good things in that life? Yea rather, there are the only good things, not good mixed with evil, safe things, in which thou mayest joy as much as thou wilt, and none say to thee, 'Restrain thyself.' But here to joy in earthly goods is full of vexation and peril, lest thou joy in them so as to cling to them, and by joying amiss, perish. For wherefore doth God mingle tribulations with earthly joys, save that, feeling tribulation and bitterness, we may learn to long for everlasting sweetness?

8. Let us see then what he seeketh, with what right he hath said, quickly hear me. For what seekest thou, that thou shouldest quickly be heard? Thou shalt multiply me. In many ways may multiplication be understood. There is the multiplication of earthly generation, according to the first blessing on our nature, which we have heard, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. Is it thus he willed to be multiplied, who said, quickly hear me? That multiplication clearly is fruitful, and cometh not save of the blessing of the Lord. And what shall I say of other multiplications? One man is multiplied in gold, another in silver, another in cattle, another in slaves, another in lands, another in all these. Many earthly multiplications are there, but more happy than all is that of children, though to avaricious men even fruitfulness is vexatious. For they fear lest if many children be born to them, they will be left poor. And this anxiety hath driven many to

unnatural dealing, so that they have forgotten that they were parents, and, stripped of all human affection, have exposed their children, to make them others' children: so that a mother, who gave it birth, has cast out her child; another, who gave it not birth, has taken it up: the first has despised it, the second loved it; the first untruly mother after the flesh, the other more truly in will. Seeing then there be many multiplications, and many kinds of multiplications, what multiplication seeketh he who said, quickly hear me? For he saith, Thou shalt multiply me. We wait to hear, wherein. Hear then: in my soul. Not in my flesh, but in my soul: Thou shalt multiply me in my soul. Is aught further added, lest perchance even multiplication in soul signify not necessarily happiness? For men are multiplied in their soul with cares: a man seemeth to be multiplied in soul, in whom vices even are multiplied. One man is only avaricious; another only proud; another only luxurious; another is both avaricious, and proud, and luxurious, he is multiplied in his soul, but to his hurt. That is the multiplication of want, not of fulness. What then dost thou desire, thou who hast said, quickly hear me, and hast withdrawn thyself entirely from the body, from every earthly thing, from every earthly desire, so as to say to God, Thou shalt multiply me in my soul? Explain yet further what thou desirest. Thou shalt multiply me, saith he, in my soul with virtue. His wish is fully stated, his longing fully stated; it is cut off from all confusion. Were he to say, Thou shalt multiply me, thou mightest think he meant with some earthly things; he added therefore, in my soul. Again, lest thou shouldest think he spoke of vices in the soul, he added, with virtue. Nought further is there which thou mayest long for from God, if thou wishest with a good and honest front to say, quickly hear me.

9. Let all the kings of the earth confess to Thee, O Lord. So shall it be, and so it is, and that daily; and it is shewn that it was not said in vain, save that it was future. Let all the kings of the earth confess to Thee, O Lord. But neither let them, when they confess to Thee, when they praise Thee, desire earthly things of Thee. For what shall the kings of the earth desire? Have they not already sovereignty? Whatever more a man desire on earth, sovereignty is the highest point of his desire. What more can he desire? It must needs be some loftier eminence. But perhaps the loftier it is, the more dangerous. And therefore the more exalted kings are in earthly eminence,

the more ought they to humble themselves before God. What do they do? Because they have heard all the words of Thy mouth. All the words of Thy mouth, O Lord. In a certain nation were hidden the Law and the Prophets, all the words of Thy mouth: in the Jewish nation alone were all the words of Thy mouth, the nation which the Apostle praiseth, saying, What advantage hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. These were the words of God. But let us take Gideon, a holy man of the time of the Judges; see what sign he sought of God. I will put, saith he, a fleece of wool in the floor; let the dew be on the fleece only, and let the floor be dry. It was done, the fleece alone was wet; the floor was dry. Again he asked a sign, Let the whole floor be wet with dew, and let the fleece alone be dry. This also was done, the floor was wet, while the fleece was dry. First, the fleece wet, the floor dry; then the floor wet, the fleece dry. What think ye, brethren, the floor meaneth? Is it not the world? What the fleece? It is like the nation of the Jews in the midst of the world, which had the grace of sacraments, not indeed openly manifested, but hidden in a cloud, or in a veil, like the dew in the fleece. The time came when the dew was to be manifested in the floor; it was manifested, no longer hidden. So came to pass what was said, Let all the kings of the earth praise Thee, O Lord, for they have heard all the words of Thy mouth. What is it, Israel, that thou wast hiding? how long didst thou hide it? the fleece hath been wrung out, and the dew hath come forth from thee. Christ alone is the sweetness of dew: Him alone thou recognisest not in Scripture, for Whom Scripture was written. But yet, let all the kings of the earth praise Thee, O Lord, for they have heard all the words of Thy mouth.

10. And let them sing in the paths of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord. Let all the kings of the earth sing in the paths of the Lord. In what paths? Those that are spoken of above, in Thy mercy and Thy truth; for all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Let not then the kings of the earth be proud, let them be humble. Then let them sing in the ways of the Lord, if they be humble: let them love, and they shall sing. We know travellers that sing; they sing, and hasten to reach the end of their journey. There are evil songs, such as belong to the old man; to the new man belongeth a new song.

Let then the kings of the earth too walk in Thy paths, let them walk and sing in Thy paths. Sing what? that great is the glory of the Lord, not of kings.

11. See how he willed that kings should sing on their way, humbly bearing the Lord, not lifting themselves up against the Lord. For if they lift themselves up, what follows? For the Lord is high, and hath respect unto the lowly. Do kings then desire that He have respect unto them? Let them be humble. What then? if they lift themselves up to pride, can they escape His eyes? Lest perchance, because thou hast heard, He hath respect unto the lowly, thou choose to be proud, and say in thy soul, God hath respect unto the lowly, He hath not respect unto me, I will do what I will. For who seeth me? Man cannot see; God willeth not to see me, because I am not lowly, but He hath respect unto the lowly; I do what I will. O foolish one! wouldest thou say this, if thou knewest what thou oughtest to love? Behold, even if God willeth not to see thee, dost thou not fear this very thing, that He willeth not to see thee? If thou salutest one greater than thyself, thy patron, and he be intent on something else, and see thee not, how doth thy soul grieve? And yet if God see thee not, thinkest thou thyself safe? Thy Saviour seeth thee not, the destroyer seeth thee. Yet God too Himself seeth thee. Think not that thou art not seen; rather pray that thou mayest be found worthy to be seen by Him by Whom thou art seen. For it is said, the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous. Because they are not over the unrighteous, let the unrighteous do what they will; the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous. Let him go on yet further; and His ears are open to their prayers. The unrighteous then, who thought themselves safe because the eyes of the Lord were not over them, do not they fear because His ears are not open to their prayers? Were it not better that both His eyes should be over us, and His ears open to our prayers? But when thou doest those things over which thou wishest not the eyes of the Lord to be, thou winnest not indeed by thy prayers the ears of the Lord, and yet thou turnest not away from thee, by doing ill, the eyes of the Lord. For what follows? Great is the glory of the Lord: for the Lord is high, and hath respect unto the lowly: the lofty then, it seemeth, He hath not respect unto, for it is the lowly He respecteth. The lofty—what? He considereth from afar. What then gaineth the proud? To be seen from afar, not to escape being seen. And think not that thou must needs be safe on that account, for that He seeth less clearly, Who seeth thee from

afar. For thou indeed seest not clearly, what thou seest from afar; God, although He see thee from afar, seeth thee perfectly, yet is He not with thee. This thou gainest, not that thou art less perfectly seen, but that thou art not with Him by Whom thou art seen. But what doth the lowly gain? The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart. Let the proud then lift himself up as much as he will, certainly God dwelleth on high, God is in heaven: wishest thou that He come nigh to thee? Humble thyself. For the higher will He be above thee, the more thou liftest thyself up. But the lofty He considereth from afar.

12. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me. True it is: whatsoever tribulation thou art in, confess, call on Him; He freeth thee, He reviveth thee. Here however we ought the better to understand, the more closely we are united to God, and say to Him, quickly hear me. For he had said, The lofty He considereth from afar: but the lofty know not tribulation. They know not, I mean, that tribulation of which it is said in another place, I found tribulation and sorrow, and I called on the name of the Lord. For what great thing is it, if tribulation find thee? If thou hast any power, do thou find tribulation. And who is there, thou sayest, who findeth tribulation, or who so much as seeketh it? Art thou in the midst of tribulation, and knowest it not? Is this life small tribulation to thee? If it be not tribulation, it is not wandering: if it be wandering, either thou lovest thy country but little, or else without doubt thou sufferest tribulation. For who does not feel tribulation, that he is not with that which he longs for? Whence then seemeth it not to be tribulation to thee? Because thou lovest not. Love the other life, and thou shalt see that this life is tribulation, whatever prosperity it shine with, whatever delights it abound and overflow with; since not yet have we that joy most safe and free from all temptation, which God reserveth for us in the end, without doubt it is tribulation. Let us understand then what tribulation he meaneth here too, brethren. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me. Not as though he said, 'If perchance there shall any tribulation have befallen me, Thou shalt free me therefrom.' But how saith he? If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me: that is, otherwise Thou wilt not revive me, unless I walk in the midst of tribulation. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me. Woe

to them that laugh. Blessed are they that mourn. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me.

13. Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe. Let mine enemies rage: what can they do? They can take my money, strip, proscribe, banish me; afflict me with grief and tortures; at last, if they be allowed, even kill me: can they do aught more? But Thou, O Lord, hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies; over that which mine enemies can do, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand. For mine enemies cannot separate me from Thee: but Thou avengest me the more, the more Thou as yet delayest; over the wrath of mine enemies, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand. Let mine enemy rage as he will, he cannot separate me from God: but Thou, O God, as yet receivest me not, as yet weariest me in my wanderings, as yet givest me not Thy joy and sweetness, as yet hast not inebriated me with the plenteousness of Thine house, as yet hast not given me to drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the well of life; in Thy light shall we see light. But, lo! I have given Thee the first-fruits of my spirit, and have believed in Thee, and with my mind I serve the law of God: yet still we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies. This life hath God given to us sinners, wherein also it is needful that Adam be wearied in the sweat and toil of his face, since the earth brought forth to him thorns and thistles. Can any enemy lay more upon him? Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies: yet not to make me despair; for it follows, and Thy right hand hath made me safe.

14. It may be understood in this way also, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies; mine enemies were wroth; Thou hast avenged me on mine enemies. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away. Where be they that said, 'Perish the name of Christians from off the earth?' Verily they either die, or are converted. Therefore, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies; while it was said, as is written, Mine enemies speak evil of me; when shall he die, and his name perish? When shall the name of Christians be blotted out from the earth? While they say this, some

believed, some perished, some remained fearful. How greatly did the wrath of the enemy rage, when the blood of the martyrs was being shed! how did they think that they were blotting out the name of Christians from off the earth! Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe. Lo! they who persecuted the martyrs seek the memorials of the martyrs, either to worship there, or to be inebriated there: still they seek. Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe. According to my longing, Thy right hand hath made me safe. There is one kind of safety on the right hand, another on the left: temporal and carnal safety on the left, everlasting safety with the Angels on the right. Therefore Christ, now that He is placed in immortality, is said to sit on the right hand of God. For God hath not in Himself right hand or left, but by the right hand of God is expressed that happiness, which, since it cannot be shown to the eyes, is thus called. On this right hand of Thine Thou hast made me safe, not after temporal safety. For Crispina was slain: did God then desert her? He made her not safe on the left hand, but He did on the right. How great tortures did the Maccabees suffer? But the Three Children, while they walked in the midst of the fire, praised God. The safety of the former was on the right hand, that of the latter on the left too. Sometimes then God saveth not His Saints on the left hand, on the right He always doth. The wicked for the most part He saveth on the left, on the right He doth not save them. For they who persecuted Crispina were sound in body: she was slain, they live: their safety is on the left hand, hers on the right: Thy right hand hath saved me.

15. Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me. I recompense not: Thou shalt recompense. Let mine enemies rage their full: Thou shalt recompense what I cannot. Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me. Observe this in our Head Himself. For He hath left us an example, that we should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who when He was reviled, reviled not again; saying, Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me. When He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. What is, Thou, O Lord, shalt recompense for me? I, saith He, seek not Mine own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, saith the Apostle, but rather give

place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Thou, O Lord, shalt recompense for me.

16. There is here another sense not to be neglected, perhaps even to be preferred. Lord Christ, Thou shalt repay for me. For I, if I repay, have seized; Thou hast paid what Thou hast not seized. Lord, Thou shalt repay for me. Behold Him repaying for us. They came to Him, who exacted tribute: they used to demand as tribute a didrachma, that is, two drachmas for one man; they came to the Lord to pay tribute; or rather, not to Him, but to His disciples, and they said to them, Doth not your Master pay tribute? They came and told Him. Then said He, Of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute, of their own children, or of strangers? They answered, Of strangers. He saith, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, He saith unto Peter, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a stater, (that is, two didrachmas, for a stater is a weight equivalent to four drachmas,) that take, and give for Me and thee. Thou, Lord, shalt repay for me. Rightly have we the first fish taken by the hook, caught by the hook, the first that riseth from the sea, the First-begotten from the dead. In His mouth we find two didrachmas, that is, four drachmas: in His mouth we find the four Gospels. By those four drachmas we are free from the claims of this world, by the four Evangelists we remain no longer debtors; for there the debt of all our sins is paid. He then hath repaid for us, thanks to His mercy. He owed nothing: He repaid not for Himself: He repaid for us. Behold, He saith, the prince of this world cometh, and shall find nothing in Me. What is, shall find nothing in Me? He shall find no sin in Me: he hath not wherefore he should put Me to death. But that all may know, He saith, that I do the will of My Father: arise, let us go hence. I suffer not of necessity, but of free-will, paying that I owe not. Thou, Lord, shalt repay for me.

17. Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting. What should I long for? not man's day. I have not toiled from following Thee, Lord, and the day of man have I not desired: Thou knowest. Behold, if the holy martyr Crispina had longed for man's day, she would have denied Christ. Longer would she live here, but for everlasting she would not live. She chose rather to live for

everlasting, than for a little longer to live in this world. Finally, Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting: not for a time only do I desire to be freed. Thy mercy is for everlasting, wherewith Thou hast freed the martyrs, and so hast quickly taken them from this life. Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting.

18. Despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands. I say not, Lord, 'despise not the works of my hands:' of mine own works I boast not. I sought, indeed, the Lord with my hands in the night season before Him, and have not been deceived; but yet I praise not the works of mine own hands; I fear lest, when Thou shalt look into them, Thou find more sins in them than deserts. This only I ask, this I say, this I long to obtain, Despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands. Behold in me Thy Work, not mine: for mine if Thou seest, Thou condemnest; Thine, if Thou seest, Thou crownest. For whatever good works there be of mine, from Thee are they to me; and so they are more Thine than mine. For I hear from Thine Apostle, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast: for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Therefore whether in regard that we are men, or in regard that we have been changed and justified from our iniquity, Lord, despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands.

PSALM 139

Sermon to the People.

1. We had prepared us a short Psalm, and had desired the reader to chant it; but he, through confusion at the time, as it seems, has substituted another for it. We have chosen to follow the will of God in the reader's mistake, rather than our own will by keeping our purpose. If then through its length we shall detain you somewhat longer than usual, impute it not to us, but believe that God hath willed that we should labour not without fruit. For neither in vain did we receive as our penalty for the first sin, that in the sweat of our face we should eat bread: only take heed that it be bread. But bread it is, if it be Christ. I am, saith He, the living Bread that came down from Heaven. Whom we have manifested in the Gospel, Him let us seek in the Prophets also. They see Him not there on whose hearts the veil still remains, whereof ye heard, beloved, yesterday. But forasmuch as for us the evening sacrifice of the Lord's Cross hath rent the veil, so that the secrets of the Temple now lie open, so long as Christ is preached to us, though it be with labour and sweat, yet have we bread given us to eat.

2. But our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh in the Prophets, sometimes in the character of our Head, that is, Christ Himself, our Saviour, sitting at the right hand of the Father: but He also was for us born of a Virgin, and suffered, as ye know, under Pontius Pilate; by the shedding of His innocent blood, which is our price, He hath redeemed us guilty from the captivity wherein we were held by the devil, forgiving us our trespasses, and with His Blood, which is our price, blotting out the handwriting whereby we were held debtors. He is the Ruler and Spouse and Redeemer of the Church, He our Head. And verily if He be a Head, He hath a Body. But His Body is the Holy Church, which is also His bride; to whom the Apostle saith, Ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular. Whole Christ therefore is Head and Body, like an entire man: for the woman was both made of man

and belongeth to man; and it was said of the first marriage, they twain shall be one flesh. But this the Apostle explains as a mystery, that it was not said without meaning of those two persons, but because in them was already prefigured Christ and His Church. For thus the Apostle expoundeth it: they twain, saith he, shall be one flesh: this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. He calls moreover Adam himself the figure of Him that was to come: who is, saith he, the figure of Him that was to come. If then Adam be the figure of Him that was to come, just as Eve was made from the side of Adam as he slept, so from the Side of the Lord, as He slept, that is, as He was dying in His Passion, and was pierced on the Cross by the spear, flowed forth the Sacraments, whereby the Church was to be formed. For of that same coming Passion of His He speaketh in another Psalm, I laid me down, and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord shall sustain Me. The sleep then meaneth the Passion. Eve was formed from the side of one sleeping, the Church from the side of One suffering. Our Lord Jesus Christ then speaketh in the Prophets, sometimes in His own Name, sometimes in ours, because He maketh Himself one with us; as it is said, they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore also the Lord saith in the Gospel, speaking of marriage, therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. One flesh, because of our mortality He took flesh; not one divinity, for He is the Creator, we the creature. Whatsoever then our Lord speaketh in the person of the Flesh He took upon Him, belongeth both to that Head which hath already ascended into heaven, and to those members which still toil in their earthly wandering; for which toiling members, when Saul was persecuting them, He cried from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Let us hear then our Lord Jesus Christ speaking in prophecy. For the Psalms were sung long before the Lord was born of Mary, yet not before He was Lord; for from everlasting He was the Creator of all things, but in time He was born of His creature. Let us believe that Godhead, and, so far as we can, understand Him to be equal to the Father. But that Godhead equal to the Father, was made partaker of our mortal nature, not of His own store, but of ours; that we too might be made partakers of His Divine Nature, not of our store, but of His.

3. Lord, Thou hast tried me, and known me. Let the Lord Jesus Christ Himself say this; let Him too say, 'Lord,' to the Father. For His Father is not

His Lord, save because He hath deigned to be born according to the flesh. He is Father of the God, Lord of the Man. Wouldest thou know to whom He is Father? To the coequal Son. The Apostle saith, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. To this Form God is Father, the Form equal to Himself, the only-begotten Son, begotten of His Substance. But forasmuch as for our sakes, that we might be re-made, and made partakers of His Divine Nature, being renewed unto life eternal, He was made partaker of our mortal nature, what saith the Apostle of Him, after that he had said, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God? He saith, yet He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man. He was in the Form of God, equal to the Father; He took upon Him the form of a servant, so as therein to be less than the Father. Whence He saith both in the Gospel; both, I and the Father are one; and, For my Father is greater than I: I and the Father are one, according to the Form of God; The Father is greater than I, according to the form of a servant. Therefore since He is both Father and Lord, Father of the Form of God, Lord of the form of a servant, let Him then say, and let not us wonder or be offended that the only-begotten Son of God saith it, Lord, Thou hast proved me; and known me. Thou hast proved me, and known me; not because He did not know before, but because He made Him known to others; Thou hast proved me, he saith, and known me.

4. Thou hast known My down-sitting and Mine up-rising. What here is down-sitting, what up-rising? He who sitteth, humbleth himself. The Lord then sat in His Passion, up-rose in His Resurrection. Thou, he saith, hast known this; that is, Thou hast willed, Thou hast approved; according to Thy will was it done. But if thou choosest to take the words of the Head in the person of the Body, let us too say, Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine up-rising. For man sitteth when he humbleth himself in penitence, he riseth up when his sins are forgiven, and he is lifted up to the hope of everlasting life. Wherefore it is said also in another Psalm, Rise up after ye have sat down, ye that eat the bread of sorrow. Penitents eat the bread of sorrow; as they sing in another Psalm, saying, My tears have been my meat day and night. What then meaneth, Rise up after ye have sat down? Lift not up yourselves, unless ye have first been humbled. For many wish to rise

before they have sat down, they wish to appear righteous, before they have confessed that they are sinners. If then thou take the verse in the person of our Head, understand thus, Thou hast known My down-sitting, and Mine up-rising, that is, My Passion and My Resurrection: if in the person of the Body, Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine up-rising, before Thine eyes I have confessed my sins, and by Thy grace I have been justified.

5. Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar; Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit; and all my ways Thou hast seen beforehand. What is, from afar? While I am yet in my pilgrimage, before I reach that, my true country, Thou hast known my thoughts. Consider the younger son in the parable, for he too was made the Body of Christ, the Church which came in from the Gentiles. This younger son then had gone into a far country; for a certain father had two sons; the elder had not gone far away, but wrought in his fields, and signifieth the saints under the Law, who did the works and precepts of the Law. But the rest of the human race, which had turned aside to worship idols, had wandered into a far country. What maketh thee so far from Him Who made thee, as the false god which thou hast made for thyself? The younger son then went into a far country, taking with him his substance, and, as we learn in the Gospel, wasted it, living prodigally with harlots; and being in want, he joined himself to a certain great man of that country, who appointed him to feed his swine; and he would fain have filled himself with the husks they eat, and could not. After his toil and suffering and tribulation and want, he thought on his father, and desired to return, and said, I will arise, and go to my father. I will arise, said he, for before he had sat. Here then thou mayest recognise him saying, Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine up-rising. I sat, in want; I arose, in longing for Thy Bread. Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar. For far indeed had I gone; but where is not He whom I had left? Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar. Wherefore the Lord saith in the Gospel, that his father met him as he was coming. Truly; for he had understood his thoughts from afar. My path and my limit Thou hast tracked out. My path, he saith; what, but a bad path, the path he had walked to leave his Father, as though he could be hid from His eyes when He would punish? nay more, as though he would have been crushed in that want, or been set to feed swine, save that his Father willed to scourge him afar, that He might receive him again near.

So then, like a runaway slave that is caught, when the lawful vengeance of God was following him, that vengeance that punisheth our affections, whithersoever we go, and how far soever we have gone, like a runaway slave, I say, that is caught, he saith, Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit. What is, my path? that by which I have gone. What is, my limit? that whereunto I have reached. Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit. That limit of mine, far distant as it was, was not far from Thine eyes. Far had I gone, and yet Thou wast there. Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit.

6. And all my ways Thou hast seen beforehand. He said not, hast seen, but, hast seen beforehand. Before I went by them, before I walked in them, Thou didst see them beforehand; and Thou didst permit me in toil to go my own ways, that, if I desired not to toil, I might return into Thy ways. For there is no deceit in my tongue. What meant he by this? Lo, I confess to Thee, I have walked in mine own way, I am become far from Thee, I have departed from Thee, with Whom it was well with me, and to my good it was ill with me without Thee. For, had it been well with me without Thee, perchance I had been unwilling to return to Thee. So he, confessing his sins, saying that the Body of Christ was justified, not in itself, but by His grace, said, There is no deceit in my tongue.

7. Behold Thou, Lord, hast known all my last doings, and the ancient ones. Thou hast known my latest doings, when I fed swine; Thou hast known my ancient doings, when I asked of Thee my portion of goods. Ancient doings were the beginnings to me of latest ills: ancient sin, when we fell; latest punishment, when we came into this toilsome and dangerous mortality. And would that this may be latest to us; it will be, if now we will to return. For there is another latest for certain wicked ones, to whom it shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And we, brethren, have heretofore abandoned God, let it be toil enough to us to have come into this mortality. Remember we our Father's Bread; recollect we the bliss of our Father's Home; delight we not in the husks of swine, the doctrines of devils. Behold Thou, Lord, hast known all my latest doings, and the ancient ones; the latest, whereunto I have come; the ancient, wherein I offended Thee. Thou hast fashioned me, and hast laid Thine hand

upon me. Fashioned me, where? In this mortality; now, to the toils whereunto we all are born. For none is born, but God has fashioned him in his mother's womb; nor is there any creature, whereof God is not the Fashioner. But Thou hast fashioned me in this toil, and laid Thine hand upon me, Thine avenging hand, putting down the proud. For thus healthfully hath He cast down the proud, that He may lift him up humble. Thou hast fashioned me, and laid Thine hand upon me.

8. Thy skill hath displayed itself wonderfully in me: it hath waxed mighty: I shall not be able to attain unto it. Listen now and hear somewhat, which is obscure indeed, yet bringeth no small pleasure in the understanding thereof. Moses, the holy servant of God, with whom God spake by a cloud,—for, speaking after human fashion, He must needs speak to His servant through some work of His hands which He assumed, that is, not by His own substance, but by some bodily work of His hands which He assumed, that through it those words might be spoken, and sound in human and mortal ears; for thus did God speak then, not as He speaketh in His own substance. For how doth He speak in His own substance? The Word of God is God's speech: and the Word of God is Christ: that Word soundeth not and then passeth away, but ever unchangeably remaineth the Word, by Whom all things were made. To which Word (for He is also the Wisdom of God) it is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed, but Thou art the same; and in another place where Scripture is speaking of Wisdom it saith, remaining in herself she maketh all things new; that abiding Wisdom then, if we may even say abiding; (but it is such because He changeth not, not because He moveth not;) and that ever continueth in the same way, never varying in place or time, in no place otherwise than in any other place; at no time otherwise than in all other time; He is the Speech of God. But the speech which was addressed to Moses, being addressed to man, was by syllables, by passing sounds; and they would not be, had not God assumed one of the works of His hand, such as might utter such discourse and words—holy Moses, I say, knew that that speech of God was uttered by means of certain corporeal works of God's hand which He assumed, and he longed and desired to see the true appearance of God, and said to God, Who was conversing with him, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me Thyself. When this he desired vehemently, and would extort from God in

that sort of friendly familiarity, if we may so speak, wherewith God deigned to treat him, that he might see His Glory and His Face, in such wise as we can speak of God's Face, He said unto him, Thou canst not see My Face; for no one hath seen My Face, and lived; but I will place thee in a clift of the rock, and will pass by, and will set My hand upon thee; and when I have passed by, thou shalt see My back parts. And from these words there ariseth another enigma, that is, an obscure figure of the truth. When I have passed by, saith God, thou shalt see My back parts; as though He hath on one side His face, on another His back. Far be it from us to have any such thoughts of that Majesty! For whoso hath such thoughts of God, what advantageth it him that the temples are closed? He is building an idol in his own heart. In these words then are mighty mysteries. The Lord spake, as I said, by one of the works of His hand, what He would say to His servant. Thereby was meant the Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Himself; Who according to the form of God indeed, wherein He is equal to the Father, is equally with the Father invisible to eye of man. For if human wisdom cannot be seen with the eye, can the Virtue and Wisdom of God be seen by eye of flesh? But forasmuch as the Lord was about to take flesh in due time, so as to appear even to fleshly eyes, that healthfully He might cure the soul within, since thus it was needful that He should appear, foretelling this, He saith to Moses in a figure, Thou canst not see My Face, but thou shalt see My back parts, when I have passed by thee. But that thou mayest not see My Face, My Hand shall be upon thee. What was 'to pass by' to the Lord, save what the Evangelist saith, But when the hour was come, that Jesus should pass from this world to the Father? For 'Pascha' signifieth passing over; for what in Hebrew is expressed by the word 'Pascha,' in Latin is interpreted 'transitus.' What is, Thou shalt not see My Face, but thou shalt see My back parts? Whom did Moses personify when it was said to him, Thou shalt not see My Face, but thou shalt see My back parts, and that when I have passed by: but that thou mayest not see My Face, I will lay My Hand upon thee. By His Face He meant His former estate, and in a manner by His back parts, His passing from this world by His Passion. He appeared to the Jews, they knew Him not. Them Moses personified when it was said to him, Thou canst not see My Face. But whence was it that they saw not the Lord in the flesh? Because the Hand was heavy on them. For of them had Esaias said, Make the heart of this people fat, and their eyes heavy. And

they say in another Psalm, Thy Hand is heavy upon me. So that they might not then perceive the divinity of Christ, (for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and if the Lord had not been crucified, His Blood would not have redeemed the world,) what did the Lord, but what the Apostle called the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; where he crieth out, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever and ever. This the Apostle saith, because above he had said, Blindness in part is happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in, and so all Israel might be saved. The Jews then were blinded in part, as their pride deserved, because they called themselves righteous; and, being blinded, they crucified the Lord. He laid His Hand upon them that they might not see Him, while He passed by, that is, from this world to the Father. Let us see whether after He had passed by, they saw His back parts. The Lord rose again, appeared to His disciples, and to all who had up to this time believed on Him; not to those by whom He was crucified, because upon them He had laid His Hand while He passed by. Then He ascended into heaven, after He had tarried forty days with His disciples. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, He sent unto them His Holy Spirit. They, filled with the Holy Spirit, began to speak in all men's tongues, who had been born in one, and had learnt one alone. Thousands of those who had crucified the Lord were amazed and astonished at so great a miracle; pricked to the heart at so great a miracle, they sought counsel of the Apostles, what they should do, when Christ was preached to them, wondering whence it came that unlearned men spake in every tongue. When then the Apostle Peter preached to them Christ, Whom they had despised, on the Cross, Whom as a mortal man they had mocked, Whom they insulted because He came not down from the Cross, whereas surely it was a much greater thing to rise from the dead, as He did, than to come down from the Cross;—when then he preached to them Christ, they said, What shall we do? They who had raged against the Lord, Whom they saw, now seek counsel how they may be saved; and it is said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of

Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be forgiven you. Behold, they saw the back parts of Him, Whose face they could not see. For His Hand was upon their eyes, not for ever, but while He passed by. After He had passed, He took away His Hand from their eyes. When the Hand was taken from their eyes, they say to the disciples, What shall we do? At first they are fierce, afterwards loving; at first angry, afterwards fearful; at first hard, then pleasant; at first blind, then enlightened.

9. I think that we may also recognise in this Psalm the same kind of words of the Gentiles, remembering their unbelief. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy on all. Thou hast fashioned me, and laid Thine Hand upon me. Thy knowledge is made wonderful from me; it hath waxed mighty, I shall not be able to attain unto it. Thou hast, as it were, laid Thine Hand upon me: Thou hast been made wonderful unto me, I comprehend Thee not, with Whom I was. How easy to me was the countenance of my Father, when I said, Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. Behold now that I have gone into a far country, and am crushed with hunger, difficult is it to me, and toil is before my eyes; I cannot perceive what I have abandoned. For Thy knowledge, saith he, is made wonderful from me. From my sin came it to pass, that it was made wonderful to me, and was incomprehensible to me. For easy was it to me to contemplate Thee, when I had not through pride left Thee. Thy knowledge is made wonderful from me; it hath waxed mighty; I shall not be able to attain unto it, that is, from myself. I shall not be able to attain to it from myself. When then I shall be able, not, save of Thee, shall I be able.

10. Behold thou findest that the runaway in a far country cannot escape His eyes, from Whom he fleeth. And whither can he go now, whose limit is tracked out? Behold, what saith he? Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? for the Spirit of the Lord filleth the earth. Who can in the world flee from that Spirit, with Whom the world is filled? Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from Thy Face? He seeketh a place whither to flee from the wrath of God. What place will shelter God's runaway? Men who shelter runaways, ask them from whom they have fled; and when they find any one a slave of some master less powerful than themselves, him they shelter as it were without any fear, saying in their hearts, 'he hath not a

master by whom he can be tracked out.’ But when they are told of a powerful master, they either shelter not, or they shelter with great fear, because even a powerful man can be deceived. Where is God not? Who can deceive God? Whom doth not God see? From whom doth not God demand His runaway? Whither then shall that runaway go from the Face of God? He turneth him hither and thither, as though seeking a spot to flee to.

11. If I go up, saith he, to heaven, Thou art there: if I go down to hell, Thou art present. At length, miserable runaway, thou hast learnt, that by no means canst thou make thyself far from Him, from Whom thou hast wished to remove far away. Behold, He is every where; thou, whither wilt thou go? He hath found counsel, and that inspired by Him, Who now deigneth to recall him. If I go up to heaven, Thou art there: if I go down to hell, Thou art present. If I lift myself up, I find Thee pressing me down; if I hide myself, I find Thee seeking me, and not only seeking me, but also tracking me out. For if I pride myself on my righteousness, Thou art there, Whose is true righteousness. If by sinning I go down to the depths of wickednesses, and spurn to confess, saying, ‘Who seeth me,’ for in hell who shall confess to Thee? there also Thou art present, to punish. Whither then shall I go that I may flee from Thy presence, that is, not find Thee angry?

12. This plan he found: So will I flee, saith he, from Thy Face, so will I flee from Thy Spirit; from Thy avenging Spirit, Thy avenging Face thus will I flee. How? If I take again my wings right forward, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea. So can I flee from Thy Face. If he will flee to the utmost part of the sea from the Face of God, will not He from Whom he fleeth be there, He of Whom he said, If I go down to hell, Thou art present? Strange, if He be not in the utmost parts of the sea, Who not even in hell is absent. But I know, saith he, how I may flee from Thy wrath. I must take again my wings, not an erring course but right forward, that I neither be lifted up to proud presumption, nor be sunk down to abandoned despair. What wings will he take again, save the two pinions, the two precepts of love, on which two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets? These wings, saith he, these pinions, if I thus take again to me, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea, I can flee from Thy Face to Thy Face; from Thy Face in anger, to Thy Face appeased. For what are the utmost parts of the sea, but the end of

the world? Thither let us now flee in hope and longing, with the wings of twofold love; let us have no rest, save in the utmost parts of the sea. For if elsewhere we wish for rest, we shall be hurled headlong into the sea. Let us fly even to the ends of the sea, let us bear ourselves aloft on the wings of twofold love; meanwhile let us flee to God in hope, and in faithful hope let us meditate on that end of the sea.

13. Now listen who may bring us thither. The very same One whose face in wrath we wish to flee from. For what followeth? If I go down into hell, Thou art present: if I take again my wings right forward, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea, even thither shall Thy hand conduct me, and Thy right hand lead me. This let us meditate on, beloved brethren, let this be our hope, this our consolation. Let us take again through love the wings we lost through lust. For lust was the lime of our wings, it dashed us down from the freedom of our sky, that is, the free breezes of the Spirit of God. Thence dashed down we lost our wings, and were, so to speak, imprisoned in the power of the fowler; thence He redeemed us with His Blood, Whom we fled from to be caught. He maketh us wings of His commandments; we raise them aloft now free from lime. Let us not love the sea, but fly to the utmost parts of the sea. Let none be afraid, yet let none presume on his wings; for, winged though we be, unless He conduct us, we are thrown headlong into the depths of the sea, worn out and tired, presuming as it were on our own strength. Needs then must we have wings, and needs must He conduct us, for He is our Helper. We have free-will; but even with that free-will what can we do, unless He help us Who commandeth us. For thither shall Thy Hand conduct me, and Thy right Hand guide me.

14. And considering the length of the way, what said he to himself? And I said, Peradventure the darkness shall overwhelm me. Lo, now I have believed in Christ, now am I wafted aloft on the wings of twofold love, and the iniquity of this world aboundeth, and because iniquity aboundeth, the love of many waxeth cold. In this life amid so many offences, so many sins, so many troubles of daily temptations, daily evil suggestions, what do I? saith he. How shall I come to the utmost parts of the sea? He addeth, he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Regarding the length of the way, I said to myself, Peradventure the darkness shall overwhelm me.

And the night was light in my delight. The night was made to me light, because in the night I despaired of being able to cross so great a sea, to surmount so long a journey, to reach the utmost parts by persevering to the end. Thanks to Him Who sought me when a runaway, who smote my back with strokes of the scourge, who by calling me re-called me from destruction, who made my night light. For it is night so long as we are passing through this life. How was the night made light? Because Christ came down into the night. Christ took flesh in this world, and enlightened for us the night. For the woman in the parable when she had lost a drachma, lighted a candle. The wisdom of God had lost a drachma. What is a drachma? A piece of money whereon was the image of our king. For man was made in the image of God, and had perished. And what did the wise woman? She lighted a lamp. A lamp is made of clay, yet has light, whereby the drachma may be found. The lamp of wisdom then, the Flesh of Christ, is made of clay, yet shines with His Word, finds the lost. And night was made light in my delight. Night was made delight to me. Our delight is Christ. See how now we delight in Him. Those shouts of yours, that joy of yours, whence are they from our delight? and whence is that delight, save that our night is enlightened, save that unto us Christ the Lord is preached? For He sought you before ye sought Him, and found you before ye found Him. And night was made light in my delight.

15. For darkness shall not be darkened by Thee. Do not thou then darken thy darkness; God darkeneth it not, but enlighteneth it yet more; for to Him is said in another Psalm, Thou, Lord, shalt light my candle: my God shall enlighten my darkness. But who are they who darken their darkness, which God darkeneth not? Evil men, perverse men; when they sin, verily they are darkness; when they confess not their sins which they have committed, but go on to defend them, they darken their darkness. Wherefore now if thou hast sinned, thou art in darkness, but by confessing thy darkness thou shalt obtain to have thy darkness lightened; by defending thy darkness, thou shalt darken thy darkness. And where wilt thou escape from double darkness, who wast in difficulty in single darkness? In what sense then doth the Lord not darken our darkness? Because he suffereth us not to have our sins unpunished, he scourgeth us in these toils, and disciplineth us. Know, my brethren, that all this misery of mankind in which the world groaneth, is

medicinal pain, not penal sentence. Ye see that every where is pain, every where fear, every where need, every where toils. Avarice increaseth, but amid evils. If for this purpose God here disciplineth us with such scourges, that our darkness may not be darkened, let us acknowledge that we are under the punishment of the scourge, and let us bless God, Who mingleth bitternesses with the sweetness of this earthly life, lest, blinded by the enjoyment of temporal delights, we long not for everlasting delights, nor be willing that the sea come to end, or ourselves to dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea. Let then the waves of the sea rage: the more the waves of the sea rage, the more does the dove soar with her wings. God then darkeneth not our darkness, because He mingleth scourges with our sins, and bitternesses with our evil delights. Let us not darken our darkness by defending our sins, and the night shall be light in our delight. For darkness shall not be darkened by Thee.

16. And night shall be lightened as the day. Night, as the day. Day to us is worldly prosperity, night adversity in this world: but, if we learn that it is by the desert of our sins that we suffer adversities, and our Father's scourges are sweet to us, that the Judge's sentence may not be bitter to us, so shall we find the darkness of this night to be, as it were, the light of this night. If it is night, how is there light there? It is night, because here mankind wander; it is night because not yet have we reached the true day, the day not straitened by yesterday and to-morrow, the day everlasting, without rising, without setting. Here then it is night, but this night has a sort of light and darkness of its own. Why it is altogether night, we have said; but what is the light of this night? Prosperity and happiness of this world, temporal joy, temporal honour, are, as it were, the light of this night. But adversity, and the bitterness of tribulations and lowness of station, these are, as it were, the darkness of this night. In this night, in this mortal condition of human life, men have darkness; their light prosperity, adversity their darkness. But when Christ our Lord has come, and has dwelt in the soul by faith, and promised other light, and inspired and given patience, and warned a man not to delight in prosperity or to be crushed by adversity, the man, being faithful, begins to treat this world with indifference; not to be lifted up when prosperity befalls him, nor crushed when adversity, but in all things to praise God, not only when he aboundeth, but also when he loseth; not only

when he is in health, but also when he is sick; so that in his mouth that strain is true, I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall be ever in my mouth. If then ever, both when this night is bright, and when it is dark; when prosperity smiles upon thee, and when adversity is sad; if ever His praise be in thy mouth, then shall it also be to thee according to what is next said, As is His darkness, so is also His light. His darkness overwhelms me not, because His light lifts me not up.

17. Behold, thou hast its light in Job: he had abundance of every thing. First is described the light of his night, in his riches. In proportion to the greatness of the goods, and the store he possessed in abundance, was the light of his night. The enemy thought that such an one as he worshipped God only because He had given him all these things, and asked that they might be taken from him. Then his night became darkness, which before had light. Still he knew that, whether it were darkness or light, it was night, wherein he was wandering in a far country, away from his God, and he had his God Himself as an inward Light, and that inner Light made him indifferent, whether it were darkness in this night, or light. And as in the light of this night, that is, in the midst of abundance, he worshipped God, when all was taken from him, when his night was made darkness, what said he? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath it happened; blessed be the Name of the Lord. I am, so to speak, in the night of this life: my Lord dwelleth in my heart, He enlightened that night for me with certain comforts, when He gave me abundance of temporal goods; now He hath withdrawn that temporal light, and the night is, as it were, darkened. But since, as is His darkness, so is His light also; the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so hath it happened; blessed be the Name of the Lord. I am not sad in this night, for as is His darkness, so is also His light; both pass away; so that they which rejoice are as though they rejoiced not, and they that weep as though they wept not; for, as is His darkness, so is also His light.

18. For Thou, O Lord, hast possessed my reins. Not without reason, as is His darkness, so is also His light. The Possessor is within; He occupieth not only the heart, but also the reins; not only the thoughts, but also the delights: He then possesseth that whence I should feel delight at any light in

this world: He occupieth my reins: I know not delight, save from the inward light of His Wisdom. What then? Dost thou not delight that thy affairs are very prosperous, times fortunate to thee? dost thou not delight in honour, in riches, in thy family? 'I do not,' saith he. Wherefore? Because as is His darkness, so is also His light. Whence hast thou this indifference, that as is His darkness to thee, so is also His light? Whence? Because Thou hast possessed my reins, O Lord; Thou hast taken me up from my mother's womb. While I was in my mother's womb, I did not regard with indifference the darkness of that night and the light of that night. For my mother's womb is the custom of my city. What city is that? That which first gave us birth in captivity. We know that Babylon, whereof we spoke yesterday, from whence all go forth who believe in and sigh for the true light, the heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore have I said, From my mother's womb was I taken up by the Lord, thence are the darkness and light of this night become indifferent to me. But he that is in the womb of that mother, Babylon, joys in the prosperity of this world, is crushed by the adversity of this world, knows not to rejoice, unless some temporal prosperity befall him; knows not to be saddened, unless some temporal adversity befall him. Now come forth from the womb of Babylon, begin to sing a song to the Lord; come forth and be born: God shall take thee up from thy mother's womb. What God? That God of the Apostle Paul, who said, But when it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal His Son in me. For who was his mother? The Synagogue. And what had he learnt there, save what the Jews themselves, the people itself, had and had learnt? The name of God's praise had remained in them, but there were not found in them deeds: there were in them the words of God, as leaves on a tree: the fruit was no where. Such a fig-tree, as ye know, the Lord when He found, withered away with a curse, for He found thereon leaves, but fruit He did not find. Some tree He was speaking of in a figure to us. For the time of figs was not yet: what all men knew, did the Maker of earth and sky not know? He therefore, Who separated Paul from his mother's womb, hath also separated us from our mother's womb. And who is our mother? Babylon. Being then taken up from that womb, let us now begin to entertain other hopes. He hath promised, brethren, that wherein ye may rejoice: now bring forth fruit, being set in other hopes. Now know no ill, save to offend God, and so not to be brought to those things which He promiseth. What of

the goods of this world, and the ills of this world? Let us regard them with indifference; for now, having been taken up from the womb of that our mother, we look on them with indifference, and say, As is His darkness, so is also His light. Neither doth earthly prosperity make us happy, nor earthly adversity wretched. We must maintain righteousness, love faith, hope in God, love God, love our neighbours also. After these toils we shall have unfailing light, day without setting. Fleeting is all the light and darkness of this night. For Thou, Lord, hast possessed my reins: Thou hast taken me up from my mother's womb.

19. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, for terribly hast Thou been made wonderful. Terribly hast Thou been made wonderful: in the very fact that we wonder at Thee, Thou art terrible, we rejoice with trembling. For we fear lest, being puffed up with pride at Thy gifts, we be punished by the loss of what we have gained by humility. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, for terribly hast Thou been made wonderful: wondrous are Thy works, and my soul knoweth it right well. Now my soul knoweth it right well, because Thou hast taken me up from my mother's womb; but aforetime Thy knowledge was made wonderful from me, it had waxed great, nor could I attain unto it. From me then it had waxed great, nor could I attain unto it. Whence doth my soul now know right well, save because the night is light in my delight? save because Thy grace hath come unto me, and enlightened my darkness? save because Thou hast possessed my reins? save because Thou hast taken me up from my mother's womb?

20. My bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret. His bone, he saith. What the people call 'ossum,' is in Latin called 'os.' This is the word in the Greek. For we might think the word 'os' is here the one which makes in the plural 'ora,' not 'os' short, which makes 'ossa.' He saith then, my bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret. I have a certain bone in secret (ossum). For this word let us prefer to use; better is it that scholars find fault with us, than that the people understand us not. 'There is then,' saith he, 'a certain bone of mine, within, hidden; Thou hast made within a bone for me in secret, yet is it not hidden from Thee. In secret hast Thou made it, but hast Thou therefore hidden it from Thyself? This my bone made by Thee in secret men see not, men know not: Thou

knowest, Who hast made. What bone then meaneth he, brethren? Let us seek it, it is in secret. But because as Christians we are speaking in the Name of the Lord to Christians, now we find what bone is of this kind. It is a sort of inward strength; for strength and fortitude are understood to be in the bones. There is then a sort of inward strength of the soul, wherein it is not broken. Whatever tortures, whatever tribulations, whatever adversities rage around, that which God hath made strong in secret in us, cannot be broken, yieldeth not. For by God is made a certain strength of patience, of which is said in another Psalm, But my soul shall be subjected to God, for of Him is my patience. Observe too the Apostle Paul, how he hath within him this kind of strength. As sorrowful, saith he, yet alway rejoicing. Whence, as sorrowful? From insults, reproaches, persecutions, scourgings, stripes, stonings, imprisonment, chains. Who would not think them wretched in all these? Nay, their very persecutors would not so rage against them, did they not think that they were made wretched by their persecutions. For from their own weakness did they guess at them, not having themselves a bone hidden within; but they who had, to men without indeed seemed sad, yet within rejoiced to God, from Whom their bone was not hidden, which He Himself had made in secret. And the same Apostle Paul discloseth to us this bone made in secret by God, in these words, ‘And not only so, but we even glory in tribulation.’ Is it too small a thing that thou art not sad, but dost thou glory also? Let it suffice thee not to be sad. Too small a thing it is, saith he, to Christians; such a bone hath He made for me in secret, that it is too small a thing for me not to be crushed, if I glory not also. Wherein dost thou glory? In tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. See how that strength is fashioned within in his heart: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Which is given unto us. So is fashioned and made strong that hidden bone, that it maketh us even to glory in tribulations. But to men we seem wretched, because that which we have within is hidden from them. My bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret, and my substance is in the lower parts of the earth. Behold, in flesh is my substance, in the lower parts of the earth is my substance; yet have I a bone within, which Thou hast fashioned, such as to cause me never to yield to any persecutions of this lower region, where still

my substance is. For what great matter is it, if an Angel be brave? This is a great matter, if flesh is brave. And whence is flesh brave, whence is an earthen vessel brave, save because in it is made a bone in secret? And my substance is in the lower parts of the earth.

21. What of them who are less strong? For, as I have already brought to your notice, it is Christ that speaketh. But many things are spoken in the person of the Body, hear now somewhat in the person of the Head; and that, not as though He maketh distinction, so as to introduce the person now of the Head, now of the Body. For if he make distinction, he in a manner divideth, and so there will not be two in one flesh. But if there be two in one flesh, wonder not if there be two in one voice. When our Lord Jesus Christ suffered, His disciples had not yet that inward bone, not yet had their strength of patience been made strong; and they knew not themselves, knew not their own strength, and Peter dared to promise to share his Lord's Passion even unto death: the sick man knew not himself, but the Physician knew the sick man. What was the result? I will go with Thee, saith he, even unto death. Verily I say unto thee, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. The answer of the Physician proved truer than the presumption of the sick man. Of those then he saith, 'My bone is not hidden from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret,' in whom is this bone made strong within; especially the strength of endurance in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who when He willed lay down, when He willed rose again; when He willed, slept, when He willed, awoke; for, I have power, saith He, to lay My life down, and I have power to take it again. What of them in whom this strength was not fashioned and established? what saith He of them? See what He saith to God His Father. Thine eyes did see My imperfect one. My imperfect one, My Peter, promising and denying, presuming and failing; yet Thine eyes saw him. For because the Lord Himself turned and looked on him, as it is written in the Gospel, at length after the third denial he remembered what the Lord had foretold to him, and went out and wept bitterly; that weeping was at God's looking upon him, for, Mine imperfect one, saith He, Thine eyes did see. For he, imperfect, stumbling at his Lord's Passion, without doubt would have perished, but that Thine eyes saw him, and not him only, but all too who were imperfect, till they were strengthened by Christ's resurrection. For it was made plain to their eyes

that that had not perished in their Lord which had died, and so that bone was made for them in secret, so that now they did not even fear to die themselves. Thine eyes did see Mine imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written, not only the perfect, but also the imperfect. Let not the imperfect fear, only let them advance. Nor yet, because I have said, 'let them not fear,' let them love their imperfection, and remain there, where they are found. Let them advance, as far as in them lieth. Daily let them add, daily let them approach; yet let them not fall back from the Body of the Lord: that, compacted in one Body and among these members, they may be counted worthy to have that said of them, Thine eyes did see My imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written.

22. By day shall they wander, and none among them. The Day was yet on earth, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Whence He said, Walk while ye have the Day. But by day shall His imperfect ones wander. They too thought that our Lord Jesus Christ was only man, that He had not within Him the hidden Godhead, that He was not secretly God, but that He was that only which was seen: this they too thought. For even Peter himself, (for of him especially we speak, in whom is set forth to us also a pattern that we despair not of our weakness,) even Peter had said to the Lord, when He asked whom men said that He was, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And the Lord had said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. Wherefore? Because he has called Him the Son of God. Then, but a little after, in the same place, in the same conversation, the Lord began to speak of His coming Passion. Then did that same Peter, who already had confessed Him to be the Son of God, fear lest He should die like a son of man. He was the Son of God, He was also the Son of man; Son of God, in the Form of God, equal to the Father; Son of man, in the form of a servant, wherein He is inferior to the Father. Doubtless He was destined to come to His Passion in the form of a servant; why did Peter fear that in the form of a servant the Form of God would perish, and not rather presume that through the Form of God the form of a servant would live again? He saith to Him, That be far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee. And the Lord, Who had called him blessed in those former words, now saith, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those

that be of men. Before, because he had said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, it was said to him, Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Which is in heaven: therefore art thou a stone, therefore blessed. But now, because not from the Father's revelation, but from the flesh's weakness he had answered, he is called Satan. Thou savourest not, He says, the things that be of God, but those that be of men. And this was Christ, my brethren; He had walked among them, He had commanded the winds, He had walked on the waters before their eyes, before their eyes He had raised one who had been four days dead, before their eyes He had done all those great miracles, and yet they were amazed at His Passion, as though they had lost Him, on Whom they had in vain trusted. But by day shall they wander, and none among them. No one whatever; not even he who had said, I will go with Thee even unto death. For He had said unto them, The hour cometh, that ye shall leave Me alone, and go every one his own way; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. The Father was with Him, and He with the Father; the Father in Him, and He in the Father; He and the Father were one; yet feared they when He died. Wherefore, save because in the day they wandered, and there was no one in them. In the day they shall wander, and none among them.

23. But what is, In the day they shall wander? Shall they perish? Where then is, Thine eyes did see My imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written? When then did they wander in the day? When they understood not the Lord set upon earth. And what followeth? But to me Thy friends are made very honourable, O God; those very ones, who wandered in the day, and none was in them, became Thy friends, and were made very honourable to me. That bone was made in them in secret after the resurrection of the Lord, and they suffered for His Name, at whose death they had been amazed. To me Thy friends are made very honourable, O God, mightily strengthened were their chieftainships. They became Apostles, they became leaders of the Church, they became rams leading their flocks, mightily strengthened were their chieftainships.

24. I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand. By means of them, who wandered in the day, and, there was none in them, lo! there has been born all this great multitude, which now is like the sand

innumerable, save by God. For He said, they shall be multiplied above the sand, and yet He had said, I will number them. The very same who are numbered, shall be multiplied above the sand. For by Him is the sand numbered, by Whom the very hairs of our head are numbered. I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand.

25. I have risen, and yet am I with Thee. What is, I have risen, and yet am I with Thee? Already have I suffered, saith He, already have I been buried; lo! I have risen, and not yet do they understand that I am with them. Yet am I with Thee, that is, not yet with them, for not yet do they recognise Me. For thus do we read in the Gospel, that after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He appeared to them, they did not at once know Him. There is another meaning also: I have risen, and yet am I with Thee, as though He would signify this present time, wherein he is as yet hidden at the right hand of the Father, before He is revealed in the brightness, wherein He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

26. And then He telleth what meanwhile, during this whole time when He already has risen, and remaineth still with the Father, He suffereth by the intermixture of sinners in His Body, the Church, and by the separation of heretics. If Thou, O God, shall slay the sinners, since Thou shalt say in Thy thought, Depart from Me, ye men of blood, they shall receive in vanity their cities. The words seem to be connected in this order; If Thou, O God, shall slay the sinners, they shall receive in vanity their cities. For in this way doth He mean them to be understood to be slain, when by pride, whereby they are puffed up, they lose the grace whereby they live. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding. Thus are sinners slain, because, having their understandings darkened, they are alienated from the life of God. For on account of elation they lose confession, and so they are slain, and in them is fulfilled what Scripture saith, Confession perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not. And so they receive in vanity their cities, that is, their vain peoples, who follow their vanity; when, puffed up by the name of righteousness, they persuade men to burst the bond of unity, and blindly and ignorantly follow them, as being more righteous. And because it is hence for the most part that they find an occasion for separating from the unity of Christ, namely,

by accusing evil men, with whom they pretend that they are unwilling to hold communion; and because it is possible that they not only disparage the guiltless, whom they pretend to flee from as wicked, but also say truth of some wicked men, like unto themselves, among whom the wheat of Christ, preserving the bond of unity, groaneth; therefore He hath inserted, Because Thou shalt say in Thy thought, Depart from Me, ye men of blood, they shall receive in vanity their cities: that is, therefore they shall draw away to their own schism their peoples, to corrupt them with their vanity, because Thou in Thy thought shalt say, Depart from Me, ye men of blood: in order, that is, that sinners, slain in the spirit as the due reward of their pride, may therefore receive their cities, that is, their peoples, into vanity, that is, may draw them away by separation into the vanity of error; and offended, as it were, by the intermixture of the chaff, may break unity, and abandon the wheat; because He warneth the wheat, that is, good and faithful men, that before the winnowing, which is to be at the end, it separate not itself openly from the bad, lest it abandon the good that are still mingled with them; but by good conversation, and contrariety of life, it, in a manner, say silently to them, Depart from Me, ye men of blood. For this he saith to them by the Voice of God, which Voice is in thought, as God speaketh it in the thought of His holy people. For who are men of blood, save they who hate their brethren? As John saith, He who hateth his brother, is a murderer. The slain sinners then not understanding this, how God saith to the wicked in the thought of the good, Depart from Me, ye men of blood, find fault with them for holding communion with wicked men, and, separating themselves on the ground of these false charges, receive in vanity their cities. This saying, which now in the thought of the good is said to the wicked, will be openly said in that day when it shall be said to them by our Head Himself, I never knew you: depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.

27. But now the Body of Christ, the Church, saith, Why do the proud speak falsely against me, as though I were stained by other men's sins, and so, by separating themselves, receive in vanity their cities? Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord? Why do those who are worse themselves require of me to separate myself in body as well as spirit from the wicked, so as to root up the wheat, together with the tares, before the time of harvest, that before the time of winnowing I lose my power of enduring the chaff; that

before all the different sorts of fishes are brought to the end of the world, as to the shore, to be separated, I tear the nets of peace and unity? Are the sacraments which I receive, those of evil men? Do I, by consent, communicate in their life and deeds? Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord, and at Thine enemies wasted away? When the zeal of Thine house eat me, did I not see the senseless ones, and waste away? Did not horror take hold of me, because of the wicked that forsake Thy law? For who are Thine enemies, save they who by their life declare how they hate Thy law? These then when I hated, why do they who receive in vanity their cities, falsely accuse me, as though their sins could be laid to my charge, whom I hated, and at whom I wasted away with zeal for the Lord's house? But where is, Love your enemies? Is it because He said yours, not 'God's?' Do good to them that hate you. He saith not, 'who hate God.' So he followeth the pattern, and saith, Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord? He saith not, 'Who have hated me.' And at Thine enemies did I waste away. Thine, he said, not 'mine.' But those who hate us and are enemies unto us, only because we serve Him, what else do they but hate Him, and are His enemies. Ought we then to love such enemies as these? Or do not they suffer persecution for God's sake, to whom it is said, Pray for them that persecute you? Observe then what followeth.

28. With a perfect hatred did I hate them. What is, with a perfect hatred? I hated in them their iniquities, I loved Thy creation. This it is to hate with a perfect hatred, that neither on account of the vices thou hate the men, nor on account of the men love the vices. For see what he addeth, They became mine enemies. Not only as God's enemies, but as his own too doth he now describe them. How then will he fulfil in them both his own saying, Have not I hated those that hated Thee, Lord, and the Lord's command, Love your enemies? How will he fulfil this, save with that perfect hatred, that he hate in them that they are wicked, and love that they are men? For in the time even of the Old Testament, when the carnal people was restrained by visible punishments, how did Moses, the servant of God, who by understanding belonged to the New Testament, how did he hate sinners when he prayed for them, or how did he not hate them when he slew them, save that he hated them with a perfect hatred? For with such perfection did

he hate the iniquity which he punished, as to love the manhood for which he prayed.

29. Since then the Body of Christ is in the end to be severed in body also from the unholy and wicked, but now meanwhile groaneth among them, and since those slain sinners falsely accusing the good for holding communion with the wicked, and separating themselves more and more from the good and innocent, on the ground of these wicked ones, so receive in vanity their cities, that many wicked still remain who follow them not in their separation, but continue intermingled as before, for the good to endure unto the end, what amongst them doeth the Body of Christ, bringing forth fruit with patience, an hundred, or sixty, or thirty-fold? What doeth the love of Christ among the daughters, as the lily among thorns? What are her words? what her conscience? what is the appearance of the king's daughter within? Lo, hear what she saith. Prove me, O God, and know my heart. Do Thou, O God, Thou prove me, Thou know; not man, not an heretic, who neither knoweth how to prove, nor can know my heart, whereas Thou provest, and knowest that I consent not to the deeds of the wicked, while they think that I can be defiled by the sins of others; so that, while I in my long wandering do what I mourn in another Psalm, that is, while I labour for peace among them that hate peace, until I come to that Vision of peace, which is called Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, the city eternal in the heavens; they, contending, and falsely accusing and separating themselves, may receive, not, evidently, in eternity, but in vanity, their cities. Prove me, then, my God, and know my heart; search me, and learn my paths. Why this? Observe what followeth.

30. And see, saith he, if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Search, he saith, my paths, that is, my counsels and thoughts; and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, either by act or consent; and lead me in the way everlasting. What else saith he, but 'lead me in Christ?' For who is the way everlasting, save He that is the Life everlasting? For everlasting is He Who said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. If then thou findest any thing in my way which displeaseth Thine eyes, since my way is mortal, do Thou lead me in the way everlasting, wherein is no iniquity; for even if any man sin, we have an

Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; He is the Way everlasting without sin; He is the Life everlasting without punishment.

31. These are great mysteries, brethren. How doth the Spirit of God speak with us? how doth it make us delights in this night? What is this, we ask you, brethren, whence are they sweeter, the darker they are? He mixeth us our potion after His love, in certain wondrous ways. He maketh His own sayings wondrous, so that while we were speaking what ye already knew, yet forasmuch as it was dug out of passages which seemed obscure, the knowledge itself seemed to be made new. Did ye not know, brethren, that the wicked are to be tolerated in the Church, and schisms not to be made? Did ye not already know, that within those nets which hold both good and bad fishes, we must abide even to the shore, nor must the nets be burst, because on the shore the good shall be separated into vessels, and the bad thrown away? Ye know this already; but these verses of this Psalm ye did not understand: that which ye did not understand is explained; that which ye knew has been renewed.

PSALM 140

Sermon to the people, in the presence of an assembly of Bishops.

1. Our Lords have bidden me, brethren, and in them the Lord of all, to bring this Psalm to your understanding, so far as God giveth me to. May He help your prayers, that I may say those things which I ought to say, ye to hear, that to all of us the Word of God may be profitable. For all it doth not profit, for all have not faith. But faith in the soul is like a good root, which turneth the rain to fruit; false faith, and devilish error, and evil desire, are the root of all evil, like the root of thorns, turning even the sweet rain into prickles.

2. What this Psalm containeth, I believe that ye perceived when it was being chanted; for therein the Church of Christ, set in the midst of the wicked, complaineth and groaneth, and poureth out prayer to God. For her voice is in every such prophecy the voice of one in need and want, not yet satisfied, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for whom a certain fulness in the end hath been promised, and is reserved. Meanwhile, here let it hunger and thirst, groan and knock and seek. Let it not delight in the allurements of its wandering, let it not think the world its country, from whence Christ came to set it free, for Christ willeth to be our Head, the Head that is of a certain Body. For we cannot speak of a head where there is no body for it to be head to. Accordingly if Christ be a Head, He is also Head of some Body. The Body of that Head is the holy Church, among whose members we are, if we love our Head. Let us hear then the words of Christ's Body, our own words, that is, if we be in Christ's Body; for whoever is not there, will be among those for whom that Body groaneth. Accordingly, either thou wilt be in that Body which groaneth among the wicked; or else thou wilt not be in that Body, but wilt be among those wicked ones among whom the Body groaneth, which groaneth amongst the wicked; either thou wilt be a member of Christ, or an enemy of the Body of Christ. Nor is it meant that they are all enemies, and adversaries of the

Body of Christ after one manner, neither do they all act after one manner. Chameleon-like is he who reigneth in them, and useth them as his vessels. But many are freed from him, and pass over into the Body of Christ, and who they are, and how many there shall hereafter be, He knoweth, Who hath redeemed them, when they knew it not, with His own Blood. But some there are, destined to persevere in their wickedness, belonging not to the Body of Christ, and they assuredly are known to Him, to Whom nothing is unknown. Meanwhile, they who are already compacted with His members, not having as yet their resurrection which is to come, wherein all groaning endeth, and praise succeedeth, all tribulation shall die, and there shall be endless exultation; not yet having this in possession, yet grasping it in hope, they groan with a sort of longing, and pray to be freed from wicked men, among whom the good too must live. For to separate them now is not safe for every one. Separation will belong to Him, Who knoweth not to err. What is, 'Who knoweth not to err?' That He neither transfer the good to the right hand, nor the bad to the left. But we in this life find it difficult to know ourselves; how much less ought we to pass a hasty sentence on any one. For if to-day we know him to be evil, what he will be to-morrow we know not; and perhaps he whom we violently hate is our brother, and we know it not. Safe then is it for us to hate in the wicked their wickedness, and to love the work of God's Hand, so that, what God made in him, we love, what man has made in himself, we hate. For God made man himself, man made sin. Love what God made, hate what man hath made: for so shalt thou persecute what man hath made, that what God hath made be set free.

3. To the end, a Psalm to David himself. No other end mayest thou look to, than is laid down for thee by the Apostle himself. For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth. Wherefore when thou hearest the Psalm say, To the end, let hearts be turned to Christ. For the title of the Psalm is, as it were, the herald of the Psalm, seeming to say, 'Lo, He is coming, of Him am I about to speak, of Christ am I about to sing.' For the words, to David himself, I understand not, save of Him, Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh. Meanwhile on account of the birth the name suiteth. His birth after the flesh was from David, His spiritual parentage above David. And not only before David, but before Abraham; not only before Abraham, but before Adam too; not only before Adam, but before earth and

sky, before all the Angels, before all powers and virtues, before all things visible and invisible. Because then He was of the seed of David, not after His Godhead, whereby He is the Creator of David, but after the flesh; therefore He deigned to be called David in prophecy: look to this end, for the Psalm is chanted to David Himself; hear the voice of His Body; be in His Body. Let the voice which thou hast heard be thine, and pray, and say what followeth.

4. Deliver me, O Lord, from the wicked man. Not from one only, but from the class; not from the vessels only, but from their prince himself, that is, the devil. Why from man, if he meaneth from the devil? Because he too is called a man in a figure: An enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat; and when the servants said to their master, Didst not thou sow good seed, whence then have the tares appeared? He replied, An enemy hath done this. From that wicked man they pray with all their might to be delivered. For thou wrestlest not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, that is, the rulers of sinners. And this we too were, for we have just heard the words of the Apostle, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Now then being made light, not in ourselves, but in the Lord, let us pray not only against darkness, that is, against sinners, whom still the devil possesseth, but also against their prince, the devil himself, who worketh in the children of disobedience. Deliver me from the unrighteous man. The same is from the unrighteous man, as from the wicked man. For he called him wicked because unrighteous, lest perchance thou shouldest think that any unrighteous man could be a good man. For many unrighteous men seem to be harmless; they are not fierce, are not savage, do not persecute nor oppress; yet are they unrighteous, because, following some other habit, they are luxurious, drunkards, given to pleasure. How doth he harm no one who spareth not himself? he is innocent who harmeth no one, not who harmeth himself. And can he help harming thee, who harmeth himself? Thou answerest, 'How doth he harm me? He hath not seized on my goods, or attacked my life; he feeds himself on his own sensuality, he delights in his own pleasures: but if his pleasures be polluting, it is himself that is polluted; what hath he to do with me, who annoyeth me not? He harmeth thee at all events by example, forasmuch as

he liveth with thee, and inviteth thee to what he doeth. Art not thou, when thou seest him prospering in his defilement, attracted by the delight of such deeds? Even though thou consent not, at all events thou hast found somewhat to fight against. How then hath he not harmed thee, when thou hast hard work to conquer what he hath made in thy heart? Wicked then is every unrighteous man, who must needs be harmful, whether he be gentle or fierce. Whoever falls in his way, whoever is taken by his snares, will find how harmful is that which he thought harmless. For, brethren, even thorns prick not with their roots. Pull up thorns from the ground, handle their roots, and see whether thou feelest pain. Yet that in the upgrowth which causeth thee pain, proceeded from that root. Let not then men please you who seem gentle and kind, yet are lovers of carnal pleasure, followers of polluted lusts, let them not please you. Though as yet they seem gentle, they are roots of thorns. For by such deeds they mostly squander in sensuality what was their own; and how do they seek to replenish what they have squandered? Do they spare plunder and devices of fraud; do they spare to seek out every kind of wickedness? Now thou seest him to be a wretched man, whom erst thou thoughtest gentle. When thou sawest him drunken, he was a good man; now thou seest him a thief, thou fearest him as a robber; thorns have grown out of those roots. When thou sawest the soft roots of thorns, thou shouldest then have burnt them, if thou couldest, and then would not have grown out of them what now punisheth thee. And so, my brethren, body of Christ, members of Christ groaning among such wicked men, whomsoever ye find hurrying headlong into evil lusts and deadly pleasures, at once chide, at once punish, at once burn. Let the root be burnt, and there remaineth not whence the thorn may grow up. If ye cannot, be sure that ye will have them as enemies. They may be silent, they may hide their enmity, but they cannot love you. But since they cannot love you, and since they who hate you must needs seek your harm, let not your tongue and heart be slow to say to God, Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man, free me from the unrighteous man.

5. Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart. How so? because what they dare not utter with their tongue, they keep in their heart. For on account of those he saith it, who for the most part speak good words with their lips. Thou hearest the voice of the righteous, yet is it not the heart of

the righteous. Else what profit was it to go on and say, Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart? From them free me, from them let Thy hand be most powerful to deliver me. For easy is it to avoid open enmities, easy is it to turn aside from an enemy declared and manifest, while iniquity is in his lips as well as his heart; he is a troublesome enemy, he is secret, he is with difficulty avoided, who beareth good things in his lips, while in his heart he concealeth evil things. Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart: all the day long did they make war. What is, war? They made for me what I was to fight against all the day. For from thence, from such hearts as these, ariseth all that the Christian fighteth against. Be it sedition, be it schism, be it heresy, be it turbulent opposition, it springeth not save from these imaginings which were concealed, and while they spake good words with their lips, all the day long did they make war. Ye hear words of peace, yet making war departeth not from their thoughts. For the words, all the day long, signify without intermission, throughout the whole time.

6. They have sharpened their tongues like serpents. If still thou seekest to make out the man, behold a comparison. In the serpent above all beasts is there cunning and craft to hurt; for therefore does it creep. It hath not even feet, so that its footsteps when it cometh may be heard. In its progress it draweth itself, as it were, gently along, yet not straightly. Thus then do they creep and crawl to hurt, having poison hidden even under a gentle touch. And so it followeth, the poison of asps is under their lips. Behold, it is under their lips, that we may perceive one thing under their lips, another in their lips. And these too he openly maketh manifest in another place, where he saith, Who speak peace with their neighbours, but evil is in their hearts.

7. Preserve me, O Lord, from the hand of the sinner, from unrighteous men deliver me. Here they wear their real colours, they are known; here we have no need to understand, but to act: we have need to pray, not to ask who they are. But how thou shouldest pray against such men, he explaineth in what followeth. For many pray unskilfully against wicked men. Who have imagined, saith he, to trip up my steps. Thus far it may be understood carnally. Every one has enemies, who seek to cheat him in trade, to rob him of money, where they are engaged together in business; every one has some neighbour his enemy, who deviseth how to bring mischief upon his family,

to injure in some way his property: and surely he deviseth this by deceit, by fraud, by devilish devices he endeavoureth to accomplish this: no one can doubt it. Yet not for these reasons are they to be guarded against, but lest they lay in wait for thee and draw thee to themselves, that is, separate thee from the Body of Christ, and make thee of their body. For as Christ is the Head of the good, so is the devil their head. Who have imagined, he saith, to trip up my steps. What is, to trip up my steps? Not as though thou shouldest be deceived in the business thou hast with him, or he cheat thee in a case which thou hast with him in the law courts. He hath tripped up thy steps, if he have hindered thee in the way of God; so that what thou didst direct aright may stumble, or fall from the way, or fall in the way, or draw back from the way, or stop on the way, or go back to the place from whence it had come. Whatsoever hath done this to thee, hath tripped thee up, hath deceived thee. Against such snares as these pray thou, lest thou lose thy heavenly inheritance, lest thou lose Christ thy Joint-heir, for thou art destined to live for ever with Him, Who hath made thee an heir. For thou art made an heir, not by one whom thou art to succeed after his death, but One together with Whom thou art to live for ever.

8. The proud have hidden a trap for me. He hath briefly described the whole body of the devil, when he saith, the proud. Hence is it that for the most part they call themselves righteous when they are unrighteous. Hence is it that nothing is so grievous to them as to confess their sins. They are men who, being falsely righteous, must needs envy the truly righteous. For none envieth another in that which he wisheth not either to be or to seem. One envieth thee because thou art rich; either he wishes to be rich, in that he envieth thee, or else he wishes to be thought rich: another envieth thee because thou art famous or of high birth; either he longeth to be so himself, or else he desires to be thought so. And so for all things which seem or are thought to be good in this world, what each one wishes to have, wherein he wishes to excel, what he desireth to be reported to have, therein doth he envy thee. But they who are falsely righteous, wish to seem righteous when they are not so; and when they see one truly righteous, they must needs envy him, and make it the object of their dealings with him, to make him love that wherein he glorieth. Hence come all allurings and trippings up of others. This the devil first wished, when falling himself he envied man who

stood; and because he himself had lost the kingdom of heaven, he was and is unwilling that man should attain thither, and this is his object now, to prevent man attaining thither, whence himself was cast down. Since then he is proud himself, and, because proud, therefore also envious, his whole body is a body of those of like character. But let us pray against him, who cannot be amended, and against those who can, so as to say to the unrighteous man, Why enviest thou the righteous, O unrighteous man? Is it because thou wishest to appear righteous? Do better at once, so shalt thou more easily be, what thou wishest to seem. Be righteous: so shalt thou love him whom thou didst envy; for so, what thou now grievest that he is, thou shalt thyself be also, and thou shalt love thyself in him and him in thyself. For if thou enviedst a rich man, it would not therefore be in thy power to be rich: if thou enviedst some honourable and high-born senator, it would not be in thy power to be high-born and illustrious: if thou enviedst one that was handsome, never wouldest thou thereby make thyself handsome: if thou enviedst one that was brave and strong, thou wouldest not thereby give thyself strength: but if thou enviest the righteous, the matter is in thy will, be what thou art grieved that another is. For thou wilt not have to buy what thou art not thyself, but another is; it is to be had for nothing, it is to be had at once. Peace on earth to men of good will.

9. But those proud ones have hidden a trap for me; they have sought to trip up my steps. And what have they done? And have stretched out cords as traps. What cords? The word is well known in holy Scripture, and elsewhere we find what cords signify. The Lord made a scourge of small cords, and with it drove out from the temple those who were ill employed there, and thereby signified to us how we were to understand cords; for each one is holden with the cords of his sins, saith another Scripture. And Esaias saith openly, Woe to them that draw sin like a long rope. And why is it called a cord? Because every sinner who persevereth in his sins, addeth sin to sin; and when he ought by accusing his sins to amend, by defending he doubleth what by confession he might have removed, and often seeketh to fortify himself by other sins, on account of the sins he hath already committed. He hath committed adultery; and, lest he be slain himself, he prepareth to commit murder; he addeth sin to sin. Again; if he happen to have committed murder, now he who feared one crime, feareth two: and so

when he seeth that he feareth now more things than before he feared, he deviseth not how he may lessen what he hath done, but how he may add what he hath not yet done: he seeketh, it may be, some other evil deed. Now he hath three. What will a man devise next? Who will end the cord of sins? Most rightly is it called a cord, for however it be twisted it is increased, and they are not straight threads, but twisted, that are added. Wickedness is intertwined, and groweth in length, and seeketh not to cut off what it has woven amiss, but to add, to protract, to lengthen, so that in the end it may have wherewith it may be bound hand and foot, and be cast into outer darkness. But these their sins they spread for the righteous, when they persuade them to do the evils which they themselves do. Therefore he said, they spread cords and traps; that is, by their sins they desired to overthrow me. And where did they this? Beside the paths have they laid a stumbling-block for me: not in the paths, but, beside the paths. Thy paths are the commandments of God. They have laid stumbling-blocks beside the paths; do not thou withdraw out of the paths, and thou wilt not rush upon stumbling-blocks. Yet will I not that thou shouldest say, ‘God should prevent them from laying stumbling-blocks beside my paths, and then they would not lay them.’ Nay, rather, God permitted them to lay stumbling-blocks beside thy paths, that thou shouldest not leave the paths. Beside the paths have they laid stumbling-blocks for me.

10. And what remaineth? what remedy amid such ills, in such temptations, such dangers? I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God. Loud is the voice of prayer, it exciteth confidence. Is He not the God of the others? Of Whom is not He God, Who is the true God? Yet is He specially theirs, who enjoy Him, who serve Him, who willingly submit to Him. For the wicked too, though unwillingly, are subject to Him. The one call upon God, to be crowned by Him; the other being under Him, flee from Him, to be condemned by Him. And whither shall the wicked, who will not have the Lord for his God, whither shall he flee from the God of all? Good is it then for him that he turn to the God of all, and make Him his God, by turning to Him, and being set among such sinners, seducers, hypocrites, proud, say to God, Whom by turning to Him he hath made his God, I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my God; hear with Thine ears the voice of my prayer. It is a simple sentence indeed, and easy to understand, yet it is pleasant perhaps to

consider why he did not say, 'Hear with Thine ears my prayer;' but, as though expressing more plainly the affection of his heart, the voice of my prayer, the life of my prayer, the soul of my prayer, not that which soundeth in my words, but that which giveth life to my words. For all other noises without life may be called sounds, but not words. Words belong to those that have souls, to the living. But how many pray to God, yet have neither perception of God, nor right thoughts concerning God! These may have the sound of prayer, the voice they cannot, for there is no life in them. This was the voice of the prayer of one who was alive, forasmuch as he understood that God was his God, saw by Whom he was freed, perceived from whom he was freed.

11. Commending this to the ears of God, let him say, Lord, Lord. Thou Lord-Lord, that is, most truly Lord, not like unto the lords-men, not like the lords who buy with money-bags, but the Lord Who buyeth with His Blood. Lord, Lord, Thou strength of my health, that is, Who givest strength to my health. What is the meaning of strength of my health? He complained of the stumbling-blocks and snares of sinners, of wicked men, vessels of the devil, that barked around him and laid snares around him, of the proud that envy the righteous, among the like of whom he has to pass his life, while here we live in this our pilgrimage. But that such offences should abound the Lord foretold, and said, 'Iniquity shall abound; and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.' But He forthwith added a comfort, He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. This he observed and feared, and, distressed at the abundance of iniquities, turned himself to hope; for, he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. He braced himself to endure, and saw that the way was long; and, because to endure is great and difficult, he prayed Him to perfect his endurance, by Whom the command was given him to endure. Verily I shall be saved, if I endure unto the end: but endurance, so as to win salvation, pertaineth unto strength; Thou art the strength of my salvation; Thou makest me to endure, that I may attain salvation. Lord, Lord, Thou strength of my salvation. And whence cometh my hope that Thou art the strength of my salvation? Thou hast overshadowed my head in the day of battle. Lo, now as yet I fight. I fight without against those who falsely pretend to be good, I fight within against mine own lusts; for, I see another law in my

members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Toiling then in this warfare, he looked back to the grace of God; and because already he had begun to be heated and parched, he found, as it were, a shade, whereunder to live. Thou hast overshadowed my head in the day of battle: that is, in the heat, lest I be heated, lest I be parched.

12. Deliver me not over, O Lord, by my own longing to the sinner. Behold to what end Thy overshadowing shall avail for me, that I suffer not heat from myself. And what could that sinner do to me, rage as he would? For wicked men raged against the martyrs, dragged them away, bound them with chains, shut them up in prisons, slew them with the sword, exposed them to wild beasts, consumed them with fire: all this they did; yet did not God deliver them over to the sinners, because they were not delivered over by their own longing. This then pray with all thy might, that God delivered thee not over by thine own longing to the sinner. For thou by thine own longing givest place to the devil. For lo, the devil hath set before thee gain, invited thee to dishonesty; thou canst not have the gain, unless thou commit the dishonesty: the gain is the bait, dishonesty the snare: do thou so look on the bait, that thou see the snare also; for thou canst not obtain the gain, unless thou commit the dishonesty; and if thou commit the dishonesty, thou wilt be caught. I say not, thou wilt be caught, because thou wilt be found out. Sometimes thou wilt not be found out, at least by man; but canst thou escape God? Thou wilt be caught, and drawn out, and slain. For every one that doeth such things, slayeth himself. There then is the bait, there is also the snare; bridle thy longing, and thou wilt not be caught by the hook; but if thy longing for the bait conquer thee, it putteth thy neck into the snare, and the fowler of souls will take thee. Deliver me not by mine own longing to the sinner. Hence is thine head overshadowed in the day of battle. For longing causeth heat, but the overshadowing of the Lord tempers longing, that we may be able to bridle that whereby we were being hurried away, that we be not so heated as to be drawn to the snare. They have thought against me; leave me not, lest perchance they be exalted. Thou hast in another place, They that oppress me will exult if I be moved. Such are they,

because such is the devil also himself. When he has led a man astray, he rejoiceth, he triumpheth over him; he himself is exalted, because the other is humbled. And why is he humbled? Because he was evilly exalted: and he too who triumpheth over him shall hereafter be humbled. Such are all who rejoice in iniquity; they seem to themselves for the while to boast, to be proud, to lift up the neck. Let not their exaltation delight thee: they have the bait in their jaws and the hook too. There is that wherein they delight, there that whereby they are caught. Leave Thou me not, lest perchance they be exalted; that is, let them not triumph over me, let them not rejoice over me.

13. The head of their going about, the toil of their own lips shall cover them. Me, he saith, the shadow of Thy wings shall cover: for, Thou hast covered me in the day of battle. Them what shall cover? The head of their going about; that is, pride. What is, their going about? How they go about and stand not, how they go in the circle of error, where is journeying without end. He who goeth in a straight line, beginneth from some point, endeth at some point: he who goeth in a circle, never endeth. That is the toil of the wicked, which is set forth yet more plainly in another Psalm, The wicked walk in a circle. But the head of their going about is pride, for pride is the beginning of every sin. But whence is pride the toil of their own lips? Every proud man is false, and every false man is a liar. Men toil in speaking falsehood; for truth they could speak with entire facility. For he toileth, who maketh what he saith: he who wisheth to speak the truth, toileth not, for truth herself speaketh without toil. Of this man then he said to God, 'Me Thine overshadowing shall protect; them their own lie shall cover;' and their own lie is the toil of their own lips. Behold, he hath travailed with unrighteousness, he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity. For in every evil work is toil, and every evil work devised hath a lie for its leader. For there is no truth, save in a good work. And forasmuch as all have toil in lying, what crieth the Truth? Come unto Me, all ye that toil and are laden, and I will refresh you. That is the voice that crieth to them that toil in another Psalm, Ye sons of men, how long will ye be heavy of heart; why love ye vanity, and seek a lie? Hear too in another place the toil of lying plainly set forth, They have taught their tongues to speak lies, they have wearied themselves to commit iniquity.

14. Coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and Thou shalt cast them down. What is, upon earth? Here, even in this life, here coals of fire shall fall upon them, and Thou shalt cast them down. What are, coals of fire? We know these coals. Are they different from those of which we are about to speak? For these I see avail for punishment, those that I am about to speak of, for salvation. For we have spoken of certain coals, when man was seeking aid against a treacherous tongue. What shall be given thee, or what shall be added to thee, against the treacherous tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty One, with devouring coals, that is, the word of God transfixing the heart, destroying the old nature, implanting love, and the patterns of men who had died and come to life again, were black, and became shining. For coals are darkness, so their colour indicateth. But when the flame of love has reached them, and they have come to life again from the dead, let them hear from the Apostle, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. These, brethren, are the coals we look on, when we are pierced by the arrow of God, and wish to change our life, but are hindered by the evil tongues of men, such as he was just now complaining of, which endeavour to lead us astray from the way of truth, and to lead us in preference into their own errors, and say to us that even if we promise, we shall not fulfil. Then we observe these coals: he that was yesterday a drunkard, to-day is sober; he that was yesterday an adulterer, to-day is chaste; he that yesterday seized others' goods, to-day gives freely of his own. All these are coals of fire. The examples of the coals are added to the wound of the arrows, (for I need not fear to say 'the wound,' when the Spouse herself saith, I am wounded with love,) and then the hay is consumed, and so they are called devouring coals. The hay is devoured, but the gold is purified, and the man exchanges death for life, and begins to be himself too a burning coal; such a coal as was the Apostle, who before was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, a coal black and extinguished; but when he had obtained mercy, he was set on fire from heaven, the voice of Christ set him on fire, all the blackness in him perished, he began to be fervent in spirit, to set others on fire with that wherewith he was set on fire himself. Are we to understand such coals of fire as this here too, who fall upon those evil men, and cast them down? Evidently we are not forbidden to understand it in this way. I see that here shines forth to us a sentiment not improbable and free from blame. I understand those coals to fall upon these men, that they may be

cast down. For on some they come, to set them on fire; on others, to cast them down. For that coal himself said, To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of death unto death. For they see the righteous blazing with the Spirit, bright with light, and envying them, they fall; this is how coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and they shall be cast down. What is, upon earth? While they are as yet in this life, excluding the punishment which is reserved for the wicked, these coals cast them down, before the everlasting fire cometh. Coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and shall cast them down. In miseries they shall not stand. Misery cometh to them, and they bear it not; but the righteous standeth, as he stood, who saith, We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of Christ is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. But when upon them any pressure, any misery hath fallen, they stand not, they fall. For when such men meet with these kind of pressures, they are unable to bear them, they fall into evil acts of iniquity, because they are delivered over by their own longing to the sinner.

15. A man full of words shall not be guided upon earth. A man full of words loveth lies. For what pleasure hath he, save in speaking? He careth not what he speaketh, so long as he speaks. It cannot be that he will be guided. What then ought the servant of God to do, who is kindled with these coals, and himself made a coal of salvation, what should he do? He should wish rather to hear than to speak; as it is written, Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak. And if it may be so, let him desire this, not to be obliged to speak and talk and teach. For behold I say to you, beloved, we speak now to you, brethren, to teach you somewhat: how much better were it that we all knew, and none taught another? so should there not be one speaking, another hearing, but all hearing Him alone, to Whom is said, To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and joy. Whence it was that John too rejoiced, not so much because he was a preacher and a speaker, but because he was a hearer. For he saith, The friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore, beloved brethren, I can quickly tell you wherein each one may prove himself, not by never speaking, but by requiring a case where it is his

duty to speak; let him be glad to be silent, in will, let him speak to teach, when he must. For when must thou needs speak and teach? When thou meetest with one ignorant, when thou meetest with one unlearned. If it delight thee always to teach, thou wishest always to have some ignorant one to teach. But if thou wishest well to others, and wishest all to be learned, thou wishest not always to have those whom thou mayest teach, and so the practice or proof of thy teaching will not be in will, but in necessity. Let thy joy be in hearing God, thy duty in thine own speaking, so shalt thou not be a man full of words, lest thou be not guided. Why art thou willing to speak, unwilling to hear? Thou ever goest without, thou declinest to return within. For He that teacheth thee is within; when thou teachest, thou, as it were, goest forth to those who are without. For from within we hear the truth, and we speak it to those who are without, outside our heart. For we are said indeed to have in our heart those of whom we are thinking, but we are said so only because we seem to have a sort of image of them stamped upon us. For, were they altogether within, surely they would know what is in our hearts, and so would have no need for us to speak to them. But if this delight thee, that thou art busy without, take heed lest thou be puffed up without, and be unable to return by the narrow way, and so thy God be unable to say to thee, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; but say, because that which thou lovedst was without, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. For in shewing that it is an evil thing to be cast without, he sheweth also that it is a good thing to enter within. For to the good servant what said He? Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: but to the wicked servant, Cast him into outer darkness. Let us not then love most what is outward, but what is inward. At what is inward let us rejoice; in what is outward let us act of necessity, not of free will. A man full of words shall not be guided upon the earth.

16. Evil shall hunt the unrighteous man to destruction. Evils come, and he standeth not; therefore said he, they shall hunt him to destruction. For many good men, many righteous men evils have befallen, evils have, as it were, found them. For therefore hath he said, shall hunt them, because every one wisheth to hide himself from evil, but when he is found by evil he is, as it were, made into a prey. But is it only the evil who fly from evils when they are sought by evils? Is it not said to the good also, When they persecute you

in this city, flee ye into another? Therefore when the evil pursued the good, that is, our martyrs, when they seized them, they hunted them, but not to destruction. For the flesh was pressed down, the spirit was crowned; the spirit was cast out from the body, yet was nought done to the flesh which might hinder it for the future. Let the flesh be burned, scourged, mangled; is it therefore withdrawn from its Creator, because it is given into the hands of its persecutor? Will not He Who created it from nothing, re-make it better than it was? So then whenever the righteous are taken, the wicked have hunted them, but not to destruction. But they who shall not be guided, and are full of words, evils shall hunt them to destruction. Wherefore? Because in miseries they shall not stand.

17. I know that the Lord will maintain the right of the needy. This needy one is not full of words; for he that is full of words, wisheth to abound, knoweth not to hunger. But they are needy to whom it is said, Knock, and it shall be opened unto you; seek, and ye shall find; ask, and it shall be given unto you. He is needy of whom it is said, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. They groan among the stumbling-blocks of the wicked, they pray to their Head, to be delivered from the wicked man, and set free from the unrighteous man. These then are they whose cause the Lord will not neglect; although now they suffer hardships, their glory shall appear, when their Head appeareth. For to such while placed here it is said, Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. So then we are poor, our life is hid; let us cry to Him that is our Bread. For He is the living Bread, Which came down from heaven; and He Who in the way refresheth us, in our wants will fill us. For now we are refreshed, that we may endure; because needs must we hunger till we be filled. I know that the Lord will maintain the right of the needy. Sure was he that the Lord would maintain the right of the needy and the cause of the poor. He shall shew the unrighteous how He loveth His righteous ones; He shall shew the rich how He loveth His poor ones. By the rich, He meant the proud; by the poor, the humble: by the rich, them who through abundance seek not; by the poor, those who through longing sigh. The Lord will maintain their cause.

18. But the just shall confess to Thy Name. Both when Thou shalt plead their cause, and when Thou shalt maintain their right, they shall confess to

Thy Name; nought shall they attribute to their own merits, all they shall attribute to nought save to Thy mercy: But the just shall confess to Thy Name. And because they shall confess to Thy Name, so that how righteous soever they have been, they claim nothing to themselves as their own, attribute nothing to themselves as their own; what shall be done, that they may direct their heart? For when they turn to themselves, they twist their heart; when they turn to the Lord, they direct their heart. And where will be pleasure, where rest, where joy, where bliss? Will it be in themselves? No; but in that they are light. Now are ye light in the Lord, said he. Therefore see what followeth, see wherewith he concludeth. The upright shall dwell with Thy Countenance. For ill was it with them in their own countenance; well will it be with them with Thy Countenance. For when they loved their own countenance, in the sweat of their countenance did they eat bread. Let them return: then, their sweat being wiped away, their toils finished, their groaning done, Thy Countenance shall come to them with abundance to satisfy them. Nought more shall they seek, for nought better have they; no more shall they abandon Thee, nor be abandoned by Thee. For after His Resurrection, what was said of the Lord? Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy Countenance. Without His Countenance He would not give us joy. For this do we cleanse our countenance, that we may rejoice in His Countenance. For now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; for the upright shall dwell with Thy Countenance. Think we, with the Countenance of the Father, and not with that of the Son? or with the Countenance of the Son, and not of the Father? or is the Countenance of Father and Son and Holy Ghost in some sense one? Let us see whether the Son Himself do not promise us His own Countenance, to gladden us therewith. The Lord God hath just inspired us to have the following passage of the Gospel read, that it might bear witness to this Psalm. The Lord Himself saith, He that heareth these commandments of Mine and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will shew him Myself. What sort of reward is this He hath promised, beloved? Did not they already see Him, to whom He promised to shew Himself? Was He not before them? Was not the Face of His flesh close before their eyes? What is it that He willed to shew to them who already saw Him? Forasmuch as they

saw Him in such form as the Jews crucified Him in, yet was He God, hidden under that flesh, because men could see the Man, but the God they could not, although in Man; because too, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; He gave the Form of Man both to good and evil, the Form of God He preserved for the pure and good, that we may rejoice in Him, and it may be well with us for ever with His Countenance.

PSALM 141

Sermon to the People.

1. Ye have heard, brethren, our instruction and our request from the mouth of the Apostle, when his Epistle was being read just now. For he saith, Continue in prayer, and watch therein; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak His mystery, that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak. Deign to consider these words mine also. For there are in Holy Scripture deep mysteries, which are for this cause hidden, lest they should be held cheap; for this cause sought, that they may employ us; for this cause opened, that they may feed us. The Psalm which we have just sung is in many parts somewhat obscure. When by the help of the Lord what has been said shall begin to be expounded and explained, ye will see that ye are hearing things which ye knew already. But for this cause are they said in manifold ways, that variety of expression may remove all weariness of the truth.

2. For what will ye hear or learn, brethren, more important or more healthful, than, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Think not that these two commandments are little; On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. Whatsoever then healthfully is either conceived in the mind, or uttered by the mouth, or is carved from any page of holy Writ, hath no end save love. For even evil-livers are enticed to one another by the fellowship of an evil conscience, and are said to love one another, to be unwilling to leave one another, to be won by intercourse among themselves, to long for one another when apart, to rejoice when they meet. This love is of hell. It hath lime, to drag down to the abyss; not wings, to lift aloft to heaven. But what is true love, that it may be separated and distinguished from others which are called love? That which is called the true love of Christians is defined by Paul, and so marked

off by its definitions, as to be entirely distinguished from the rest. The end, saith he, of the commandments is love. He might have ended here; for in other places where he was speaking as unto them that knew, he said no more; Love, saith he, is the fulfilling of the Law; and he said not what law. Therefore did he not say here, because he had said elsewhere. Here therefore, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Thou askest, perhaps, what love? what sort of love? Thou art told in another place, The end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart. Now see whether robbers have among themselves love out of a pure heart. This is a pure heart in regard of love, when thou lovest man according to God's will: for thou oughtest to love thyself too in such wise that the rule be not broken, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. For if thou lovest thyself amiss and unprofitably, by loving thy neighbour also in the same way, what dost thou benefit him? But in what way dost thou love thyself amiss? In the way that Scripture hinteth, which flattereth no man, and convinceth thee that thou lovest not thyself, yea rather convinceth thee that thou hatest thyself. He that loveth iniquity, it saith, hateth his own soul. If then thou lovest iniquity, thinkest thou that thou lovest thyself? Thou art mistaken. And if thou love thy neighbour in this way, thou wilt lead him to iniquity, and thy love will be the snare of him thou lovest. Love then is out of a pure heart, in agreement with God's will, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. This love then thus defined by the Apostle hath two commandments, to love God, and to love our neighbour. In no part of Scripture seek ought else, let none enjoin on you ought else; whatever is hidden in Holy Scripture, this is hidden in it; whatever is plain in Holy Scripture, this is plain in it. If it were no where plain, it would not feed thee; if it were no where hidden, it would not exercise thee. This work crieth in these words out of a pure heart, out of the heart of them that are such as He Who here now prayeth. And who this is I will soon tell you: it is Christ.

3. But the words ye are about to hear are unworthy to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one who understood not would think that it is rash in me to have said, that the speaker in this Psalm was Christ. For how can it rightly be said of our Lord Jesus Christ, of that Lamb without spot, of Him in Whom alone no sin was found, Who alone could most truly say, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in Me, that is, no

blame, no fault, Who alone paid that which He seized not, Who alone could offer innocent blood, the only Son of God, Who took flesh, not to decrease Himself, but to increase us; of such an one, I say, how could this be rightly understood, Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips; that Thou turn not aside my heart to wicked words, to making excuses in sins? For plainly this is the meaning. 'Guard Thou, O Lord, my mouth with Thy commandments as with a gate and door, that my heart be not turned aside to wicked words.' What wicked words? Those which make excuses for sins. Let me not choose to excuse, rather than to accuse, my sins. These words fit not our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For what sins did He commit, which He ought to have confessed, rather than defended? These are our words: and yet assuredly it is Christ that speaketh. If they be our words, how is it Christ that speaketh? Where is the love whereof I was speaking? Know ye not that it maketh us one in Christ? Love crieth to Christ from us, love crieth from Christ for us. How doth love cry to Christ from us? And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How doth love cry from Christ for us? Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Ye, saith the Apostle, are the Body of Christ, and members. If then He be the Head, we the Body, it is one that speaketh; whether the head speak or the members, it is one Christ that speaketh. And it is the property of the head to speak in the name of the members also. Observe our own habit: first, how none among our members can speak, save the head: then further, how the head in us speaketh in the name of all the members. Some one in some narrow place hath trod on thy foot; thou art treading on me, saith the head: some one hath wounded thy hand; thou hast wounded me, saith the head. The tongue which is in thy head undertaketh to represent all thy members, it speaketh for them all. In the same way then let us hear Christ speaking, but let each hear therein his own voice, adhering as it were in Christ's Body. For sometimes He will speak words wherein none of us can find himself represented, but which belong to the Head alone: yet doth He not sever Himself from our words, and raise Himself aloft to those which are His own specially; nor doth He not return from His own special ones to ours. For of Him and the Church it is said, And they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore He Himself too saith in the Gospel of this very thing, Now therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. All this is not new: ye have heard it continually: but it is needful

that it be mentioned as occasion serves, first, because the Scriptures themselves which we handle are so interwoven, that many things are repeated in many places; and further, because it is profitable. For the cares of this world produce thorns and choke the seed: it is fitting that that be often brought to our recollection by the Lord, which the world forceth us to forget.

4. Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hear Thou me. This we all can say. This not I alone say: whole Christ saith it. But it is said rather in the name of the Body: for He too, when He was here and bore our flesh, prayed; and when He prayed, drops of blood streamed down from His whole Body. So is it written in the Gospel: Jesus prayed earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood. What is this flowing of sweat from His whole Body, but the suffering of martyrs from the whole Church? Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hear Thou me: listen unto the voice of my prayer, while I cry unto Thee. Thou thoughtest the business of crying already finished, when thou saidst, I have cried unto Thee. Thou hast cried; yet think not thyself safe. If tribulation be finished, crying is finished: but if tribulation remain for the Church, for the Body of Christ, even to the end of the world, let it not only say, I have cried unto Thee, but also, Listen unto the voice of my prayer, while I cry unto Thee.

5. Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as incense, and the lifting up of my hands an evening sacrifice. That this is wont to be understood of the Head Himself, every Christian acknowledgeth. For when the day was now sinking towards evening, the Lord upon the Cross laid down His life to take it again, did not lose it against His will. Still we too are figured there. For what of Him hung upon the tree, save what He took of us? And how can it be that the Father should leave and abandon His only-begotten Son, especially when He is one God with Him? Yet, fixing our weakness upon the Cross, where, as the Apostle saith, our old man is crucified with Him, He cried out in the voice of that our old man, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? That then is the evening sacrifice, the Passion of the Lord, the Cross of the Lord, the offering of a salutary Victim, the whole burnt-offering acceptable to God. That evening sacrifice produced, in His Resurrection, a morning offering. Prayer then, purely directed from a

faithful heart, riseth like incense from a hallowed altar. Nought is more delightful than the odour of the Lord: such odour let all have who believe.

6. Our old man, then, saith the Apostle, is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Therefore in the Psalm, after the words, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? far from my health, immediately is subjoined, the words of my sins. What sins, if thou regard the Head? And yet that the words in the Psalms were His, He Himself testified on the Cross, He said the very words, He uttered the very verse. There is no room left for man's conjecture; no opportunity for denial to any Christian whatever. What I read in the Psalms, that I hear from the Lord. In the Psalm too I recognise what I read in the Gospel, They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they counted all My Bones: they considered and gazed upon Me: they parted My garments, and cast lots for My vesture. All these things as they were foretold, so did they come to pass; like as we have heard, so have we also seen. Therefore if our Lord Jesus Christ, figuring us in the love of His Body, though He was Himself without sin, yet said, The words of My sins, and said this in the name of His Body, who among His members dareth to say that he hath no sin, save he who dareth to puff himself up under the name of a false righteousness, and to accuse Christ of falsehood? Confess then, O member, that for thee thy Head uttered it. And that we may confess this, do this, not justify ourselves in the sight of Him Who alone is righteous, Who justifieth the ungodly, He hath added at once the words of His Body, Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips. He said not a barrier of restraint, but a door of restraint. A door is opened as well as shut. If then it be a door, let it be both opened and shut; opened, to confession of sin; closed, to excusing sin. So will it be a door of restraint, not of ruin.

7. For what doth this door of restraint profit us? What doth Christ pray in the name of His Body? That Thou turn not aside My heart to wicked words. What is, My heart? The heart of My Church; the heart, that is, of My Body. Observe those words where this rule is laid down for us: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? yet had no one touched Him. I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: and the rest. Then they ask, When saw we Thee hungry or thirsty? He answers, Forasmuch as ye

did unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it unto Me. These passages ought not to be strange to Christians, especially since in them are rules established for understanding all other Scriptures too, and either they will not be disturbed, or, if they are, will soon be set right. Just as then in that passage the righteous are to say, Lord, wherefore hast Thou said, I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat? when saw we Thee hungry? and He is to answer, Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me; so in this passage too let us speak to Christ inwardly, in our inner man, for there He deigneth to dwell by faith. For He is not far from us, and so not such that we can speak to Him; since He Himself hath said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Let us then too speak to Him, since He hath given us His Voice in this Psalm. For that is His Voice, as none denieth, The lifting up of My Hands is an evening sacrifice. So thou go then and say, Set, O Lord, a watch upon my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips, that Thou turn not aside my heart to wicked words, to making excuses in sins. Wherefore prayest Thou thus, Lord? What sins of Thine canst Thou make excuses for? He answereth, When one of My members thus prayeth, I pray thus: just as in the other place He answered, Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me.

8. But when thine heart hath not been turned aside, O member of Christ, when thy heart hath not been turned aside to wicked words, to making excuses in sins, with men that work in iniquity, thou shalt also not unite with their elect. For this followeth, And I will not unite with their elect. Who are their elect? Those who justify themselves. Who are their elect? Those who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others, as the Pharisee said in the temple, Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are. Who are their elect? This Man, if He were a prophet, would know what manner of woman this is that touched His feet. Here thou recognisest the words of that other Pharisee, who invited our Lord to his house; when the woman of that city, who was a sinner, came and approached His Feet. She, the unchaste one, who once went unabashed after fornication, but now came yet more unabashed after salvation, forced her way into a strange house. But He Who there sat at meat was not a stranger. She was not a strange woman following any chance guest, but a handmaid her Lord. She

drew near to His Feet, because she desired to follow His Footsteps; she washed them with her tears, she wiped them with the hairs of her head. What are the Feet of Christ, save they by whom He hath traversed the whole world? How beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace, that bring glad tidings of good things! How many then have received the feet of the Lord, so as by receiving a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, to receive a righteous man's reward; and received a prophet in the name of a prophet, so as to receive a prophet's reward! And whosoever, saith He, shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. He then who with such kindness received the Feet of the Lord, what did He expend save the superfluities he had in his house? Rightly, since the hair is as it were a superfluity, did she with it wipe the Lord's Feet. Thy superfluities become necessities to thee, if thou with them follow the Feet of the Lord. She then desired to be healed, conscious of the greatness of her wound. But surely it was not a great wound, a mean Physician. The Pharisees were loth to be touched by the unclean, they shunned all contact with sinners, and if it happened that they could not avoid their touch, they washed themselves. And almost every hour they washed not only themselves, but also their vessels, their couches, their cups, their platters, as the Lord recordeth in the Gospel. Inasmuch then as the Pharisee knew this woman, and certainly, had she drawn near to his feet, would have repelled her, lest his sanctity should be defiled; for it was in his body, not in his heart; (and because he had it not in his heart, clearly it was but a false sanctity that he had in his body;) forasmuch, I say, as he would himself have repelled her, when the Lord did not so, he thought that He knew not who she was, and said within himself, This man, if He were a prophet, would know what manner of woman this is which hath approached His Feet. He said not, 'would have repelled her,' but, 'would have known who she was;' as though it followed that, if He knew, He would repel. From the fact then that He did not repel her, he felt sure further that He did not know her. But the Lord so had His eyes fixed on that woman, as to have His ears fixed upon the heart of the Pharisee: and so, when He heard his thought, He set before him the parable, which ye know. A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty: and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. I ask of thee,

saith He, which of them will love him most? Then answered he, now compelled by truth to give sentence against himself, I suppose, saith he, Lord, that he to whom he forgave most. And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no kiss, but she hath not ceased to kiss My Feet: thou gavest Me no water to My Feet, she hath washed My Feet with her tears: thou gavest Me no oil, she hath anointed Me with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. Wherefore? Because she confessed, because she wept, because her heart was not turned aside to wicked words, to offering excuses in sins; because she united not herself with their elect; that is, with those that defend themselves.

9. For even this woman herself, if her heart had turned aside to wicked words, would not have lacked wherewith to defend her sins. Do not women daily, her equals in defilement, but not her equals in confession, harlots, adulteresses, doers of shameful deeds, defend their sins? If they have not been seen, they deny them: if they have been caught and convicted, or have done their deeds openly, they defend them. And how easy is their defence, how ready, yet how headlong; how common, yet how blasphemous! Had God not willed it, I had not done it: God willed it: fortune willed it: fate willed it. She saith not, I said, Lord, have mercy upon me; she saith not, like that sinner coming to the feet of her Physician, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. And from whom do they get this defence, my brethren? not only from the unlearned, but from the learned also. They sit and count the stars, their distances, their orbits, their speed, their positions, their movements: they observe all these, describe them, form conjectures. Men think them learned, and great. All this learning and greatness is defence of sin. Thou wilt be an adulterer, because Venus is in a particular quarter for thee: thou wilt be a murderer, because Mars is. Mars then is a murderer, not thou; Venus is an adulteress, not thou. Beware, lest for both Mars and Venus thou be condemned. For God, Who is to condemn, knoweth that thou art the man, thou that sayest, 'It is not I,' to the Judge that knoweth. Further, the very astrologer himself who selleth to thee the very fables that ensnare thee, that thou shouldest not obtain even thy death for nothing;—(for thou buyest death of the astrologer for a price, who hast spurned life from Christ without price;)—the very astrologer, I say, if he see

his wife behave herself somewhat wantonly, or pay more than due regard to any strangers, or often to betake herself to the window, doth he not seize her, beat her, administer discipline to her in his own house? Let his wife reply, 'If thou canst, beat Venus, not me:' will not he answer, 'Fool, that which belongeth to the lord and master is one thing, what is displayed to the purchaser is another thing?' Who then are their elect? The elect of the evil, the elect of the wicked, with whom we must not unite, that is, with whom we must have no dealings. But who are they? They that think themselves righteous, and despise others as sinners, as were the Pharisees; or who, because their sins are manifest, being either detected, or done publicly, defend and maintain them, that nothing may be laid to their charge, and that men may judge that they have done no evil, but that God has done it all, because He has either, as they say, created man so, or so ordered the stars, or because He neglects the affairs of men. These are the defences of the elect of this world. But let the members of Christ, the Body of Christ, say, let Christ say in the name of His Body, Turn not Thou aside, My Heart, to wicked words, to offering excuses in sins, with men that work iniquity, and I will not unite with their elect.

10. Ye know, my brethren, what I must not pass by, that among the Manichees certain seeming righteous ones, more exalted than the rest, who have reached as it were the highest step of righteousness, are called 'elect.' Let those who know this, recall it; those who knew it not, hear it. Elect indeed of God are all the saints, and this we have in the Scriptures: but they have usurped this name to themselves, and applied it to themselves, so to speak, in a more familiar manner, as though they were now called in some special sense, 'elect.' Who are these 'elect?' Men, to whom if you say, 'Thou hast sinned,' immediately bring forward that defence of theirs, an impious one, worse and more blasphemous than all others, 'It is not I that have sinned, but the race of darkness.' What is this race of darkness? That which waged war with God. And doth it sin, when thou sinnest? It doth, saith he, because I am mixed with it. Well then, what did God, Who mixed thee with it, fear? For they say, that that race of darkness rebelled against God, before the world was made: and He, to guard against His dominions being laid waste by the invasion of an enemy, sent hither His members, His substance, that which He Himself is; gold, if He be gold; light, if He be

light; whatever it be, He sent it, and mixed it with the vitals of the race of darkness, and whatever sins we are said to commit, that race committeth. They seem indeed to excuse themselves from sin, but they do not excuse their God from the charge of fear, nor the very substance of their God from the charge of being corruptible. For if God is incorruptible, incommutable, incapable of pollution or stain, impenetrable, what could that race have done to Him? It might have made what onset it would; yet how could it frighten One Who was impenetrable, inviolable, incapable of pollution, or change, or corruption? If God then be such, He is cruel, for sending you hither without cause, seeing that nothing could harm Him. Wherefore sent He you? Behold, the race of darkness could not harm Him; but He hath grievously harmed you, and He hath been more your enemy than it, though it too could harm you. It was possible for you to be oppressed, to be led captive, to be defiled, to be corrupted; so therefore could He. For a fragment, so to speak, and portion ever so small of His Nature, convicteth the whole mass. Such as is that which He hath sent hither, such is also That Which remained there. This they themselves say; themselves confess that they are two substances, one on this side, the other on that. This their books contain; if they deny it, they are read and convicted.

11. What then? To say no more on this one subject, I will not mention worse things, things yet more wicked: in this one argument, wherein they make war, see how they are conquered, and when they say that the race of darkness wages war against God, how they are caught in the battle of their own words. For nought have they to say, nothing to which to betake themselves. But thou wishest, O wicked one, O false elect, to defend thy sin, that when thou hast done any evil, thou be not thought to have done it: thou seekest on whom to cast back thy sin, and thou flingest it back upon the race of darkness. But consider God, whether thou art not flinging it back upon Him. For if that race of darkness, which thou imaginest, could speak, it would say to thee, Why dost thou accuse me? Had I the power to do ought to thy God, or had I not? If I could, I am stronger than He; if not, why did He fear me? if He feared me not, why did He send thee hither to suffer so much, seeing thou art a Member of Him, seeing thou art His own Substance? If He feared not, He envied: if He did it not through fear, He did it through cruelty. How unjust then is He, Who could receive no hurt, yet

caused that His members should thus receive hurt here! Or could He be hurt? Then is He not incorruptible. When then thou wishest to defend thyself from thy sin, thou canst not praise God. Thou wouldest not fail in the praise of God, unless thou wert puffed up in thine own. Change, and blame thyself; thou shalt then praise God. Come back to the words of the Psalms which ye curse; say, I said, Lord, have mercy upon me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. I said, I have sinned: not fortune, not fate, not the race of darkness. If then thou hast sinned, see how enlarged is the praise of God, wherein thou wast straitened, while thou wouldest defend thyself. Better for thee to be straitened in thine own sins, and enlarged in His praise. Now then when thou hast confessed thy sin, see how God is praised thereby; for He is both just, in punishing thee while thou didst persevere; and merciful, in freeing thee now thou dost confess. Do not thou, therefore, he saith, turn aside my heart to wicked words, to making excuses in sins, so as to say that the race of darkness hath done what I have done.

12. With men that work wickedness. What wickedness? Let me mention some sinful wickedness of theirs. Let me tell you one open sinful wickedness, which they acknowledge. They say, it is better for a man to be an usurer than a husbandman. Thou askest the reason, and they assign one. See whether their reason ought not to be called madness: for they say, 'He that employs his money in usury, injureth not the cross of light:' (this many understand not, but I will explain:) 'but he that is an husbandman, much injureth the cross of light.' Thou askest, 'What cross of light?' Those members, he saith, of God, which were taken captive in that battle, are mixed with the universe, and are in trees, in herbs, in apples, in fruits. He vexeth the members of Christ, who cleanseth the earth with a furrow: he vexeth the members of Christ, who pulleth grass from the earth: he vexeth the members of Christ, who plucketh an apple from a tree. To avoid committing their imaginary murders in the farm, he committeth real murders in usury. He dealeth no bread to the needy. See whether there can be greater unrighteousness than this righteousness. He dealeth not bread to the hungry. Thou askest, wherefore? Lest the beggar receive the life which is in the bread, which they call a member of God, the substance of God, and bind it in flesh. What then do ye? why do ye eat? Have ye not flesh? Yes; but we, they say, forasmuch as we are enlightened by faith in Manes, by our

prayers and our Psalms, forasmuch as we are elect, we cleanse thereby that bread, and transmit it into the treasure-house of the heavens. Such are the elect, that they are not to be saved by God, but saviours of God. And this is Christ, they say, crucified in the whole universe. I received in the Gospel Christ a Saviour, but ye are in your books the saviours of Christ. Plainly ye are blasphemers of Christ, and therefore not to be saved by Christ. Therefore lest a crumb be given to the hungry, and in the crumb a member of Christ suffer, is the hungry to die of hunger? False mercy to a crumb causeth true murder of a man. But who are their elect? Turn not thou aside, my heart, to wicked words, and I will not unite with their elect.

13. The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and convict me. Behold the sinner confessing. He desireth to be amended in mercy, rather than praised deceitfully. The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and convict me, if He is just, if He is merciful, when He seeth me sinning. This verily certain members of Christ say, of certain members of Christ they say it, in one body they say it. The Lord deigneth to speak in the character of an amender, yet despiseth not the character of him that is amended or to be amended. For all His members are in Him, and He saith, the righteous One shall amend me. What righteous One shall amend thee? The Head amendeth all the members. The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and shall convict me. Shall convict me, but in mercy: shall convict, yet hateth not: yea, shall all the more convict, because He hateth not. And why doth he therefore give thanks? Because, rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. The righteous One shall amend me. Because He persecuteth thee? God forbid. He requireth rather amending himself, who amendeth in hate. Wherefore then doth He amend? In mercy. And shall convict me. Wherein? In mercy. For the oil of a sinner shall not enrich my head. My head shall not grow by flattery. Undue praise is flattery: undue praise of a flatterer is the oil of a sinner. Therefore men too, when they have mocked any one with false praise, say, 'I have anointed his head.' Love then to be convicted by the righteous One in mercy; love not to be praised by a sinner in mockery. Have oil in yourselves, and ye shall not seek the oil of a sinner. For the wise virgins in the parable carried oil with them: the wise virgins carried oil with them, that is, their conscience bore them witness. Oil is glory, it glittereth, it shineth on the surface: but the oil should be good and true, that there it may

be within, in their vessels. Hear what in their vessels meaneth: but let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself alone, and not in another. What is, in their vessels? Hear the Apostle himself; For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience.

14. Lastly, since thou art in the Body of Christ, and yet bearest a kind of mortality, be thou just to thyself, be thou just against thyself. Thou art a sinner: inflict punishment upon thyself: return to thy conscience, crucify thyself; for so dost thou offer a sacrifice to God: for Thou desirest not sacrifice, saith the sinner, else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. What then? doth He accept no sacrifice? The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Humble thy heart, bruise thy heart, crucify thy heart, so shalt thou amend thyself in mercy. Thou hatest not thyself, when thou art fierce against thyself. Thou wilt be, in that part of thee that amendeth, righteous, though in that which is to be amended, thou art yet a sinner. For so far as thou displeasest thyself, thou art unrighteous; but so far as that in thee displeaseth thee which is unrighteous, thou art righteous. Wilt thou see how righteous thou art? That in thee displeaseth thee, which also displeaseth God: now thou hast joined thyself to the will of God, and thou hatest in thyself not what He made, but what He hateth. Insomuch as thou hatest in thyself that which thou hast made, which He too hateth Who made it not, and beginnest to be strict against thyself, He will be merciful: He will spare, because thou hast not spared. In proportion then as thine eyes agree with His, and thou delightest with Him in His law, and accusest that in thyself which His law accuseth, and because that in thee displeaseth thee, which displeaseth also the Eye of God, see how righteous thou art. In proportion as thou hast fallen, hast done those things which displease God, and by a certain frailty of human weakness art prone to these things, and as yet bearest about the infirmity of the flesh, and groanest in consciousness of a struggle, so far thou art unrighteous, and a sinner.

15. How, thou wilt say, am I in one way righteous, in another a sinner? What is this thou sayest? We are at fault: we seem to be speaking contraries, unless the authority of an Apostle come to our aid. Hear it from the Apostle, lest, understanding amiss, thou blame me: for I delight, saith he, in the law

of God according to the inner man. Behold a righteous man. Is he not just who delighteth in the law of God? Whence then is he a sinner? But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity unto the law of sin. As yet I wage war against myself; not yet am I entirely renewed after the image of my Maker: I begin to be re-hewn, and so far as I am being re-fashioned, that displeaseth me which is misshapen. So long then as I am thus, what hope I? Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The grace of God, which hath already begun to re-hew thee; the grace of God, which infuseth sweetness, so that now in the inner man thou delightest in the law of God. By the same will all the rest be healed whereby this too has been healed. Groan still, being wounded, scourge thyself, displease thyself.

16. So fight I, saith he, not as one that beateth the air; but I punish my body, and bring it into slavery, lest haply while preaching to others, I myself be found a castaway. Doth he who punisheth his body, hate his body? If a man punish his slave, doth he hate his slave? If a man scourge his son, doth he hate his son? And, to mention somewhat yet more closely connected, thy flesh is in a sort thy wife. This the Apostle himself saith, No man ever hated his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it, as the Lord the Church. Verily thy flesh is in a sort thy wife, and no one hateth his own flesh. Yet what saith he in another place? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. It lusteth against thee, as though thy wife did so: love, and punish it, till by one reformation there be brought about one agreement. When will this be? When now thou criest out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Will then this body be severed from thee, and thou then be safe? What then meaneth, We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body? It is being renewed then from mortality to immortality, and then it resisteth no longer, for no longer is their mortality to resist. Wherefore punish thy body: tame it now, that then thou mayest receive it back: now let it fail, that then it may suffice. For in this life it cannot be renewed so long as it weareth this mortality. Let it not set thee aside, let it not burst thee from it: bear it, discipline it, punish it; in the end it shall be renewed. And forasmuch as no one ever yet hated his own flesh, the flesh too shall rise

again. But how? Am I then too to struggle? This corruptible, saith he, must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

17. When then it is said, He shall amend me and correct me, whether it be a brother, or a connexion, or a neighbour, or thine own self, in mercy oughtest thou to be convicted and amended. But let not the oil of a sinner fatten my head. Thou sayest to me, What am I doing? I am beset with flatterers; they cease not to besiege me; they praise in me what I would not, that praise in me what I hold in little esteem; what I hold dear they blame in me; flatterers, treacherous, deceivers. For instance, 'Gaiuseius is a great man, great, learned, wise; but why is he a Christian? For great is his learning, great his reading, great his wisdom.' If great is his wisdom, approve of his being a Christian; if great his learning, learnedly hath he chosen. In fine, what thou revilest, that pleaseth him whom thou praisest. But what? That praise sweeteneth not: it is the oil of a sinner. Yet ceaseth he not to speak so. Let him not therewith fatten thy head; that is, rejoice not in such things; agree not to such things; consent not to such things; rejoice not in such things; and then, if he have applied to thee the oil of flattery, yet hath thy head remained as it was, it has not been puffed up, it hath not swollen. For if it hath been puffed up and swollen, it increaseth in weight, and hurleth thee headlong. But let not the oil of a sinner fatten my head.

18. For still shall My word be wellpleasing to them. Wait awhile: now they revile Me, saith Christ. In the early times of the Christians, the Christians were blamed on all sides. Wait as yet; and My word shall be wellpleasing to them. The time shall come when they shall conquer thousands of men, who shall beat their breasts, and say, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Even now, how many remain who blush to beat their breasts? Let them then blame us: let us bear it. Let them blame; let them hate, accuse, detract; still shall My word be wellpleasing to them; the time shall come when My word shall please them. For they shall lift themselves up as though righteous in their own strength, they shall be conquered in the strife; because they have lifted themselves up proudly, they shall be dashed down, they shall be dragged by their sins, they shall see that they are unrighteous; then shall be fulfilled what was spoken by the Prophets, judgment shall begin to be feared, the eye of the soul shall turn itself to consciousness of

sins, and those words that please it, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. O wordy defence of iniquity! Verily now whole nations say this, and the thunder of nations beating their breasts ceaseth not. Rightly do the clouds thunder, wherein now God dwelleth. Where is now that wordiness, where that boasting, 'I am righteous; nought of ill have I done?' Verily, when thou hast contemplated in Holy Scripture the law of righteousness, how far soever thou hast advanced, thou shalt find thyself a sinner. Thou hast advanced; now thou worshippest one God: it is well: now thou goest not a whoring from Him to idols, to astrologers, fortune-tellers, diviners, augurs, evil doers; for that is committing fornication against the Lord thy God; now art thou included in some number of the members of Christ. Now begin to see also the common sins of human society. Thou murderest none; thou committest not adultery with another's wife; thou wrongest not thy wife by going to another; thou pollutest not thyself by any grievous defilement; thou hast kept thy hands from theft, thy tongue from perjury, thy heart from coveting thy neighbour's goods; now thou art righteous. Consider what remains: be not yet proud. Dost thou never sin in thy tongue? dost thou not fall into harsh words? But what great matter is this? What great matter? Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Now trembleth all that pride. Supposing now that he committeth no great thing, which may seem by some impiety to blaspheme God; that he hasteth not to injure any; doth not to another what he would not should be done to him; what of the tongue? who tameth that? But supposing thou hast bridled even it; (though who is so good as entirely to achieve this?) supposing thou hast bridled even it, what doest thou with thy thoughts? what doest thou with the tumult and crowd of rebellious desires? dost thou keep from giving thy members to them? I believe and see that thou dost: but still thy thoughts sometimes bend thee and carry thee away, often even when thy knees are fixed in prayer. Thou prostratest thy body, bowest down thy neck, confessest thy sins, worshippest God; I see where thy body is prostrate, I ask whither thy mind flitteth. I see thy members prostrate; let us see whether conscience standeth still; let us see whether it is fixed on Him Whom it worshippeth; whether it be not often caught by thoughts, as by some tide of the sea, and borne by the storm to one thing and another. If thou wert now speaking with me, and suddenly wert to turn away to thy servant, and leave me, I say not when thou wast asking

somewhat of me, but even when thou wast conversing with me on equal terms, should I not think that a wrong was done me? That is what thou doest daily to God. What sort of man am I now speaking of, brethren? I speak of him who worshippeth God alone, who confesseth Christ, who knoweth the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to be one God; who committeth not fornication against Him; who worshippeth not devils; who seeketh him not aid from the devil; who holdeth the Catholic Church; whom no one complaineth of as cheating; under whose oppression no weak neighbour groaneth; who assaileth not another's wife; who is content with his own, or even without his own, in such wise as is lawful, and as Apostolical discipline permitteth, with consent of both, or when she is not yet married. Even he who is such as this, is yet overtaken in such things as I have mentioned.

19. So then the time has come which was spoken of. Yet shall My word be wellpleasing to them, whether it be that which He taught, or that whereby He intercedeth for us. For all these daily sins then what is our hope, save to say with humble heart in the Lord's Prayer, while we defend not our sins, but confess them, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and to have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, that He may be the propitiation for our sins? Now let the proud speak: they are overpowered by numbers, by whole nations, by the whole world, from the rising to the setting of the sun, praising the Name of the Lord. What do a few maintaining the contrary? They are the judges of the wicked. What is that to thee? See what followeth: their judges have been swallowed up beside the Rock. What is, swallowed up beside the Rock? That Rock was Christ, They have been swallowed up beside the Rock. Beside, that is, compared, as judges, as mighty, powerful, learned: they are called their judges, as judging about morals, and laying down their opinions. This Aristotle said. Set him beside the Rock, and he is swallowed up. Who is Aristotle? let him hear, 'Christ hath said,' and he trembleth among the dead. This Pythagoras said, that Plato said. Set them beside the Rock, compare their authority to the authority of the Gospel, compare the proud to the Crucified. Say we to them, 'Ye have written your words in the hearts of the proud; He hath planted His Cross in the hearts of kings. Finally, He died, and rose again; ye are dead, and I will not ask how ye rise again. So their

judges have been swallowed up beside that Rock. So long do their words seem somewhat, till they are compared with the Rock. Therefore if any of them be found to have said what Christ too hath said, we congratulate him, but we follow him not. But he came before Christ. If any man speak what is true, is he therefore before the Truth itself? Regard Christ, O man, not when He came to thee, but when He made thee. The sick man too might say, 'But I took to my bed before the physician came to me.' Why, for that very reason has He come last, because thou first has sickened.

20. See then the language of the Psalm. Yet shall My Word be well pleasing to them. But there shall be many who speak against it. Their judges have been swallowed up beside the Rock. What then will happen? They shall hear My Words, for they have prevailed. My Words have prevailed over their words. They have spoken clever things, I true things. To praise one who talketh well is one thing, to praise One who speaketh truth is another. They shall hear My Words, for they have prevailed. How have they prevailed? Who of them has been taken offering sacrifice, when such things were forbidden by the law, and has not denied it? Who of them has been taken worshipping an idol, and has not exclaimed, 'I did it not,' and feared lest he should be convicted? Such servants hath the devil. But how have the Words of the Lord prevailed? Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Fear not those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; but fear Him, Who can cast both body and soul into hell fire. He gave them fear, He suggested hope, He kindled love. 'Fear not death,' He saith. Do ye fear death? I die first. Fear ye, lest a hair of your head perish? I first rise again in the flesh uninjured. Rightly have ye heard His Words, for they have prevailed. They spake, and were slain; they fell, and yet stood. And what was the result of so many deaths of martyrs, save that those words prevailed, and the earth being, so to speak, watered by the blood of Christ's witnesses, the cross of the Church shot up every where? They shall hear, saith He, My Words, for they have prevailed. How have they prevailed? We have said already, when they were preached by men who feared not. Feared not what? Neither banishment, nor losses, nor death, nor crucifixion: for it was not death alone that they did not fear; but even crucifixion, a death than which none was thought more accursed. It the Lord endured, that His

disciples might not only not fear death, but not even that kind of death. When then these things are said by men that fear not, they have prevailed.

21. What then have all those deaths of the martyrs accomplished? Listen: As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit. Beside the pit have been scattered the bones of the martyrs, that is, the bodies of the witnesses of Christ. The martyrs were slain, and they who slew them seemed to prevail. They prevailed by persecution, that the words of Christ might prevail by preaching. And what was the result of the deaths of the saints? As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit. What meaneth, the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth? We know that every thing that is refuse is the fatness of the earth. The things which are, as it were, contemptible to men, enrich the earth. For it is said also in a certain Psalm, that the dead bodies of the saints were cast out, and there was none to bury them. But all these dead bodies became the fatness of the earth. Just as the earth receives a sort of fatness from things contemptible and refuse, so from that which this world despised, the earth received fatness, so that from it the crop of the Church should sprout more plentifully. Now ye know, brethren, that the contemptible things of this earth, wherewith the soil is enriched, which I am unwilling to name, nor is it fitting to speak of them, are a kind of nourishment of the earth, and a sort of fatness: they are, as it were, vile, and are thrown away. But what hath He done, to use now His own words? He hath lifted up the needy from the earth, and raised the poor from the dunghill, to set him with the princes, the princes of His people. For he was laid upon the earth, as a sort of fatness of the earth, he was scattered over the earth; so lay Lazarus full of sores, yet was he raised by angels into Abraham's bosom. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. As it is contemptible to the world, so is it precious to the husbandman. For he knoweth the use thereof, and its rich juice; he knoweth what he desireth, what he seeketh, whence the fertile crop ariseth; but this world despiseth it. Know ye not that God hath chosen the contemptible things of the world, and those which are not, like as those which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought? From the dunghill was Peter lifted up, and Paul; when they were put to death, they were despised: now, the earth having been enriched by them, and the cross

of the Church springing up, behold, all that is noble and chief in the world, even the emperor himself, cometh to Rome, and whither does he hasten? to the temple of the emperor, or the memorial of the fisherman? For, as the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit.

22. For unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I hoped, take not Thou away my life. For they were tortured in persecutions, and many failed. And because it was of the captivity of persecution that he said, As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit, it occurreth to him that many have failed, many have been in hazard, and as it were in the midst of the tribulation of persecution is sent forth the voice of one praying; For unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes: I care not what they threaten who stand around, unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes. More do I fix mine eye on Thy promises than on their threats. I know what Thou hast suffered for me, what Thou hast promised me. To Thee, Lord, are mine eyes: in Thee have I hoped, take not away my life.

23. Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me. What was the trap? 'If thou consentest, I spare thee.' In the trap was set the bait of the present life; if the bird love this bait, it falleth into the trap: but if the bird be able to say, 'The day of man have I not desired: Thou knowest:' his eyes shall not be withdrawn from God, and He shall pluck his feet out of the net. Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them which work iniquity. Two things he hath mentioned to be distinguished the one from the other: the trap he said was set by persecutors; the stumbling-blocks came from those who have consented and apostatised: and from both he desires to be guarded. On the one side they threaten and rage, on the other consent and fall: I fear lest the one be such, that I fear him; the other such, that I imitate him. 'This I do to thee, if thou consent not.' Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me. 'Behold, thy brother hath already consented.' And from the stumbling-blocks of them which work iniquity.

24. Sinners shall fall into his nets. What then, brethren, is, sinners shall fall into his nets? Not all sinners: certain sinners, who are so great sinners, as to love this life to such a degree as to prefer it to everlasting life, shall fall into

his trap. But what sayest thou? Shall they that are such, thinkest thou, fall into his nets? what of Thy disciples, O Christ? Behold, when persecution was raging, when they all left Thee alone, and went every one to his own: (this Thou didst foretell, because Thou didst foresee: for not because Thou didst announce it beforehand, didst Thou therefore do it, or in any way deny Thyself:) but, lo! they who were closest to Thee, in Thy trial and persecution, when Thine enemies demanded Thee to be crucified, abandoned Thee. And that one bold one, who had promised Thee that he would go with Thee even unto death, heard from the Physician what was being done in him, the sick man. For being in a fever, he had said he was whole; but the Lord felt the pulse of his heart. Then came the trial; then came the test; then came the accusation; and now, questioned not by some great power, but by a humble slave, and that a woman, questioned by a handmaid, he yielded; he denied thrice. When he had once denied and was reminded, he denied a second time. When he had twice denied and was reminded, he denied a third time. This had the Lord foretold, not fore-ordered, not compelled. Or, if Peter be thought to have done rightly, because the Lord foretold it, Judas also did rightly, who betrayed Him, for this also the Lord had foretold. God forbid, my brethren. These are the words of those elect who defend their own sins also, rather than confess them. Let us rather consider Peter himself. If he sinned not, why wept he? Let us ask none concerning Peter, save the tears of Peter: more faithful witness concerning him we do not find. He wept bitterly, it saith. Not yet was he fitted to suffer. To him was said, Thou shalt follow Me afterwards. Hereafter he was to be firm, having been strengthened by the Lord's Resurrection.

25. Not yet then was it time that those bones should be scattered beside the pit. For see how many failed, even to those who first hung on His mouth; even they failed. Wherefore? I am alone, until I pass over: for this followeth in the Psalm. Above he hath said, Keep me, O Lord, from the trap which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them who work iniquity. From the trap, and from the stumbling-blocks, from those who frighten, and from those who have fallen. But because, at His passion, even those first ones, who were destined to be leaders of the Church and pillars of the earth, failed; not yet was accomplished what He saith in another

Psalm, I have strengthened the pillars thereof. What saith He? I am alone, until I pass over. This is said in the person of the Head, I am alone, until I pass over. What is, alone? In Thy Passion Thou alone sufferest, Thou alone art slain by Thine enemies. I am alone, until I pass over. What is, until I pass over? The Evangelist saith, When the hour was come that Jesus should pass over from this world unto the Father. What then is, until I pass over, save, from this world unto the Father? For then have I strengthened the pillars thereof, that is, the pillars of the world, when in My Resurrection they have clearly learnt that death is not an object of fear. Until then I pass over, I am alone: when I have passed over, I shall be multiplied; many shall imitate Me, many shall suffer for My Name. One am I until I pass over; many shall be one in Me when I have passed over. I am alone, until I pass over. Hear farther a mystery in this word. According to the Greek method of speech, Pascha seemeth to mean Passion; but, according to the Hebrew tongue, as they explain who know it, Pascha meaneth Pass-over. For if you ask true Greeks, they say that Pascha is no Greek word. It sounds like πάσχειν, that is, ‘to suffer;’ but it is not wont to be derived in this way. For Passion in Greek is πάθος, not Pascha. Pascha then, as they say who know, and who have explained to us what to read, meaneth ‘Pass-over.’ When then the Lord’s Passion was about to come, the Evangelist, as though he would use this very word, saith, When the hour was come that Jesus should pass over to the Father. We hear then of Pascha in this verse, I am alone, until I pass over. After Pascha I shall no longer be alone, after passing-over I shall no longer be alone. Many shall imitate Me, many shall follow Me. And if afterward they shall follow, what shall be the case now? I am alone, until I pass over. What is it that the Lord saith in this Psalm, I am alone, until I pass over? What is it that we have expounded? If we have understood it, listen to His own words in the Gospel. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. This He saith in the same place where He also saith, And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. Except a corn of wheat, He saith, fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. To that Corn of wheat then, a great crop was due; but wait; let It first die, for, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.

26. Therefore He was alone before He was put to death. Therefore too Peter had not yet sufficient strength: he was to receive strength to follow, he had not strength to go before. For for Christ's sake, that is, for confessing the Name of Christ, whereby we are Christians, no one died before Christ, lest perchance such thought should occur to you. For many died and are martyrs, many prophets suffered the same things, yet they were not put to death because they foretold Christ, but because they told men of their sins, and freely resisted their iniquities, and so are accounted among martyrs. Rightly; for, though not for confessing the Name of Christ, yet for the truth's sake were they slain. But so far was any from dying for the Name, that is, for confessing the Name of Christ, before that Corn of wheat fell into the ground, in whose person is said, I am alone, until I pass over, that even John, who was slain just before Him, being given by a wicked king to a dancing woman, was not put to death because he confessed Christ. Of course he might have been put to death for this, and that by many. If for another reason he was put to death by one man, how much more might he have been put to death by those very men, who put Christ to death? For John gave testimony to Christ. They who heard Christ, wished to slay Him; the man who gave testimony to Him they slew not. For had John been attacked for Christ's sake, he would not have denied Him; for he had great strength, wherefore he was called, the friend of the Bridegroom. Great grace was there in him, great excellence; among them that are born of women hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. He therefore was attacked, who had not so great strength: Peter was attacked, not John. For Peter received the strength afterwards, but then he was weak. For Christ's Name he is questioned, who had not strength: he who had strength, suffers not persecution for Christ, lest for the Name of Christ he should precede Christ. He is not slain by the Jews who gave free testimony to Christ, Whom the Jews slew; he is slain by Herod, because he said to him, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. For his brother had not died without issue. For the law of truth, for equity, for righteousness' sake, he did die: therefore is he a saint, therefore a martyr; but yet he died not for that Name whereby we are Christians, wherefore, save that the saying might be fulfilled, I am alone, until I pass over.

PSALM 142

Sermon to the People.

This festival of the martyrs, as it claimeth from you the devotion of a crowded attendance, so doth it also claim a discourse from me, your servant. But ye ought to remember, beloved, how much was said yesterday. For we ought not, because, through the eagerness of your inward appetite, ye were present throughout the whole discourse as though ye had just arrived, therefore to forget our common weakness, first because we ought also to treat with honour excellent words, as it is written, ‘Excellent are the words of the wisdom of the Lord God.’ By us, as by earthen vessels, they are ministered to you: but, if the vessels be earthen, yet is the bread from heaven. The Apostle saith, We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God. But that which is the treasure, the same is also the bread: for, were not the treasure and the bread the same, it would not elsewhere be said of this very treasure, A treasure to be desired resteth in the mouth of the wise, but the foolish man swalloweth it up. Wherefore we exhort you, beloved, that what by hearing, ye store, so to speak, in the stomach of your memory, that by again revolving and meditating ye in a manner ruminateth. For this is, A treasure to be desired resteth in the mouth of the wise, but a foolish man swalloweth it up. What he said is in brief, A wise man ruminateth, a fool doth not ruminateth. And what is this in plain and downright language? The wise thinketh on that which he heareth, but the fool committeth what he hath heard to oblivion. For neither was it for any other reason that in the Law those animals are called clean which ruminateth, those which do not ruminateth unclean: for every creature of God is clean. To God the Creator the swine is as clean as the lamb. For He created all things very good; and every creature of God is good, saith the Apostle; and, to the pure all things are pure. Since then by nature both are clean, but in signification the lamb signifieth something

clean, the swine something unclean, the lamb signifieth the innocence of wisdom that ruminateth, the swine signifieth the uncleanness of folly that forgetteth. A brief Psalm hath been said for the festival, let us see whether it can also be briefly handled.

2. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord. It were enough to say, with voice: not for nothing perhaps has my been added. For many cry unto the Lord, not with their own voice, but with the voice of their body. Let the inner man then, in whom Christ hath begun to dwell by faith, cry unto the Lord, not with the din of his lips, but with the affection of his heart. God heareth not, where man heareth: unless thou criest with the voice of lungs and side and tongue, man heareth thee not: thy thought is thy cry to the Lord. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord: with my voice have I prayed unto the Lord. What he meant by, I have cried, he explained when he said, I have prayed. For they too who blaspheme, cry unto the Lord. In the former part he set down his crying, in the latter he explained what it was. As though it were demanded, With what cry hast thou cried unto the Lord? Unto the Lord, saith he, I have prayed. My cry is my prayer, not reviling, not murmuring, not blaspheming.

3. I will pour out before Him my prayer. What is, before Him? In His sight. What is, in His sight? Where He seeth. But where doth He not see? For so do we say, where He seeth, as though somewhere He seeth not. But in this assemblage of bodily substances men too see, animals too see: He seeth where man seeth not. For thy thoughts no man seeth, but God seeth. There then pour out thy prayer, where He alone seeth, Who rewardeth. For the Lord Jesus Christ bade thee pray in secret: but if thou knowest what thy closet is, and cleanse it, there thou prayest to God. When ye pray, saith He, be not as the hypocrites, who stand praying in the roads and streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and shut the door, and pray to thy Father in secret, and He Who seeth in secret shall reward thee. If men are to reward thee, pour out thy prayer before men: if God is to reward thee, pour out thy prayer before Him; and close the door, lest the tempter enter. For the tempter ceaseth not to knock, that he may break in; if he find it shut, he passeth on. Therefore the Apostle, because it is in our power to shut the door, the door of our hearts, not of our

walls, for in it is our closet,—because it is in our power to shut this door, saith, neither give place to the devil. For if he have entered and taken possession, observe that thou hast either negligently closed, or neglected to close it.

4. But what is to shut the door? This door hath as it were two leaves, desire and fear. Either thou desireth something earthly, and he enter by this; or thou fearest something earthly, and he enters by that. Close then the door of fear and desire against the devil, open it to Christ. How dost thou open these folding doors to Christ? By desiring the kingdom of heaven, by fearing the fire of hell. By desire of this world the devil entereth, by desire of eternal life Christ entereth; by fear of temporal punishment the devil entereth, by fear of everlasting fire Christ entereth. Behold, the martyrs closed the door against the devil, opened it to Christ. Many things this world promised them: they laughed; they closed the leaf of desire against the devil. The world threatened them with wild beasts, with fire, with the cross; they feared not; they closed the leaf of fear against the devil. Let us see whether they opened them to Christ. He that confesseth Me, saith He, before men, him will I confess also before My Father Which is in heaven. They loved then the kingdom of heaven, where Christ will confess them. How shall He confess them? Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. He will confess them when they are set on the right hand. Let us see whether they opened also to Christ the leaf of fear, which they closed to the devil. In one and the same place doth the Lord bid us both close it to the devil and open it to Him. Fear not, saith He, them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. He bade the door of fear be closed in the face of the devil. Is there nothing to be feared? Is not the approach of fear opened to Christ, which is shut to the devil? He added at once, as though He would say, Thou hast shut out him, open to me; fear Him, Who hath power to kill both soul and body in hell fire. Now then, if thou hast believed and opened to Christ, and closed it against the devil, Christ is within; there He dwelleth: pour out before Him thy prayer; seek not that He hear thee from afar. For not far off is the wisdom of God, which reacheth from one end to the other, and mightily and sweetly ordereth all things. Within then, in thyself, before Him pour out thy prayer: there are His ears. For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the desert

mountains; for God is the Judge. But, if He be the Judge, take heed what cause thou bearest in thine heart.

5. I will pour out before Him my prayer; my tribulation I will proclaim in His sight. There is a repetition, both in the two preceding sentences, and in these which follow: the sentiments are two, but both twice expressed. One is, with my voice have I cried unto the Lord; with my voice have I prayed unto the Lord; the other is, I will pour out before Him my prayer; my tribulation will I proclaim in His sight. For, in His sight, is the same as before Him; I will proclaim my tribulation, is the same as, I will pour out my prayer. When doest thou this? Being set in the midst of persecution, he saith, while my spirit failed from me. Wherefore hath thy spirit failed, O martyr, set in tribulation? That I may not claim my strength as mine own, that I may know that Another worketh in me the goodness I have. But when they shall deliver you up to judges, (so warned the Lord those whom He wished to make martyrs,) take no thought what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. Let then thy spirit fail, let the Spirit of God speak. Rightly willed He to make them poor in spirit: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed then are they that are poor in their own spirit, rich in the Spirit of God. For every man who followeth his own spirit is proud. Let him subdue his own spirit, that he may receive the Spirit of God. He clomb to the top, let him settle down in the valley. If he climb to the top, the water flows down from him: if he settle down in the valley, he shall be filled with it, and become that belly whereof is said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. Therefore, while my spirit failed from me, in Thy sight did I proclaim my tribulation, being humbled, confessing to Thee with mine own spirit failing, while I am full of Thy Spirit.

6. And men perhaps have heard that my spirit hath failed within me, and have despaired of me, and have said, 'we have taken him captive, we have overpowered him;' and Thou hast known my paths. They thought me cast down, Thou didst see me standing upright. They who persecuted me and had seized me, thought my feet entangled, but their feet were entangled, and they fell, but we are risen, and stand upright. For mine eyes are ever unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. I have persevered in

walking, for he that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved. They thought me overpowered, but I continued walking. Where did I walk? In paths which they saw not, who thought me prisoner, in the paths of Thy righteousness, in the paths of Thy commandments. For, Thou knewest my paths; the persecutor knew them not; else would he not envy me in them, but would walk with me in them. What are those paths, but the ways of which in another place is said, the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish? He said not, 'He knoweth not the way of the ungodly,' but 'the way of the ungodly shall perish.' For what He knoweth not, perisheth. In many passages of Scripture we find that God's knowing is preservation, that God's knowing is protection, His not knowing, damnation. For how will He, Who knoweth all things, say in the end, I know you not? Would they not rejoice at that, and say, 'We shall not be punished, for the Judge knoweth us not?' Therein are they punished, if the Judge know them not. What then are called the ways which the Lord knoweth, the same are here called paths, when He saith, Thou knowest my paths. For every path is a way, but not every way is a path. Why then are those ways called paths, save because they are narrow? Broad is the way of the wicked, narrow the way of the righteous.

7. That which is 'the way' is also 'the ways,' just as 'the Church' is also 'the Churches,' the 'heaven' also the 'heavens:' they are spoken of in the plural, they are spoken of also in the singular. On account of the unity of the Church it is one Church; My dove is one, she is the only one of her mother. On account of the congregation of brethren in various places there are many Churches. The Churches of Judæa which are in Christ rejoiced, saith Paul, because he that persecuted us now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; and they glorified God in me. Thus he spake of Churches; and of one Church he thus speaketh, Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God. Thus then are both 'ways' and 'way,' both 'paths' and 'path.' Wherefore 'paths,' and wherefore 'path?' As we have given a reason why we have both 'Church' and 'Churches,' we ought also to give a reason for this. The phrase, 'paths of God,' is used, because His commandments are many; and because those many commandments are reduced to one, for Love is the fulfilling of the law; therefore those ways in many commandments are gathered into one, and it

is called one, because our way is Love. Let us see whether it be Love. Let us hear the Apostle; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. What more excellent way speakest thou of, O Apostle? Hear what I say: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal: and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing: and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Therefore called he charity, a more excellent way. Great is that way, brethren, great is the marvel it containeth. This way certainly, because it is more excellent, is also more lofty; for that surpasseth others which is lofty. Nought is more lofty than the way of love, and none walk in that save the lowly. By these paths then he meaneth the commandments of love. Thou, saith he, knowest my paths: Thou knowest that I suffer for Thee, suffer for Love. Thou knowest that Love in me beareth all things; Thou knowest that if I give my body to be burned, I have that without which it profiteth man nought.

8. But who knoweth those ways of a man, brethren, save truly He to Whom it is said, Thou knowest my paths? For in the eyes of men all acts of men are uncertain, in what spirit they are done. And how many wicked men, measuring themselves by themselves, say of us in the Church, that we seek three things, honours, praise, temporal advantages? How many say that I address you in order that ye may applaud and praise me, and that this is my end and aim when I address you? And how do I shew to them that I speak not with such aim? It remains for me to say, Thou knowest my paths. How do they know, what ye yourselves even know not? How do they know, what I myself scarce know? For I judge not mine own self, but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Peter in ignorance presumed I know not what of himself: different was what the Physician saw in his strength. Therefore in reverence and purity let us cry unto the Lord, for truly do we cry it, Thou knowest my paths. But wishest thou that He lead thee by these paths? Be meek, be gentle; be not fierce; be not proud; be not of an up-tossed and uplifted neck, like unto horse and mule, which have no understanding. For when thou art gentle, the Lord will sit upon thee, and guide thee in His ways. For them

that are meek, shall He guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them shall He teach His ways.

9. In this way, wherein I was walking, they hid a trap for me. This way wherein I was walking, is Christ; there have they laid a trap for me, who persecute me in Christ, for Christ's Name's sake. There then have they hid for me a trap. What in me do they hate, what in me do they persecute? That I am a Christian. If this they persecute that I am a Christian, in the way wherein I was walking have they hid a trap for me. So far as in them lay, in the way wherein I was walking they have hid a trap for me: as regards their desire, as regards their endeavour, as regards their wish, in that way they desired that I should find a trap wherein I might be taken. But, the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; and, Thou hast known my paths. This indeed they desired, but Thou allowest them not to make a stumbling-block in Thee, for Thou art my way. For the heretics too wish to hide a stumbling-block for us in the Name of Christ, and are themselves deceived. What they think that they put in the way, they put outside the way, for they themselves are outside the way. They cannot set a trap where themselves are not. But this is said in regard of their desire, in regard of their wish and their thought; for it is expressly said elsewhere, Near the paths they laid stumbling-blocks for me. The expression here, in the way, is said in regard of their desire and wish: the expression there, near the way, that is, near the paths, is said in regard of the truth. For in truth they set them not in the path, they set them not in the way; for the way is Christ; so in truth they set them near the way. Christ suffereth them not to set them in the way, lest we have not where to go; He does suffer them to set them near the way, that we may not turn aside from it. The Pagan thinketh to put a stumbling-block in the way, when he saith to me, 'Thou worshippest a crucified God.' He findeth fault with the Cross of Christ, which he understandeth not. He thinketh that he setteth in Christ, what he setteth near the way. I will not depart from Christ, so shall I not fall from the way into the trap. Let him mock at Christ crucified, let me see the Cross of Christ on the foreheads of kings. What he laugheth at, therein am I saved. Nought is prouder than a sick man, who laugheth at his own medicine. If he laughed not at it, he would take it, and be healed. The Cross is the sign of humility, but he through excess of pride acknowledged not that whereby may be healed the

swelling of his soul. But if I acknowledged, I am walking in the way. So far am I from blushing at the Cross, that in no secret place do I keep the Cross of Christ, but bear it on my forehead. Many sacraments we receive, one in one way another in another: some as ye know we receive with the mouth, some we receive over the whole body. But because the forehead is the seat of the blush of shame, He Who said, Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father Which is in heaven, set, so to speak, that very ignominy which the Pagans mock at, in the seat of our shame. Thou hearest a man assail a shameless man, and say, 'He hath no forehead.' What is, 'He hath no forehead?' He hath no shame. Let me not have a bare forehead, let the Cross of my Lord cover it. So in the way wherein I was walking have they hid a trap for me, so far as in them lay: they laid it near the way: but I shall be safe, if I depart not from the way. Remember that thou goest in the midst of snares, saith Scripture. What is, in the midst of snares? In the way of Christ, and snares on this side and on that: snares on the right hand, and snares on the left: snares on the right hand, worldly prosperity; snares on the left hand, worldly adversity: snares on the right hand, promises; snares on the left hand, alarms. Do thou walk in the midst of the snares: depart not from the way: let neither promise ensnare thee, nor alarm drive thee off it. In this way, wherein I was walking, have they hidden a trap for me.

10. I considered upon the right hand, and saw. He considered upon the right hand, and saw: whoso considereth upon the left hand, is blinded. What is to consider on the right hand? Where they will be to whom shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom. For there will be certain on the left to whom shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. While then the whole world raged, and threatened in persecutions, when on all sides the attacks and terrors of men increased, he, despising the present, looked to the future, gave heed to the right hand, where he is to be: there he meditated to be, to that he gave heed, and saw, and therefore bore all; but they who persecuted him, saw not. Therefore when he said, I considered upon the right hand, and saw, he goeth on to say, and there was none that knew me. For when thou fearest all things, who knoweth what thou regardest, whether thou directest thine eyes to the right hand or to the left? If, in bearing, thou seekest the praise of men,

thou hast regarded the left: if, in bearing, thou seekest the promises of God, thou hast regarded the right hand. Hast thou regarded the right hand, thou shalt see: hast thou regarded the left hand, thou shalt be blinded. But even when thou seest on the right hand, there will be none to know thee. For who comforteth thee save the Lord, to Whom thou sayest, And Thou hast known my paths? And there was no man that knew me.

11. Flight hath perished from me. He speaketh as though he were hemmed in. Flight hath perished from me. Let the persecutors rejoice over him; he is overpowered, he is taken, he is hemmed in, he is conquered; flight hath perished from him. Flight hath perished from him who fleeth not. But he who fleeth not, suffereth whatever he can for Christ: that is, he fleeth not in soul. For in body it is lawful to flee; it is allowed, it is permitted; for the Lord saith, When they persecute you in one city, flee to another. He then who fleeth not in soul, from him flight hath perished. But it maketh a difference why he fleeth not; whether because he is hemmed in, because he is caught, or because he is brave. For both from him that is caught flight hath perished, and from him that is brave flight hath perished. What flight then is to be avoided? what flight shall we allow to perish from us? That whereof the Lord speaketh in the Gospel, The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, when he seeth the wolf coming, fleeth. When he seeth the ravager, why fleeth he? Because he careth not for the sheep. Such flight had perished from him, whether we understand this saying in the name of the Head Himself, Christ our Lord, Who suffered for us; or whether of His members, our martyrs, who themselves too have suffered for their brethren. Hear what John saith, For as He laid down His life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. But when they lay them down, Christ layeth down: for, when they suffer persecution, He crieth out, Why persecutest thou Me? Flight hath perished from me; and there is none to seek my life. Is there then none to seek his life? He sees men desirous to rage against him even to death, desirous to shed his blood; how is there none to seek his life? This also may be taken in two ways. Just as flight perishing may be taken in two ways, because both from him that is caught, and from him that is brave, flight perisheth; so in two ways a man's life is sought, either by his persecutors or by his lovers. So then there is none to seek my life, he said of them; verily

they persecute my life, and they seek not my life. But if they seek my life, they will find it clinging to Thee: and if they know to seek it, they know also to imitate it. For that ye may know that a man's life is sought by his persecutors too, therefore is it said elsewhere, Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my life.

12. Unto thee have I cried, O Lord: I have said, Thou art my hope. When I endured, when I was in tribulation, I said, Thou art my hope. My hope here, therefore I endure. But my portion, not here, but in the land of the living. God giveth a portion in the land of the living; but not something from Himself without Himself. What will He give to one that loveth Him, save Himself?

13. Give heed unto my prayer, for much have I been humbled. Humbled by persecutors, humbled in confession. He humbleth himself out of the sight of man: he is humbled by enemies in their sight. Therefore is he lifted up by Him both visibly and invisibly. Invisibly are the martyrs already lifted up; visibly shall they be lifted up, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption in the resurrection of the dead; when this very part of him, against which alone her persecutors could rage, shall be renewed. Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. And what perisheth? what kill they? Is even this permitted them, that what they kill should perish? It shall not perish. Hear the promise of the Lord Himself: Verily I say unto you, there shall not an hair of your head perish. Why then art thou anxious about the rest of thy members, when thou shalt not lose even a hair?

14. Deliver me from them that persecute me. From whom thinkest thou that he prayeth to be delivered? From men who persecuted him? Is it so? are merely men our enemies? We have other enemies, invisible, who persecute us in another way. Man persecuteth, that he may slay the body; another persecuteth, that he ensnare the soul. And therefore by means of his vessels, (for of him is said, He worketh in the children of disobedience,) by his vessels, that is, men in whom he worketh, he dealeth persecution of the body, that inwardly he may effect the ruin of the soul. For if, though the body fall, the soul stand upright, the snare is broken, and we are delivered. There are then other enemies of ours too, from whom we ought to pray God to deliver us, lest they lead us astray, either by crushing us with troubles of

this world, or alluring us by its enticements. Who are these enemies? Let us see whether they are plainly described by any servant of the Lord, by any soldier, now perfected, who hath engaged with them. Hear the Apostle saying, We wrestle not against flesh and blood: as though he would say, Turn not your hatred against men; think not them your enemies; think not that it is by their hostility you are being bruised; these men whom ye fear are flesh and blood: we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Thus he chose to speak, despising mortal men. Against whom then? Against principalities, saith he, and powers, and the rulers of this world, of this darkness. Thou wast alarmed when thou heardest, the rulers of this world. If they be rulers of this world, art thou to go beyond the world, to escape suffering them? art thou to go beyond the world, to be delivered from them? Thus then understand; the rulers of the world and of this darkness, not the rulers of heaven and earth, for they are the workmanship of God. Heaven and earth are called the world, and wicked men are called the world. Wherefore are they too called the world? Because they love the world: and therefore darkness, because they are wicked. And therefore when now many out of that very number believed, what saith the Apostle? Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Before then ye were light, while ye were darkness, observe what ruler ye had. What ruler have the wicked save the devil, just as the good and faithful have Christ for their ruler. Therefore did he call the devil and his angels the rulers of the world, that is, rulers of the lovers of the world, rulers of sinners, that is, of this darkness: them have we for our enemies, and from them we ought to pray to God to be delivered.

15. Hear both worlds clearly mentioned in one passage in holy Scripture, in the Gospel, the world which God made, and the world which the devil ruleth, that is, the lovers of the world. For God made men, but He made them not lovers of the world. For to love the world is sin, and God made not sin. Hear then, as I began to say, both worlds. He was in the world, it is said. Of whom is it said, He was in the world, save of the Wisdom of God, which is Jesus Christ, of which Wisdom is said, as I mentioned just above, Wisdom reacheth from one end to another, mightily and sweetly doth she order all things? For, She passeth and goeth through all things by reason of Her pureness, and nothing defiled can fall unto Her. So then He was in this

world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Here thou hast heard of two worlds; The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. It is not the world which was made by Jesus that is ruled over by those princes and powers of darkness, but the world which knew not Jesus, that is, the lovers of the world, the sinners, the wicked, the proud, the unbelieving. Whence are sinners called the world? Because they love the world, and by loving dwell in the world; just as both the building and its indwellers are called 'the house.' 'A good house,' generally means 'a good building;' but we also say 'a good house,' because they are good who dwell therein. Again, 'beware of that house, it is a bad one;' this is said in two ways: 'This is a bad house, beware;' perhaps because it is ruinous, lest ought fall and crush thee: it is said also in another way, 'Beware of that bad house, lest thou fall into the snare of the hunters; lest if poor thou be oppressed by a rich man, lest thou be in some way cheated.' Just as then we say 'house' in two senses, so do we say 'world' in two senses. But why are not the righteous too, since they too are in the world, called the world? Because the Apostle saith, But though we walk in the flesh, yet we do not war after the flesh: for our conversation is in heaven. The righteous dwelleth here in the flesh, but in heart he is with God. And he is called the world, if there is no ground for saying to him, 'Lift up your heart;' but if there be ground for it, then let him dwell aloft: for ye are dead, saith the Apostle, and your life is hid with Christ in God. But they whose life is here, that is, whose longing and love cling to this, here have their use, here are entangled, well are called indwellers of the world. Well too are they who dwell in the world, called the world; just as well are they called the house, who dwell in the house. Two worlds then are there: The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Behold the world made by the Lord, behold the world which knew not the Lord. Praise thou the building, and love the Builder; and love not to dwell in the building, but dwell in the Builder.

16. Deliver me from them that persecute me: for they are strengthened over me. Who said, they are strengthened over me? The Body of Christ crieth out; it is the voice of the Church; the members of Christ cry out, 'Much hath the number of sinners increased.' Because iniquity hath abounded, the

love of many waxeth cold. Deliver me from them that persecute me: for they are strengthened over me.

17. Bring forth my soul out of prison, that it may confess to Thy Name. This prison has been variously understood by former writers. And perhaps it is the prison which is called in the title, the cave. For the title of this Psalm runneth thus: Of understanding to David himself, a prayer when he was in the cave. That which is the cave, the same is also the prison. Two things have we set before us to understand, but when we have understood one, both will be understood. A man's deserts make a prison. For in one dwelling place one man finds a house, another a prison. When men keep others imprisoned, even though they keep them in their own houses, yet are they who are closely guarded in prison; must we say that the others are in prison also? There is but one dwelling place to the one and the other: to the one, liberty makes it a home; to the other, slavery makes it a prison. To some then it has seemed that the cave and prison are this world; and this the Church prayeth, that it may be brought out of prison, that is, from this world, from under the sun, where all is vanity. For it is said, All is vanity, and there is vexation of spirit in every work of a man, which he toileth under the sun. Beyond this world then God promiseth that we shall be in some sort of rest; therefore perhaps do we cry concerning this place, Bring my soul out of prison. Our soul by faith and hope is in Christ; as a little before I said, Your life is hid with Christ in God. But our body is in this prison, in this world. If he had said, 'Bring my body out of prison,' we should be safe in understanding the prison to be the world. But perhaps on account of certain earthly desires, which keep hold on us, against which we struggle and fight, because I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind; rightly do we say, Bring my soul out of this world, that is, out of the toils and troubles of this life. For not the flesh which Thou hast made, but the corruption of the flesh, and its troubles and temptations, are a prison to me.

18. But some have said, that this prison and cave is this body, so that this is the meaning of, Bring my soul out of prison. But this interpretation too is somewhat at fault. For what great thing is it to say, Bring my soul out of prison, bring my soul out of the body? Do not the souls of robbers and

wicked men go forth from the body, and go into worse punishment than here they have endured? What great request then is this, Bring my soul out of prison, when, sooner or later, it must needs come forth? Perhaps the righteous saith, 'Let me die now; bring forth my soul from this prison of the body.' If he be too hasty, he hath not love. He ought indeed to long for and desire, as the Apostle saith, having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is far better. But where is love? Therefore it followeth, but to abide in the flesh is needful for you. Let God then lead us forth from the body, when He will. Our body too might be said to be a prison, not because that is a prison which God hath made, but because it is under punishment and liable to death. For there are two things to be considered in our body, God's workmanship, and the punishment it has deserved. All this form, stature, gait, well-ordered members, all the arrangement of the senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, all this framework, and intricacy of workmanship, could not have been made, save by God, Who made all things in heaven and earth, above and below, visible and invisible. What is there in it that is a punishment to us? That the flesh is subject to corruption, that it is frail, that it is mortal, that it is needy; this will not be so in our reward. For the body will not cease to be a body when it rises. But what will not be then? Corruption. For this corruptible shall put on in corruption. If then the flesh be a prison to thee, it is not the body that is thy prison, but the corruption of thy body. For God made thy body good, for He is good: corruption he introduced in His justice, because He is Judge: the one thou hast in the way of goodness, the other in the way of punishment. Perhaps then he meant by, Bring my soul out of prison, bring my soul out of corruption. If thus we understand it, it is no blasphemy, the meaning is consistent.

19. Lastly, brethren, as I think, he meant this; Bring my soul out of prison, bring it out of straitness. For to one who rejoiceth, even a prison is wide; to one in sorrow, a field is strait. Therefore prayeth he to be brought out of straitness. For though in hope he have enlargement, yet in reality at present he is straitened. Listen to the straits of the Apostle: I had no rest in my spirit, saith he, because I found not Titus my brother. In another place: Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? But he who was both weak and burning, was not he under punishment and in prison.

But these punishments through love produce a crown. Wherefore he saith again, There remaineth for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall pay me at that day. Hereto pertaineth, Bring my soul out of prison, that I may confess Thy Name. When now it has been brought forth from corruption, what hath it to confess? There are no sins there, but there are praises. But confession is understood in two senses, of our sins, and of God's praise. Confession of our sins is well known; so well known to all the people, that whenever they hear the name of confession in the Lessons, whether it is said in praise or of sin, their fists fly to their breasts. The name of confession then is well known in regard of sins, let us seek for confession of praise. Where do we find it? Thou hast in Scripture, And thou shalt say in confession, All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Here then confession is of praise. Elsewhere the Lord Himself saith, I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. What did He confess? Could it be sins? So then Christ's confession was praise. Hear further His praise of the Father: Because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Since then after these straitenings of corruption we shall dwell in the house of God, our whole life will be nothing save praise of God. It has often already been set forth to you, that when need departeth, all works of need come to an end, for there we shall have nought to do. I say not day and night, for there is no night there, but all the day, since it is one day, we shall have nought to do there, save to praise Him Whom we love, because then we shall also see Him. Now we long for Him Whom we see not, and praise Him; then, when we see Him Whom we love, how shall we praise Him? There will be praise without end, because there will be love without end. Since then thus we shall be employed there, therefore, bring my soul out of prison, that it may give thanks to Thy Name. For, blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, for they shall be alway praising Thee. Now the prison hindereth, because the corruptible body weigheth down the soul. It is not the body that weigheth down the soul, (for then too we shall have the body,) but the corruptible body. It is not the body then that maketh the prison, but the corruption. Bring my soul out of prison, that it may give thanks to Thy Name. Now the words which follow seem to come from the Head, our Lord Jesus Christ. And they are the same as yesterday's last words. Yesterday's last words, if

ye remember, were, I am alone, until I pass over. And here what are the last words? The righteous shall sustain me, until thou recompense me.

PSALM 143

A Sermon to the People.

1. Of the Psalm which we have chanted, I will speak to you, beloved, what the Lord shall give me. Yesterday we treated of a shorter Psalm, but the length of time gave us opportunity for saying much even on few verses: now, since the Psalm is longer, we ought not to delay so long on each several verse, lest perchance the Lord grant us not the power to go through the whole.

2. The title of the Psalm is, To David himself, when his son was pursuing him. We know from the Books of Kings that this happened: that Absalom arose in hostility to his father; that he waged against him not only civil, but even domestic war: that David, not evilly despairing, but reverently humbled, received the discipline at the Lord's hand, endured the medicine, not returning evil for evil; but had a heart prepared to follow the Lord's will. Thus praiseworthy was that David: but we must recognise here another David, truly 'strong in hand,' which is the explanation of David, even our Lord Jesus Christ. For all those events of past time were figures of things to come; nor needs it long time to commend to you, what ye have often heard, and very well remember. Let us seek then in this Psalm our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, announcing Himself beforehand in His prophecy, and foretelling what should happen at this time by things which were done long ago. For He Himself foretold Himself in the Prophets: for He is the Word of God. Nor did they say ought of this kind, save when filled with the Word of God. They announced then Christ, being filled with Christ, they went before Him about to come, and He deserted not them going before. Let us learn then how Christ too was persecuted by His son: for sons He had of whom He said, The children of the bride fast not while the bridegroom is with them: but when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then shall the children of the bridegroom fast. The sons of the bridegroom then are the

Apostles, and the persecutor among these was Judas the devil. In this Psalm then Christ is about to foretel His Passion: let us listen.

3. But we again call your attention, beloved, to this, not as teaching you what ye know not, but reminding you of what ye know, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of His Body, that He is the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus, born of a Virgin, as it were in solitude, as we have heard in the Revelation. In solitude, as I think, because He alone has been so born. Him did that woman bear, to rule the nations with a rod of iron; and the woman is the ancient city of God, of which is said in the Psalm, Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God. This city hath its beginning even from Abel, as the evil city hath from Cain. That then is the ancient city of God, ever enduring earth, hoping for heaven, which is also called Jerusalem and Sion. Truly of One born in Sion and yet Founder of Sion itself is said in another Psalm, Sion, My Mother, a man shall say. What man? And a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her. In short, in Sion He was made Man, but as Man He was made humble, and He also, the Most High, founded that city in which He was made Man. Therefore was that woman also clothed with the sun, even with the Sun of Righteousness, Whom the wicked know not; who shall say in the end, Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the Light of Righteousness hath not shone unto us, and the Sun of Righteousness was not upon us. There is then a Sun of Righteousness, which shineth not on the wicked. Yet the sun of this world He maketh to rise on the evil and the good. Therefore was she both clothed with the sun, and bore in her womb a male child, being about to bring forth. He it was that both buildeth Sion, and is born in Sion; and that woman, the City of God, was protected by His Light, with Whose Flesh she was pregnant Rightly too had she the moon under her feet, because by virtue she trampled under foot the mortality of flesh which waxeth and waneth.

The Lord Jesus Christ then is both Head and Body; for He willed to speak in us, Who deigned to die for us; He hath made us His members. Sometimes then He speaketh in the person of His members, sometimes in His own person, as our Head. He hath somewhat which He can say without us, we nought which we can say without Him. The Apostle saith, That I

may fill up what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh. That I may fill up, he saith, what is lacking of the afflictions, not mine own, but Christ's, in the flesh, no longer Christ's, but mine. Christ, saith he, still suffereth affliction, not in His own Flesh, wherein He hath ascended into heaven, but in my flesh, which yet toileth on earth. Christ, saith he, suffereth affliction in my flesh: for it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. Did not Christ Himself suffer affliction in His members too, that is, in His faithful ones, Saul upon earth could not persecute Christ seated in heaven. Finally, he openly setteth this forth in a certain place, and saith, As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. He saith not, 'so also is Christ and His Body,' but 'as there is one body and many members, so also is Christ.' The whole then is Christ. And because the whole is Christ, therefore doth the Head call from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me. Remember this, and commit to your memory, and keep it entirely fixed there, as children of the Church's training and of the Catholic Faith, that ye may perceive Christ to be the Head and Body, and the same Christ to be also the Word of God, the Only-begotten, equal to the Father, and so may see how great is the Grace whereby ye pertain to God, that He has willed to be one with us, Who is one with the Father. How, one with the Father? I and the Father are one. How, one with us? He saith not, says the Apostle, Unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to Thy Seed, Which is Christ. But some one will say, 'If Christ be the seed of Abraham, are we so also?' Remember that Christ is Abraham's Seed; and accordingly, if we also are the seed of Abraham, we also are Christ. As there is one body and many members, so also is Christ. And, as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Now Christ is the Seed of Abraham; nor can we gainsay the clear words of the Apostle, Thy Seed, which is Christ. See now what he saith to us, If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed. Great then is that mystery, they twain shall be one flesh. Great, saith the Apostle, is this mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Christ and the Church are two in one flesh. The two ye must refer to the wideness apart of His Majesty from us. For we are not also the Word; we are not also God in the beginning with God; we are not also He by Whom all things were made. He cometh to the Flesh, and there Christ is both Himself and we. Let us not wonder then in the Psalms: for He saith many things in the

character of the Head, many in the character of the members, and He so speaketh, as though their whole were one person. Nor wonder thou that there are two in one voice, if there be two in one flesh.

4. Judas is the son of the Bridegroom persecuting the Bridegroom. Did this merely happen then, or was it set forth beforehand as a pattern of what was to come? For the Church was destined to endure many false brethren, so that still and even unto the end that Bridegroom is persecuted by His son. For if an enemy had upbraided me, verily I should have borne it, saith He; and if he who hated me had spoken great things over me, verily I should have hid myself from him. Who is the enemy? who is he that hated me? He who saith, 'Who is Christ? Christ was a man: He neither could live, when He willed to live, and He died,' say they, 'against His will; conquered, crucified, slain.' They are enemies who say such things as this. 'He is an open enemy,' saith Christ; 'he hateth Me; he openly declareth his hostility to Me; him it is easy either to bear or to shun. What do I with Absalom? what do I with Judas? what with false brethren? what with evil sons, who yet are sons, who do not against us blaspheme Christ, but with us worship Him, and in us persecute Him?' Of these He goeth on to speak in the same Psalm. Another it was easy to bear, him who hated me, or else to hide myself from him. For thou hidest thyself from a Pagan, by entering the Church. But when there also thou findest what thou fearest, what good to seek where to hide thyself? Lastly, that very same Apostle, who groaneth in perils among false brethren, saith, without were fightings, within were fears. If then he who hated me had spoken great things over me, verily I should have hid myself from him: but thou, man of one mind—of one mind, he saith, as though one in Christ. The Church then hath what to bear without, what to groan over within: yet it is to consider both those without and those within, enemies; those without more easily to be shunned, those within with more difficulty to be borne.

5. Let then our Lord speak; let Christ with us, whole Christ, speak. Lord, hear my prayer, receive with Thine ears my entreaty. 'Hear' and 'receive with ears' are the same thing. It is repetition, it is confirmation. In Thy truth hear me, in Thy righteousness. Take it not without emphasis when it is said, in Thy righteousness. For it is a commendation of grace, that none of us

think his righteousness his own. For this is the righteousness of God, which God hath given thee to possess. For what saith the Apostle of them, who would boast of their own righteousness? I bear them witness, saith he, that they have a zeal of God. Speaking of the Jews, he saith, they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. What is, not according to knowledge? For what knowledge dost thou commend as useful? Is it that which, when it is alone, puffeth up, which, unless it be accompanied with charity, edifieth not? Verily not this: but the knowledge which is the companion of charity, the mistress of humility. See whether it be this: They have a zeal of God, saith he, but not according to knowledge. Let him expound to us what knowledge he meaneth: they, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Who then are they who go about to establish their own righteousness? They who impute to themselves whatever they have done well; whatever ill, to God; entirely perversely. Then only will they be right, when they have changed this. Thou art perverse, because thou imputest what thou hast done ill to God, what well to thyself: thou wilt be right, when thou imputest what thou hast done ill to thyself, what well to God. For thou wouldest not from being ungodly live righteously, save by having been justified by Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Therefore he saith, Hear me in Thy truth, in Thy righteousness, not in mine own; that I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of faith. Behold, in Thy righteousness hear me. For when I look upon myself, nought else do I find mine own, save sin.

6. And enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Who are willing to enter into judgment with Him, save they who, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, go about to establish their own? Wherefore have we fasted, and Thou hast not seen; wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and Thou takest no knowledge? As though they would say, 'We have done what Thou hast commanded, wherefore dost Thou not render to us what Thou hast promised?' God answereth thee: I will give to thee to receive what I have promised: I have given thee that thou shouldest do that whereby thou mayest receive. Finally, to such proud ones the Prophet speaketh; Wherefore will ye plead with Me? ye have all transgressed against Me,

saith the Lord. Why will ye enter into judgment with Me, and recount your own righteousnesses? Recount your righteousnesses; I know your wickednesses. How shall I there approve righteousness, where I shall condemn pride? Rightly saith that humble one in the Body of Christ, leaning on his Head, for He is meek and lowly in heart, Enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Let us not strive together, I desire not to plead with Thee, so that to set forth my righteousness Thou convict me of mine iniquity: enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Wherefore this? wherefore feareth he? For before Thee every one living shall not be justified. Every one living; living, that is, here, living in the flesh, living in expectation of death; born a man; deriving his life of man; sprung from Adam, a living Adam; every one thus living may perhaps be justified before himself, but not before Thee. How before himself? By pleasing himself, displeasing Thee: but, before Thee every one living shall not be justified. Enter not then into judgment with me, O Lord my God. How straight soever I seem to myself, Thou bringest forth a standard from Thy store-house, Thou fittest me to it, and I am found crooked. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Well is it said, with Thy servant. It is unworthy of Thee to enter into judgment with Thy servant, or even with Thy friend; for Thou wouldest not say, I say unto you, My friends, hadst not Thou Thyself made them of servants to become friends. Though Thou callest me friend, I confess myself a servant. I need Thy pity; I return from running from Thee; I seek peace. I am not worthy to be called Thy son. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight every one living shall not be justified. Judge none blessed before his death; no one living whatever. What of the rams themselves, what of the Apostles themselves, of whose offspring it is said, Bring the young of rams unto the Lord? Of these is Paul, who calleth not himself perfect, not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. Finally, brethren, that ye may perceive it at once, they learnt to pray what we pray: to them was given the pattern of prayer by the heavenly Counsellor. After this manner, saith He, pray ye. And have set down certain things first, He laid down this too to be said by our rams, the leaders of the sheep, the chief members of the Shepherd and Gatherer of the one flock; even they learnt to say, Forgive us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors. They said not, 'Thanks be to Thee, Who hast forgiven us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors,' but, 'Forgive, as we forgive.' But surely the

faithful prayed then, surely the Apostles prayed then, for this Lord's Prayer was given rather to the faithful. If those debts only were meant which are forgiven by Baptism, it would befit catechumens rather to say, Forgive us our debts. Let the Apostles then say, yea let them say, Forgive us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors. And when it is said to them, 'Wherefore say ye this? what are your debts?' let them answer, for in Thy sight every one living shall not be justified.

7. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath humbled my life on the earth. Here we speak, here our Head speaketh for us: for the enemy hath persecuted my soul. Manifestly both the devil persecuted the Soul of Christ and Judas the Soul of his Master: and now too the same devil remaineth to persecute the Body of Christ, and one Judas succeedeth another. There lacketh not then of whom the Body too may say, For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath humbled my life on the earth. He hath humbled, saith he, my life on the earth. In another place it is said, They bowed down my soul. For what doth each one who persecuteth us endeavour save to make us abandon our heavenly hope, and savour of the earth, yield to our persecutor, and love earthly things? They indeed, as far as in them lies, do this: yet let not this befall us to whom it is said, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Seek those things which are above, not those which are on earth, for ye are dead. For in God's sight every one living shall not be justified. They then, either openly raging, or secretly laying snares, endeavour to bring our life to the earth. Against them let us watch; that we may be able to say, Our conversation is in heaven. The enemy, saith he, hath humbled my life upon earth.

8. They have laid me in dark places, as the dead of the world. This ye hear more readily from the Head; this ye perceive more readily in the Head. For He died indeed for us, yet was He not one of the dead of the world. For who are the dead of the world? And how was not He one of the dead of the world? The dead of the world are those who have died of their own desert, receiving the reward of iniquity, deriving death from the sin transmitted to them; according as it is said, For I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother cherish me in her womb. But He came by a Virgin, taking to

Him Flesh pure itself, purifying others. But they who thought Him a sinner, looked on Him as one of the dead of the world. But He, Who said in another Psalm, I paid them the things that I never took, and Who said in the Gospel, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, the captain of death, the persuader to evil deeds, the executor of punishment, saith, Behold he cometh, and shall find nothing in Me. What is, shall find nothing in Me? No fault, nothing for which I ought to die. But that all, saith He, may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go hence. In dying, saith He, I do the will of My Father, but I am not deserving of death. Nought have I done wherefore I should die, yet is it Mine own doing that I die, that by the death of an innocent One, they may be freed who had wherefore they should die. They set me in dark places, as though in Hades, as though in the tomb, as though in His very Passion, as the dead of the world, even Him they set, Who saith, I am become like one that hath no help, free among the dead. What is, free? Wherefore, free? Because every one that doeth sin is the servant of sin. Finally, He would not free from bonds, were He not free from bonds Himself. He, Himself free, slew death, bound bondage, led captivity captive, and they set Him in dark places as the dead of the world.

9. And My Spirit within me, saith He, suffered weariness. Remember, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Here we see one voice. Do we not see plainly the transition from the Head to the members, from the members to the Head? My Spirit within Me, saith He, hath suffered weariness. Here we recognise, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. But we too were there. For He transfigured in Himself the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the Body of His glory; and our old man is crucified with Him. My heart in Me is troubled. In Me, He saith, not in others. For they forsook Me, they who had clung to Me left Me, and because they saw Me die, they thought that I was somewhat else, and were beaten by the thief, who believed, when they failed.

10. Then he goes to the members. I have called to mind the days of old. Did He call to mind the days of old, by Whom every day was made? No, but the body speaketh, each one who has been justified by His grace, who dwelleth in Him in love and devout humility, speaketh and saith, I have called to mind the days of old, I have meditated upon all Thy works: plainly because

Thou hast made all things good, and nothing would have stood fast, which was not established by Thee. Thy creation is made a spectacle unto me: I have sought in the work the Artificer, in all that is made the Maker. Wherefore this, to what purpose this, save that he might understand, that whatever there was of good in himself was made by Him; lest, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish his own righteousness, he should not submit himself to the righteousness of God: that those words above, in Thy Truth and in Thy Righteousness, might suit him? In all the works of God then, and in meditation on all the works of God, he introduceth grace, he commendeth grace, he boasteth that he hath found grace, the grace whereby we are saved without price; for without price we are saved. Why boastest thou of thine own righteousness? why liftest thou up thyself, being ignorant of the righteousness of God? Perchance thou gavest somewhat to be saved? What gavest thou to be made a man? Look back then upon the Framers of thy life, the Author of thy substance, of thy righteousness, and of thy salvation: meditate upon the works of His hands, for the righteousness too which is in thee, thou wilt find to pertain to His hand. Hear the Apostle teaching thee this, not of works, he saith, lest any should boast. Have we no good works? Plainly we have: but see what follows; for we are His workmanship, saith he. We are His workmanship: perhaps in thus speaking of workmanship, he meant to mention the nature whereby we are men? Evidently not: he was speaking of works. Not, saith he, of works, lest any should boast. But let us not make conjectures; let the text go on, for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Think not then that thou thyself doest any thing, save in so far as thou art evil. Turn thee from thine own work, to His work Who made thee; He fashioneth thee, and let Him refashion what He had fashioned, and thou hast destroyed. For that thou art, He hath wrought; that thou art good, if good thou art, He worketh. Work out your own salvation, saith the Apostle, with fear and trembling. If we do work out our own salvation, wherefore with fear, wherefore with trembling, when what we work is in our own power? Hear wherefore with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of His good pleasure. Therefore with fear and trembling, that it may delight our Maker to work in the lowly valley. For so doth He work, as it were, in that which is cast down, Who judgeth among the nations, and repaireth that which hath fallen.

I have meditated on the works of Thine hands. I have seen then and looked into Thy works, that nothing good can there be in us, unless it be wrought by Thee, Who hast made us.

11. And what did I when I saw that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning? When I saw this, I turned me from the evil work which I had wrought in myself, and I stretched forth my hands unto Thee. I stretched forth, saith he, my hands to Thee: my soul is as a land without water to Thee. Rain upon me, saith he, to bring forth from me good fruit. For the Lord shall give sweetness, that our land may give her fruit. I have stretched forth my hands to Thee; my soul is as a land without water, not to me, but, to Thee. I can thirst for Thee, I cannot water myself. My soul is as a land without water to Thee; for, my soul is athirst for the living God. When shall I come to Him, save when He hath come to me? My soul is athirst for the living God; for, my soul is as a land without water to Thee. The sea aboundeth, floodeth, is full, floweth: but it is bitter. The water is separated, my dry soul hath appeared: water it, for my soul is as a land without water to Thee.

12. Speedily hear me, Lord. For what need of delay to inflame my thirst, when already I thirst so eagerly? Thou didst delay the rain, that I might drink and imbibe, not reject, Thy inflowing. If then Thou didst for this cause delay, now give; for, my soul is as a land without water to Thee. Speedily hear me, O Lord: my spirit hath failed. Let Thy Spirit fill me, for my spirit hath failed me. This is the reason why Thou shouldest speedily hear me, because my spirit hath failed me. I am now become poor in spirit, make Thou me blessed in the kingdom of heaven. For he in whom his own spirit liveth, is proud, is puffed up with his own spirit against God. Let that happen in him to his good which elsewhere is written, Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail, and be turned to their dust; that they may confess, and say, Remember that we are but dust. But when they have said, Remember that we are but dust, then let them say, my soul is as a land without water to Thee. For what is so much a land without water, as dust? But do Thou speedily hear me, O God, rain on me, strengthen me, that I be not dust which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth. Speedily

hear me, O God; my spirit hath failed: let not my need suffer longer delay. Thou hast taken away my spirit, that I might fail, and be turned to dust, and say unto Thee, my soul is as a land without water to Thee: do Thou also what followeth in that Psalm, Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. If any one be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away: old things are passed away in his spirit, they are made new in Thy Spirit.

13. Turn not Thou away Thy Face from me. Thou didst turn it away from me when proud. For once I was full, and in my fulness I was puffed up. Once in my fulness I said, I shall never be moved. I said in my fulness, I shall not be moved, knowing not Thy Righteousness, and establishing mine own; but Thou, Lord, in Thy Will hast afforded strength to my beauty. I said in my fulness, I shall not be moved, but from Thee came whatever fulness I had. And to prove to me that it was from Thee, Thou didst turn away Thy Face from me, and I was troubled. After this trouble, whereinto I was cast, because Thou didst turn away Thy Face, after the weariness of my spirit, after my heart was troubled within me, because Thou didst turn away Thy Face, then became I like a land without water to Thee: turn not Thou away Thy Face. Thou turnedst it away from me when proud; give it back to me now I am humble. Turn not away Thy Face from me, because, if Thou turn it away, I shall be like to them that go down into the pit. What is, that go down into the pit? When the sinner has come into the depth of sins, he will shew contempt. They go down into the pit, who lose even confession; against which is said, Let not the pit close her mouth over me. This depth Scripture calleth mostly a pit, into which depth when a sinner hath come, he sheweth contempt. What is, he sheweth contempt? He no longer believeth in Providence, or if he do believe, he thinketh that he has no longer ought to do with it. He setteth before himself licence to sin, the reins of iniquity being let loose now that he has no hope of pardon. He saith not, 'I will return to God that He may return to me;' he heareth not, Turn ye unto Me, and I will return to you, for having come to the depth of evil, he sheweth contempt. For from the dead, saith the wise man, as though he were not, confession perisheth. Turn not then Thy Face from me, or I shall be like them that go down into the pit.

14. Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped. Behold, I am in the night, yet in Thee have I hoped, until the iniquity of the night pass away. For we have, as Peter saith, a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. Morning then he calleth the time after the end of the world, when we shall see what in this world we believe. For, in the morning Thou shalt hear my voice; in the morning I will stand by Thee, and gaze. Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped. For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. The night requireth patience, the day will give joy. Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped.

15. But what here, until the morning come? For it is not enough to hope for the morning; we must do somewhat. Why do somewhat? Because he saith in another Psalm, I sought God in the day of my tribulation; as it were in the time of night I sought God. How didst thou seek? With my hands in the night before Him; and I was not deceived. God is to be sought with the hands in the night. What is, with the hands? By good works. What, before Him? When Thou doest an alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee. Since then we must thus hope for the morning, and bear this night, and persevere in this patience until the day dawn, what meanwhile must we do here? lest perchance thou think that thou wilt do ought of thyself, whereby thou mayest earn to be brought to the morning. Make known to me, O Lord, the way wherein I must walk. Therefore did He kindle the lamp of prophecy, therefore did He send the Lord in the vessel, as it were, of the flesh, Who should even say, My strength is dried up like a potsherd. Walk by prophecy, walk by the lamp of future things predicted, walk by the word of God. As yet thou seest not the Word in the beginning, God with God: walk by the Form of a servant, thou shalt be brought to the Form of God. Make known to me, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul. I have lifted it up to Thee, not against Thee. With Thee is the Fountain of life: to Thee have I lifted up my soul. I have brought it as a vessel to the Fountain: fill me, therefore, for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.

16. Deliver me from mine enemies, O Lord, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge. I who once fled from Thee, now flee to Thee. For Adam fled from the Face of God, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise, so that of him was said in the Book of Job, As a servant that fleeth from his Lord, and findeth a shadow. He fled from the Face of his Lord, and found a shadow; for he fled to the shade among the trees of Paradise. Woe to him, if he continue in the shade, lest it be said afterward, All things are passed away like a shadow. Deliver me from mine enemies. I think not here of men enemies. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. But against whom? Against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the world. What world? For he cannot mean earth and sky, for they rule not what they have not made. Rulers of the world. But of what world? This darkness. What darkness? Clearly the wicked. For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. The rulers of this world, of this darkness, the rulers of the wicked; against these ye wrestle. Great is your conflict, not to see your enemies, and yet to conquer. Against the rulers of this world, of this darkness, the devil, that is, and his angels; not the rulers of that world, whereof is said, the world was made by Him, but that world whereof is said, the world knew Him not. Deliver me from mine enemies, O Lord, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge. From mine enemies, not from Judas, but from him who filled Judas. The one whom I see, I endure; the one whom I see not, I fight. For Judas received the sop, and Satan entered into him, that That David might suffer persecution at the hands of his son. How many Judases doth Satan fill, unworthily receiving the sop to their damnation! For whoso eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself. Not evil is that which is given, but what is good is given to the evil to damnation. It cannot be well with him who in evil wise taketh what is good. Therefore, Deliver me from mine enemies, for I have fled unto Thee for refuge. For whither should I flee? Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? If I go up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down to hell, Thou art there. What then remaineth? If I take my wings as a dove, and fly to the farthest parts of the sea: that is, if in hope I dwell in the end of the world. For thither shalt Thine hand guide me, and Thy right hand bring me. Deliver me from mine enemies, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge, O Lord.

17. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Glorious confession! glorious rule! For Thou, saith he, art my God. To another will I hasten to be re-made, if by another I was made. Thou art my all, for Thou art my God. Shall I seek a father to get an inheritance? Thou art my God, not only the Giver of mine inheritance, but mine Inheritance itself. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance. Shall I seek a patron, to obtain redemption? Thou art my God. Lastly, having been created, do I desire to be re-created? Thou art my God, my Creator, Who hast created me by Thy Word, and re-created me by Thy Word. But Thou createdst me by Thy Word, remaining God with Thee: Thou re-createdst me by Thy Word, made Flesh for our sakes. Teach Thou me then to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. If Thou teach me not, I shall do mine own will, and my God will abandon me. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Teach Thou me: for it cannot be that Thou art my God, and yet I am to be mine own master. See how grace is commended to us. This hold fast, this drink in, this let none drive out of your hearts, lest ye have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge; lest, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish your own righteousness, ye submit not yourselves to the righteousness of God. Ye recognise the words of the Apostle. Say then this, Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

18. Thy good Spirit, not my bad one, Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land. For my bad spirit hath led me into a crooked land. And what have I deserved? What can be reckoned as my good works without Thy aid, through which I might obtain and be worthy to be led by Thy Spirit into the right land. What are my works? what my deserts? For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me. Listen, then, with all your power, to the commendation of Grace, whereby ye are saved without price. For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me in Thy righteousness; not in mine own: not because I have deserved, but because Thou hast mercy. For were I to shew mine own desert, nought should I deserve of Thee, save punishment. Thou hast pruned off from me mine own merits; Thou hast grafted in Thine own gifts. For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me in Thy righteousness. Thou shalt bring forth my soul out of tribulation: and in Thy mercy shalt

bring mine enemies to destruction: and Thou shalt destroy all them that afflict my soul; for I am Thy servant.

PSALM 144

Sermon to the People.

1. The title of this Psalm is brief in number of words, but heavy in the weight of its mysteries. To David himself against Goliath. This battle was fought in the time of our fathers, and ye, beloved, remember it with me from Holy Scripture. For when the aliens were fighting against the people of God, one of them challenged a single adversary, Goliath challenged David: that in that contest the will of God for either party's success might be tested. But why do we trouble ourselves about the victory, when we see the challenger and the challenged? It was wickedness challenging goodness, pride challenging humility; lastly, it was the devil challenging Christ. Why wonder ye that the devil was vanquished? The one was great in bodily stature; the other small in stature, great in faith. Holy David took to him armour of war, to go forth against Goliath. This armour, through his age, and his smallness of stature, as we have mentioned, he could not carry. He cast away what burdened him, but helped him not; he took five stones from the river, and put them in his shepherd's vessel. Armed in body with these, in spirit with the Name of God, he went forth, and conquered. This did that David; but let us search for the hidden meaning. For we had set forth above, that this title was brief in number of words, but heavy in weight of mysteries. But call to mind that sentence of the Apostle, All these things happened unto them in a figure, that we seem not wantonly to seek for somewhat hidden, where it may be said that all is simply said without any depth of mystery. We have then authority which makes us eager to seek, watchful to trace out, attentive to hear, faithful to believe, active to do. In David is Christ; but, as ye that are learned in His school are wont to understand, Christ is both Head and Body. Hear not then any thing spoken in the person of Christ, as though it concerned not you, who are members of Christ. This being laid down as a foundation, see what followeth.

2. Ye know that the former people were laden with many rites visible and corporeal, with circumcision, with that laborious priesthood of theirs, with the temple filled with types, with manifold kinds of whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. These our David laid aside, as armour that weighed down, but helped not. For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law. To what purpose then was the Law? It followeth; But Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to all that believe. Finally, this David, that is, Christ, both Head and Body at the time of the revelation of the New Testament, at the time when grace was to be put forward and recommended, what did He? He laid aside His armour, He took five stones: He laid aside, as we have said, the burdensome armour: He laid aside, that is, the rites of the Law, those rites of the Law which are not laid on the Gentiles, which we do not observe. For ye remember how much we read in the old Law, which we do not observe, yet understand to have been sent before, and set forth to signify somewhat; not that we cast away the Law of God, but that we celebrate not the rites of promise, now that the promise is fulfilled. For what they promised has come. For the grace of the new covenant which was veiled under the Law, is unveiled in the Gospel. We have removed the veil, and have seen what was veiled: we have seen it in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Head and Saviour, Who was crucified for us, at Whose crucifixion, moreover, the veil of the temple was rent in twain. Finally, He laid aside His armour, that is, the burden of the rites of the old Law, and took the Law itself. For the five stones signify the five Books of Moses. He took then those five stones from the river. Ye know what the river is. For this mortal life glideth on, and whatever cometh into the world floweth by. They were then in the river, that is, in that former people, stones; there they were useless, idle, profited nothing, the river flowed along over them. What did David, that the Law might be profitable? He received grace. For without grace the Law cannot be fulfilled. For love is the fulfilment of the Law: and where is this love? see if it come not from grace. The love of God, saith the Apostle, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us. Since then grace maketh the Law to be fulfilled, and grace is signified by milk; for milk in the flesh is without price, where the mother seeketh not to receive, but busies herself to give; where the mother giveth without price, and is saddened, if there be none to

receive: how then doth David shew that the Law cannot work without grace, save when, wishing to unite those five stones, whereby was signified the Law in five Books, to grace, he placed them in his shepherd's vessel, into which he had been wont to put the milk? Armed with these, armed, that is, with grace, and so not trusting in himself, but in his Lord, he went forth against the proud Goliath, who vaunted himself, trusted in himself. He took one stone, he cast it, he smote his enemy in the forehead, he slew him through that part of his body where he had not the sign of Christ. This you may further observe. He put five stones in his scrip, he hurled but one. The five Books were chosen, but unity conquered. For the fulfilment of the Law, as we mentioned a little above, is love: and the Apostle saith, Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep unity of spirit in the bond of peace. Then, having smitten and overthrown him, he took the enemy's sword, and with it cut off his head. This our David also did, He overthrew the devil with his own weapons: and when his great ones, whom he had in his power, by means of whom he slew other souls, believe, they turn their tongues against the devil, and so Goliath's head is cut off with his own sword. We have handled the mystery of the title, as the briefness of the time allowed; now let us see what the Psalm itself containeth.

3. Blessed be the Lord my God, Who teacheth my hands for battle, my fingers for war. These are our words, if we be the Body of Christ. Let us bless the Lord our God, Who teacheth our hands for battle, our fingers for war. It seems a repetition of sentiment; our hands for battle, and our fingers for war, are the same. Or is there some difference between hands and fingers? Certainly both hands and fingers work. Not then without reason do we take fingers as put for hands. But still in the fingers we recognise the division of operation, yet still a sort of unity. Behold that grace! the Apostle saith, To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another different kinds of tongues; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. To one, this; to another, that; there are diversities of operations; all these worketh one and the self-same Spirit; there is the root of unity.

With these fingers then the Body of Christ fighteth, going forth to war, going forth to battle.

4. Now to mention the various kinds of battles and wars is, perhaps, a long task, and to wage them more easy than to explain them. We have one warfare which the Apostle recordeth; we wrestle not against flesh and blood, that is, with men, at whose hands we seem to suffer annoyance; not against those do we fight, but against principalities, and powers, and rulers of the world. And, lest we should understand by the world the earth and sky, he shewed what he meant: of this darkness, he saith: the world, that is, not which was made by Him, for the world was made by Him, but the world which knew Him not, for the world knew Him not. This darkness is not in nature, but in will. For the soul of itself shineth not; for humbly and truly doth the Psalmist sing, Thou, Lord, shalt light my candle; my God, enlighten my darkness. And, with Thee is the Fountain of Life: in Thy Light shall we see light: not in our light, but in Thy Light. For our eyes too are called lights, and yet, if light from without be wanting, even though they be sound and open, they will remain in darkness. So then we wage war against the rulers of this darkness, the rulers, that is, of unbelievers, the devil and his angels, the wielders of that sword, wherewith the devil fighteth against the faithful. But just as, when Goliath has fallen, his sword is drawn, that his head may be cut off with his own sword; so, when the unbelievers believe, it is said to them, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Ye have fought in the hand of Goliath; now in the Hand of the Lord cut off the head of Goliath.

5. This is one battle: another each one hath in himself. This sort of warfare was just now read out of the Apostolic Epistle: The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. This also is a grievous warfare, and, what is more distressing, inward. And in this warfare each one who is victorious, will forthwith conquer enemies whom he doth not see. For the devil and his angels tempt not, save the fleshly part which ruleth in thee. For how do we conquer those enemies whom we see not, save because we do perceive the motions of our flesh within? With the battling with these we strike down those. Avarice ruleth in the love of money; to the avarice that ruleth within thee, the devil

from without proposeth gain by means of deceit. For often thou attainest not to gain, unless thou art guilty of deceit. He then from without setteth that before thy avarice, which within thou hast not conquered, thou hast not tamed, thou hast not subjected to thee; he setteth before it, as an evil master of the games before his wrestler, deceit and gain, a work and a reward: 'Do the one, and take the other.' But if thou tramplest upon avarice; if that rule thee not within, which thou perceiving conquerest, (for the devil lying in wait for thee thou perceivest not,) if then thou hast overcome avarice, thou observest Another setting before thee a work and a reward. What did the other propose? Deceit and gain. What doth this one propose? Innocence and a crown. 'Do, and take,' saith both the one and the other. Now if thou, battling within, art not conquered by avarice, but the conqueror of avarice, thou observest the one, conquerest the other. For thou discernest both, and sayest, 'On the one side I see a work and a reward, on the other a bait and a hook.' For thou sayest nothing within thyself, which doth not concern thyself. For through sin art thou divided against thyself. Thou hast within thee the stock of concupiscence which transmitteth. Thou hast in thee wherewith to fight. Thou hast what to overcome. But thou hast also Whom to invoke, to aid thee in thy fight, and crown thee when victor, even Him Who made thee when thou wast not.

6. Thou sayest, 'How shall I conquer?' Behold, the Apostle himself setteth it forth as a most difficult battle; and how toilsome, or, it may be, impossible, it is, if I understand not, he himself sheweth. The flesh, he saith, lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. How dost thou bid me conquer, when he saith, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would? Askest thou how? Mark the grace of the shepherd's vessel; put the stone from the river in the receptacle of milk. Behold I too say to thee, yea rather the Truth itself saith to thee, Certainly thou doest not what thou wishest, while the flesh fighteth against thy spirit. If for this battle thou reliest on thyself, thou hast need to be warned, lest thou have heard in vain, Sing unto God our Helper. For if by thyself thou couldest fulfil all, thou wouldest have no need of an Helper. Again, if thou thyself of thine own will didst nothing, he would not be called an Helper, for an helper helpeth one who doeth somewhat. Finally, when he had said, The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against

the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would, and had set thee before thyself, as failing in thyself, he forthwith sent thee to an Helper: but if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are no longer under the Law. For he who is under the Law, fulfilleth not the Law, but is oppressed by the Law, as David was under his armour. If then thou art led by the Spirit, see Who will help thee, that thou mayest fulfil what thou wilt. Thy Helper, thy Champion, thy Hope, Who teacheth thine hands for battle, and thy fingers for war. For the works of the flesh, saith he, are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, idolatry, sensuality, witchcraft, contentions, quarrels, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. For one thing thou hast need of when thou fightest; another, when thou conquerest; another, when thou hast peace and rest. Listen while I illustrate this by a few examples. Some gain is suggested to thee: it delighteth thee: it involveth deceit, but it is a great gain: it delighteth thee, yet thou consentest not: here is the battle: still it is urged on thee, still it is pressed on thee: still thou deliberatest: he then who fighteth is in danger. We have seen the battle, let us see the other matters. He hath despised justice, so as to commit deceit; he is conquered: he hath despised gain, to obey righteousness; he hath conquered. In these three, I grieve for the conquered, I fear for the combatant, I rejoice with the conqueror. But even he who hath conquered, hath he altogether achieved in himself that money tempt him not at all, that it excite in him no delight, however easy of conquest, however contemptible, however it be one that he not only doth not consent to, but doth not even deign to fight with? Yet there is in him some slight irritation of delight. That irritation and that enemy now neither fight nor reign: yet they are there, and tarry as it were in the mortal flesh, which shall not be the case hereafter. For the whole shall be led in triumph, but hereafter: now the body is dead because of sin: (and therefore in that body sin is, though sin reigneth not:) but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if He that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, through His Spirit, which dwelleth in you. Then shall there be no longer ought to irritate or to fight: all shall yield in peace: for no longer do two contrary natures fight against one another, but they are as husband and wife in a house. If they disagree, there is trouble, irksome and perilous: if

the husband be conquered, and the wife rule, that is a perverse peace: if the wife submit, and the husband rule, that is a right peace: yet is she not another substance of another nature, for out of man was woman made, for her husband. Thy flesh is thy wife, thy handmaid: lay on her what thou wilt, thou must needs subject her; and if thou fightest, fight that she may benefit thee. For this is expedient, that the lower be subjected to the higher; that he too who wisheth what is lower than himself to be subjected to himself, may himself be subjected to Him that is higher than himself. Observe order, seek peace. Do thou be subject to God, thy flesh to thee. What more righteous, what more beautiful? Thou to Him that is greater, he that is less to thee: obey thou Him that made thee, that that may obey thee which was made for thee. For we know not nor commend this order, 'Thy flesh to thee, and thou to God,' but, 'thou to God, and thy flesh to thee.' But if thou despisest 'Thou to God,' never wilt thou bring about 'Thy flesh to thee.' Thou that obeyest not God shall be tormented by a slave. If thou dost not first submit to God that thy flesh may then submit to thee, wilt thou be able to say these words, Blessed be the Lord my God, Who teacheth my hands for battle, my fingers for war? Thou wishest to fight without instruction; thou wilt be conquered and condemned. First then submit thyself to God, then, with Him to teach thee and aid thee, fight, and say, Who teacheth my hands for battle, and my fingers for war.

7. And when thou battlest, because while thou battlest thou art in danger, say what followeth when thou art set in the peril of battle. My Mercy. I shall not then be conquered. What is this, My Mercy? Does it mean, 'Thou shewest mercy to me, and in me manifestest Thyself merciful,' or, 'Thou hast given to me that I too myself should be merciful?' For by nothing is our enemy so conquered, as when we are merciful. He is ever preparing accusations for our judgment, and he cannot bring false charges against us, because He is not one before Whom he can bring them. For if he had to do with us before a man as judge, he might deceive him by lies, and overwhelm us by false accusations; but because we have to plead with him before a Judge, Who cannot be deceived, therefore he aimeth to lead us astray to sin, that he may have true charges to bring against us. And when it happeneth that human frailty yieldeth to his deceits, let the work of humility follow in confession, let it be exercised in works of mercy and kindness. All

is blotted out, when with true heart and full confidence we say to Him Who seeth, Forgive us, as we also forgive. Say with thy whole heart, say with entire confidence, say without anxiety, Forgive us, as we also forgive: or forgive not, if we forgive not. For although thou sayest not, 'Forgive not, if we forgive not,' certainly He forgiveth not, if we do not forgive. For He will not be a false Promiser, that thou mayest be an unpunished sinner. Wilt thou, saith He, that I forgive? Do thou forgive. There is another work of mercy: Wilt thou that I give? Do thou give. They are both set down in one place in the Gospel, Forgive, and it shall be forgiven to you: give, and it shall be given. Somewhat, saith He, I have against thee; somewhat hast thou against another: forgive, and I forgive. Somewhat thou seekest from Me; somewhat another seeketh from thee: give, and I give. And what forgiveth, what giveth? is it not charity? And whence is charity, save by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us. If then by works of mercy our enemy is conquered, and we could not have works of mercy unless we had charity, and charity we could have none unless we received it by the Holy Ghost; He then teacheth our hands for battle, and our fingers for war: to Him rightly do we say, My Mercy, from whom we have also that we are merciful: for he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.

8. Think ye that works of mercy are of small importance? I will say somewhat about them too. Regard first that sentence taken out of Holy Scripture, which I have just reminded you of, he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy. Without mercy shall he be judged, who hath not shewed mercy before he be judged. What then? what followeth? But mercy rejoiceth over judgment. What is this, brethren? what is, mercy rejoiceth over judgment? Mercy is set above judgment: on whomsoever shall be found works of mercy, though he have, it may be, what in judgment may be punished, yet by the stream of mercy the fire of sin is quenched. For mercy rejoiceth over judgment. What then? when God helpeth such, when He freeth them, when He pardoneth them, is He unjust? God forbid. Here too He is just. Mercy taketh not away justice from Him, nor justice, mercy. See whether He is not just: Forgive, and I forgive: give, and I give. See if He is not just: with what measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you again. For thus far is it, with what measure; for the measure is

not of the same kind: but thus far is it the same measure, Forgive, and I forgive. Thou hast with thee the measure of giving pardon; thou shalt find with Me the measure of receiving pardon: thou hast with thee the measure of giving what thou hast; thou shalt find with Me the measure of receiving what thou hast not.

9. My Mercy and my Refuge, my Upholder and my Deliverer. Much toileth this combatant, having his flesh lusting against his spirit. Keep what thou hast. Then shalt thou have in full what thou wishest, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory; when this mortal body has been raised, and is changed into the condition of the angels, and rises aloft to a heavenly quality. The dead in Christ, saith he, shall rise first; then we that are alive and remain, when the Lord cometh, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Then shall death be swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy strife? where, O death, is thy sting? For there will not be left, either in the mind or in the body, ought to rebel against the love of God. Then will be full victory, full peace. Of this it is said to us while battling, Come, ye children, and hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Ye are in battle, ye are contending in strife, and yet ye seek some sort of rest. What man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good days? Who is there who doth not say, 'I do?' There is life, there are good days, where nought lusteth against the spirit, where it is not said, 'Fight,' but, 'Rejoice.' But who is he that lusteth for these days? Every man certainly saith, 'I do.' Hear what followeth. I see that thou art toiling, I see that thou art engaged in battle, and in danger; hear what followeth; He is teaching thy hands for battle, and thy fingers for war. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile: depart from evil, and do good. For how wilt thou be able to do good, unless thou first depart from evil? What good to ask thee to clothe, when as yet thou strippest? What good to ask thee to give, when as yet thou plunderest? Depart from evil, and do good: let not the poor first weep under thee, that the poor may rejoice through thee. Depart from evil, and do good. For what reward, since now thou art fighting? Seek peace, and ensue it. Learn and say, My Mercy and my Refuge, mine Upholder and my Deliverer, my Protector: mine Upholder, lest I fall; my Deliverer, lest I stick; my Protector, lest I be stricken. In all these things, in all my toil, in all

my battles, in all my difficulties, in Him have I hoped, Who subdueth my people under me. Behold, our Head speaketh together with us.

10. Lord, what is man, that Thou hast become known unto him? All is included in that Thou hast become known unto him. What is man, that Thou hast become known unto him; or the son of man, that Thou valueth him? Thou valueth him, that is, Thou makest him of such importance, Thou countest him of such price, Thou knowest under what Thou placest him, over what Thou placest him. For valuing is considering the price of a thing. How greatly did He value man, Who for him shed the blood of His only-begotten Son! What is man, that Thou hast become known unto him? To whom hast Thou become known? Who art Thou, that hast become known? What is the son of man, that Thou valueth him? that Thou countest him of so great price, that Thou valueth him at so much, that Thou shewest him to be somewhat precious? For God valueth not man in the same way as one man valueth another: he, when he findeth a slave for sale, giveth a higher price for a horse than for a man. Consider how greatly He valued thee, that thou mayest be able to say, If God be for us, who can be against us? And how greatly did He value thee, Who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all? How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things? He Who giveth this food to the combatant, what keepeth He in store for the conqueror? I am, saith He, the living Bread, Who came down from heaven. This is the Food of combatants, brought from the granaries of heaven, wherewith the angels are fed; for man did eat angels' food. But after this warfare and food, what keepeth He in store? what will He give to the conquerors, save what is said in another Psalm: One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and that I may be protected, His temple. What is man, that Thou hast made Thyself known unto him; or the son of man, that Thou valueth him?

11. Man is made like unto vanity: and yet Thou hast made Thyself known unto him, and valueth him. Man is made like unto vanity: what vanity? Time, which passeth on, and floweth by. For this vanity is said in comparison of the Truth, which ever abideth, and never faileth: for it too is a work of His Hand, in its degree. For, as it is written, God filled the earth

with His good things. What is, His? That accord with Him. But all these things, being earthly, fleeting, transitory, if they be compared to that Truth, where it is said, I Am That I Am, all this which passeth away is called vanity. For through time it vanisheth, like smoke into the air. And why should I say more than that which the Apostle James said, willing to bring down proud men to humility, What is, saith he, your life? It is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Therefore man is made like unto vanity. By sinning is he made like unto vanity. For when he was first created, he was made like unto the Truth: but because he sinned, because he received his deserts, he was made like unto vanity. For on account of iniquity Thou hast chastened man, saith he in another Psalm, and hast made his life to waste away, even as a spider. Therefore saith he this also, Man is made like unto vanity. What saith he there? Behold, Thou hast made my days old. What saith he here? His days pass away like a shadow. Let man take heed to himself in the days of his shadow, that he do somewhat worthy of the light he longeth for; and since he is in the shadow of night, let him seek the day. For the day of this vanity to a man that knoweth it is a day of tribulation; whether the world harm us with any inconvenience and vexation, or whether it smile on us, all is to be feared and groaned over; for the life of man upon earth is temptation: whence it is said, All the day long did I walk saddened. We have need of consolations; and whatever God sheweth us now, when He sheweth it in happiness, is not the joy of the blessed, but the consolation of the wretched. Let man then, I say, do somewhat worthy of the light he longeth for in these days of his shadow, and let him seek God in the night; as it is written, In the day of my tribulation I sought God, with my hands in the night before Him, and I have not been deceived. What doth he call the day of tribulation, save what he calleth also night. With my hands in the night before Him. As yet we are in the night, and we watch by the lamp of prophecy. Something is promised us, which as yet we wait for: but what saith the Apostle Peter? We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, till the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. That is the day; there is our reward. In the morning Thou shalt hear my voice: in the morning I will stand by Thee, and gaze on Thee. Work then, though it be in the night, with thine hands, that is, by good works seek God, before the day come which shall gladden thee, lest the day

come which shall sadden thee. For see how safely thou workest, who art not left by Him Whom thou seekest; with my hands, saith he, I sought the Lord in the night before Him. That thy Father Which seeth in secret may reward thee openly; therefore, before Him. Have within thee mercy, charity, lest thou do ought as with the desire of pleasing men: with my hands, with my works: in the shade, in this life: where He seeth, not where I strive to please men. And what followeth? And I have not been deceived. Man is made like unto vanity; his days pass away like a shadow: and yet Thou hast made Thyself known unto him, and valuest him.

12. Lord, bow Thy heavens, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. Flash Thy lightning, and Thou shalt scatter them; send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them. Send forth Thy Hand from above, and deliver me, and draw me out of many waters. The Body of Christ, the humble David, full of grace, relying on God, fighting in this world, calleth for the help of God. Bow Thy heavens, and come down. What are heavens bowed down? Apostles humbled. For those heavens declare the glory of God; and of these heavens declaring the glory of God it is presently said, There is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard among them: their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. When then these heavens sent forth their voices through all lands, and did wonderful things, while the Lord flashed and thundered from them by miracles and commandments, the gods were thought to have come down from heaven to men. For certain of the Gentiles, thinking this, desired even to sacrifice to them. Then they, seeing that an honour not their due was being paid to them, and being alarmed and protesting, and correcting those who made so great a mistake, to shew them how their minds were troubled at it, rent their garments, and said, Why do ye this? we also are men of like passions with you. And they began after these words to commend to them the excellence of our Lord Jesus Christ, humbling themselves, that God might be commended; because the heavens were bowed, that God might come down. Bow then Thy heavens, and come down. It is done. Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke: the proud mountains, the earthly up-liftings, the swelling grandeurs: touch, saith he, touch those mountains, give of Thy Grace to those mountains: and they shall smoke, for they shall confess their sins. The smoke of sinners

confessing shall draw forth also the tears of the proud when humbled. Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. So long as they are not touched, they seem to themselves great: they are now about to say, Great art Thou, O Lord: the mountains also are about to say, Thou only art the Most Highest over all the earth.

13. But there are some that conspire, that gather themselves together against the Lord, and against His Christ. They have come together, they have conspired. Flash forth Thy lightnings, and Thou shalt scatter them. Abound with Thy miracles, and their conspiracy shall be broken. Flash forth Thy lightnings, and Thou shalt scatter them. Now, frightened by Thy miracles, they shall not dare ought against Thee, and at Thy miracles they shall be alarmed and hesitate. Who is He, Who can do such great things? Who is He, Who is thus exalted, Whose Name so mightily prevaieth? When they say, Who is He? they are about to believe, Thou hast flashed with Thy miracles, and scattered their evil conspiracy. Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them. Let the sharp arrows of the Mighty One, even Thy commandments, Thy words, strike their heart. Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them. Let the unsound be wounded, that, being well wounded, they may be made sound; and let them say, being set now in the Church, in the Body of Christ, let them say with the Church, I am wounded with Love. Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them.

14. Send forth Thine Hand from on high. What afterward? What in the end? How conquereth the Body of Christ? By heavenly aid. For the Lord Himself shall come with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God shall He descend from heaven, Himself the Saviour of the body, the Hand of God. Send forth Thy Hand from above, and deliver me, and snatch me out of many waters. What is, out of many waters? From many peoples. What peoples? Aliens, unbelievers, whether assailing us from without, or laying snares within. Take me out of many waters, in which Thou didst discipline me, in which Thou didst roll me, to free me from my filth. This is the water of contradiction. Deliver me, and snatch me from many waters.

15. Let us hear now about these many waters, from which God shall deliver the Body of His Christ, from which God shall deliver the humility of David.

What is, out of many waters? What hast thou said, lest waters should be understood in any other sense? Hear what I have said. From the hand of strange children. Hear, brethren, among whom we are, among whom we live, from whom we long to be delivered. Whose mouth hath spoken vanity. All of you to-day, if ye had not gathered yourselves together to these divine shows of the word of God, and were not at this hour engaged in them, how great vanities would ye be hearing! whose mouth hath spoken vanity: when, in short, would they, speaking vanity, hear you speaking vanity? Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.

16. What doest thou among them with thy pastoral scrip with five stones in it? Say it to me in another form: that same law which thou hast signified by five stones, signify in some other way also. I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God. A new song is of grace; a new song is of the new man; a new song is of the New Testament. But lest thou shouldest think that grace departeth from the law, whereas rather by grace the law is fulfilled, upon a psaltery of ten strings will I sing unto Thee. Upon a psaltery of ten strings, upon the law of ten commandments: therein may I sing to Thee; therein may I rejoice to Thee; therein may I sing to Thee a new song; for, Love is the fulfilling of the law. But they who have not love may carry the psaltery, sing they cannot. I therefore, saith he, in the midst of the waters of contradiction will sing to Thee a new song, and never shall the waters of contradiction cause, by their din, my psaltery to be silent. On a psaltery of ten strings will I sing unto Thee.

17. Who giveth salvation to kings, when the mountains now are smoking. Who redeemeth David His servant. Ye know who David is; be yourselves David. Whence redeemeth He David His servant? Whence redeemeth He Christ? Whence redeemeth He the Body of Christ? From the sword of ill intent deliver me. From the sword is not sufficient, he addeth, of ill intent. Without doubt there is a sword of good intent. What is the sword of good intent? That whereof the Lord saith, I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. For He was about to separate believers from unbelievers, sons from parents, and to sever all other ties, while the sword cut off what was diseased, but healed the members of Christ. Of good intent then is the sword twice sharpened, powerful with both edges, the Old and New

Testaments, with the narration of the past and the promise of the future. That then is the sword of good intent: but the other is of ill intent, wherewith they talk vanity, for that is of good intent, wherewith God speaketh verity. Therefore from the sword, of ill intent deliver me. For truly the sons of men have teeth which are spears and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword. From this sword of ill intent deliver me. What he hath now called a sword, the same he called above many waters. Take me out of many waters. The same which I called many waters, I now call a sword of ill intent. Finally, when he had said, out of many waters, he went on to say, from the hand of strange children, whose mouth hath spoken vanity. And that thou mightest know that the same are spoken of, when here too he had said, Deliver me from the sword of ill intent, he went on to say, And take me out of the hand of strange children, whose mouth hath spoken vanity: just as before. And that which followeth, their right hand is a right hand of iniquity, the same he had set down before also, when he called them many waters. For lest thou shouldest think that the many waters were good waters, he explained them by the sword of ill intent. Now then let him explain what he meant by, whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. What vanity hath their mouth spoken? and how is their right hand a right hand of iniquity?

18. Whose sons are like young vines firmly planted in their youth. He wisheth to recount their happiness. Observe, ye sons of light, sons of peace: observe, ye sons of the Church, members of Christ; observe whom he calleth strangers, whom he calleth strange children, whom he calleth waters of contradiction, whom he calleth a sword of ill intent. Observe, I beseech you, for among them ye are in peril, among their tongues ye fight against the desires of your flesh, among their tongues, set in the hand of the devil wherewith he fighteth, ye have to wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of this world, of this darkness, that is, of the wicked. Observe, that ye may discern yourselves, that ye may not think that to be true felicity, which men either weak, or of ill intent, desire for themselves. Behold, brethren, surely he hath called them strange children, surely he hath called them many waters, surely he hath called them a sword of ill intent. Behold the vanity which they speak, and beware lest ye speak the same; beware lest in speaking the same, ye

imitate them. Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. What vanity hath their mouth spoken, and how is their right hand a right hand of iniquity? Whose sons are as young vines firmly planted in their youth, their daughters are fitted and adorned after the similitude of a temple: their garners are full, bursting out from one store to another: their sheep are fruitful, multiplying in their streets: their oxen are fat: their hedge is not broken down, nor their road, nor is there crying in their streets. Is not this then happiness? I ask the sons of the kingdom of heaven, I ask the offspring of everlasting resurrection, I ask the body of Christ, the members of Christ, the temple of God. Is not this then happiness, to have sons safe, daughters beautiful, garners full, cattle abundant, no downfall, I say not of a wall, but not even of a hedge, no tumult and clamour in the streets, but quiet, peace, abundance, plenty of all things in their houses and in their cities? Is not this then happiness? or ought the righteous to shun it? or findest thou not the house of the righteous too abounding with all these things, full of this happiness? Did not Abraham's house abound with gold, silver, children, servants, cattle? Did not the holy patriarch Jacob, when he fled from the face of his brother Esau into Macedonia, after enriching himself as a servant, return, and give thanks to the Lord his God, because with his rod he had crossed the river, returned with such abundance of flocks and children? What say we? is not this happiness? Be it so, still it is on the left hand. What is, on the left hand? Temporal, mortal, bodily. I desire not that thou shun it, but that thou think it not to be on the right hand. For they were not therefore wicked, therefore vain, because they had this abundance, but because what ought to have been on the left hand they set on the right. Therefore too their right hand is a right hand of iniquity; therefore their mouth hath spoken vanity, because they set that on their right hand which ought to have been on the left. For what ought they to have set on the right hand? God, eternity, the years of God which fail not, whereof is said, and Thy years shall not fail. There should be the right hand, there should be our longing. Let us use the left for the time, let us long for the right for eternity. If riches increase, set not your heart upon them. For if, when riches increase, ye set your heart upon them, ye will make what is left, to be right. Amend yourselves, acknowledge Wisdom embracing you, to Whom it is said, His left hand shall be under my head, and His right hand shall embrace me. Behold the holy song of love,

behold the song of songs, of the heavenly marriage of Christ and His Church. What saith the bride of the Bridegroom? His left hand shall be under my head, and His right hand shall embrace me. The left under the head, and the right above the head. For when one embraceth from above, his arm is above the head, but his left hand under the head. His left hand, saith he, under my head. For He will not desert me in times of need: but yet His left hand will be under my head, it will not be put above my head, but will be beneath my head, that His right hand may embrace me, promising eternal life. For so is His left hand under my head, if His right hand be above my head, and that is fulfilled which was written to Timothy, having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. Having the promise, he saith, of the present and of the future life. What in the present? His left hand under my head. What in the future? His right hand shall embrace me. Do ye seek what is needful for the present time? Seek ye first the kingdom of God, that is, the right hand, and all these things shall be added unto you. Ye shall have here, saith He, both riches and glory, and in the world to come everlasting life: both with the left hand I will support you while weak, and with the right I will crown you when perfected. Or did perhaps the Apostles, when they left their all, or distributed what they had to the poor, remain without riches in this world? Where then is that promise of the left hand, he shall receive sevenfold in this world? He promised to multiply them. And, in truth, what can be wanting to the man of God? If any one perchance be an unbeliever, he hath but one house, or at all events a few; the whole world of riches are the faithful man's. Behold His left hand full under his head: he shall receive sevenfold in this world. Behold His right hand embracing him: and in the world to come life everlasting. Rightly is it said in another place too of Wisdom herself, in her right hand is length of days, and in her left hand riches and honour.

19. Whence then speak they vainly? wherefore hath their mouth spoken vanity? Because their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. I blame them not because their sons were as young vines firmly planted in their youth, nor because their daughters were adorned after the similitude of the temple, nor because they had every thing else in abundance, and because earthly peace was theirs. But why do I blame them? They have called the people blessed who have these things. O men that speak vanity! They have called

the people blessed who have these things. They have lost the true right hand, wicked and perverse, they have put on the benefits of God inversely. O wicked ones, O speakers of vanity, O strange children! They have called the people blessed who have these things. What was on the left hand, they have set on the right. They have called the people blessed who have these things. What dost thou, David? What dost thou, Body of Christ? What do ye, members of Christ? What do ye, not strange children, but children of God? Since the speakers of vanity, the strange children, have called the people blessed who have these things, what say ye? Blessed is the people whose Lord is their God. Have then the left hand, but on the left; long for the right, that ye may be set on the right. They had the left on the left, before whom He hungered, and they gave Him to eat; He was thirsty, and they gave Him drink; He was a stranger, and they took Him in; He was naked, and they clothed Him. All this they took from the left, and transferred to the works of the right, that they might be set on the right. So then the speakers of vanity, the strange children, called the people blessed who have these things: say ye with us, Blessed is the people, whose Lord is their God.

PSALM 145

Sermon to the People.

1. We have longed to praise the Lord with you; and since He has deigned to grant us this, in order that the praise which we give Him may be in due order, that it may not by any excess offend Him Whom it praiseth, it is better for us to seek the path of praise in the Scripture of God, that we turn not aside from the way, either to the right hand or to the left. For I venture to say to you, beloved, God hath praised Himself, that He might be properly praised by man: and because He hath deigned to praise Himself, therefore hath man found how to praise Him. For it cannot be said to God, as it is to man, let not thine own mouth praise thee. For for man to praise himself is arrogance; for God to praise Himself is mercy. It is good for us to love whom we praise: by praising one that is good, we are ourselves made better. So, since He knoweth that this is for our good, in order that we might love Him, by praising Himself, He maketh Himself lovely; and herein He endeavoureth to benefit us, in that He maketh Himself lovely. He exhorteth then our heart to praise Him, and He hath filled His servants with His Spirit, that they might praise Him. And since His Spirit in His servants praiseth Him, what doeth He but praise Himself? So then this Psalm beginneth thus:

2. I will exalt Thee, my God, my King; and I will bless Thy Name for the age, and age upon age. Ye see that the praise of God is here begun, and this praise is carried on even to the end of the Psalm. Finally, the title is, Praise, to David himself. Praise to Christ Himself. And since He is called David, Who came to us of the seed of David, yet He was our King, ruling us, and bringing us into His kingdom, therefore Praise to David himself is understood to mean, Praise to Christ Himself. Christ according to the flesh is David, because He is the Son of David: but according to His Divine Nature He is the Creator of David, and Lord of David. Finally, the Apostle too, when he would pay honour to the former people of God, out of whom

both the Apostles themselves, beloved, and many of the first Churches came, doing in many thousands of men, what just now in the Gospel one rich man heard, and went away sorrowful, that is, selling all that they had, and distributing to the poor, and seeking perfection in the Lord;—when he would praise, I say, that former people, he thus saith, Whose are the fathers, and of whom as pertaining to the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. So because Christ is of them, as pertaining to the flesh, therefore is He David: but because He is over all, God blessed for ever, therefore, I will exalt Thee, saith he, my God, my King; and I will bless Thy Name for the age, and for age upon age. Perhaps for the age meaneth here, for age upon age, for ever. Now then begin to praise, if thou intendest to praise for ever. He who will not praise in this transitory age, will be silent when age upon age has come. Accordingly in the following verses he hath said nearly this.

3. But lest any one should in any otherwise also understand what he saith, I will praise Thy Name for the age, and should seek another age, wherein to praise, he saith, Every day will I bless Thee. Praise then and bless the Lord thy God every day, that when single days have passed, and there has come one day without end, thou mayest go from praise to praise, as from strength to strength. Every day, he saith, I will bless Thee: no day shall pass by, wherein I bless Thee not. And it is no wonder, if in thy day of joy thou bless the Lord. What if perchance some day of sorrow hath dawned on thee, as is natural in the circumstances of our mortal nature, as there is abundance of offences, as temptations are multiplied; what, if something sad befall thee, a man; wilt thou cease to praise God? wilt thou cease to bless thy Creator? If thou cease, thou hast lied in saying, every day will I bless Thee, O Lord. But if thou cease not, although it seem to thee to be ill with thee in the day of thy sorrow, yet in thy God it shall be well with thee. For there are cases where it is well with thee, even when it is ill with thee. For if in any evil it is ill with thee, without doubt in any good it is well with thee. And what so good as thy God, of Whom it is said, None is good save One, that is, God. For how safe it is to praise thus, and how safe for it to be well with thee thus, thou mayest learn from the very nature of good. For if thou rejoicest at a good which accrueth to thee one day, perchance another day this good whereat thou rejoicest passeth away. ‘It has been well with me, I have spent

a good day;' because perhaps gain has come to thee, or thou hast received an invitation, or sat long at a feast. Thou rejoicest, because thou hast sat long at a feast: another day grieveth thee, because thou hast not had to blush. However, at whatever good of this sort thou rejoicest, at all events it is fleeting. But if thou rejoicest in the Lord thy God, thou shalt hear Scripture saying, Delight thee in the Lord. The more firmly shalt thou rejoice, the more sure He is in Whom thou shalt rejoice. For if thou rejoicest in money, thou fearest the thief; but if thou rejoicest in God, what fearest thou? Lest any take God from thee? None will take God from thee, if thou send Him not from thee. For God is not like the light which shineth in the heavens. We cannot approach to it whensoever we please, for it shineth not in every place. And through our weakness perhaps it cometh to pass, that in winter we delight to be in this light; but now in summer time ye see that we rather seek a spot where we shall not stand in the light. But when thou abidest in thy God, and delightest in the light of His truth, thou seekest not a spot where thou mayest approach Him: but thy conscience approacheth, thy conscience retreateth from Him. That which is said, Approach to Him, and be enlightened, is said to the soul, not to any carriage; it is said to the affections, not to the feet. And when thou abidest in Him, thou shalt suffer no heat. For His Spirit shall breathe on thee, and under His wings thou shalt hope.

4. Thou seest then that thou hast whereof to delight every day. For thy God will not leave thee, even though any thing befall thee. For how sad was that which befell the holy man Job: how sudden, how manifold ills! how was all in which he was thought to rejoice, not all in which he did rejoice, withdrawn when the devil assailed him! how did even his sons die! All that he was careful in preserving, perished; all they for whom he was preserving it, perished; yet He perished not, Who gave both the one and the other. And even his sons, though they perished in this world, shall be recognised and received back in the world to come. Yet had that man somewhat else wherein to rejoice; and in him was that true which we have just recited, Every day will I bless Thee: because then the day wherein all perished shone upon him sadly, did therefore the inward light in his heart fail? Nay, he stood in that light, and said, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as the Lord hath pleased, so hath it been done; blessed be the Name

of the Lord. He then praised every day, who even in the day of sorrow praised. It is a short lesson, that thou ever praise God, and with true, not false heart say, I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall be ever in my mouth. It is a short lesson: it is in fact to know that He giveth in mercy, when He giveth; that He taketh away in mercy, when He taketh away: not to believe that thou art abandoned by His mercy, Who either comforteth thee by giving lest thou fail, or punisheth thee when thou art uplifted, lest thou perish. Whether then in His gifts, or in His scourges, do thou praise. The praise of the scourger is the healing of the wound. Every day, saith he, I will bless Thee. My brethren, bless God: what ever happen, bless God. For it is He Who causeth that nothing happen which ye cannot bear. Therefore thou oughtest to be in fear when it is well with thee, and not so to prepare thyself as though thou shouldest never be tried. For if thou art never tried, thou art never proved. Is it not better to be tried and proved, than to be not tried and rejected? And I will praise Thy Name for the age, and for age upon age.

5. Great is the Lord, and very much to be praised. How much was he about to say? what terms was he about to seek? How vast a conception hath he included in the one word, very much? Imagine what thou wilt, for how can that be imagined, which cannot be contained? He is very much to be praised, and of His Greatness there is no end; therefore said he very much, because, of His Greatness there is no end: lest perchance thou begin to wish to praise, and think that thou canst reach the end of His praises, Whose Greatness can have no end. Think not then that He, Whose Greatness has no end, can ever be enough praised by thee. Is it not then better that as He has no end, so neither should thy praise have end? His Greatness is without end; let thy praise also be without end. Of His Greatness what is said? of His Greatness there is no end. Of thy praise what? I will praise Thy Name for the age, and age upon age. Therefore, as of His Greatness there is no end, so of thy praise there shall be no end. For, not even when thou art dead in this flesh, shalt thou cease to praise the Lord. It is said indeed, the dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord; but it is they, of whom it is said, from the dead, as from one that is not, confession perisheth; not they of whom He saith, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. For the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, is not the God of the dead, but of the living. For if thou shalt never be ought but His, thou shalt never be silent

from His praise. Will it be possible for thee to fear, lest while thou livest here, thou mayest be His, and when thou art dead, not be His? Hear the Apostle promising thee safely: Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. And whence is it, that thou art His, even when dead? Because He redeemed thee with the price of His blood, even by His death. How can He lose His servant, even when dead, Whose death is thy price? Therefore when he hath said, Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, that He might set forth the price too, he added, for for this cause Christ died and rose again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

6. However, since of His Greatness there is no end, and whom we cannot contain, we ought to praise: (for if we can contain Him, there is an end of His Greatness; but if there be no end of His Greatness, some part of Him indeed we can contain, but God entirely we cannot contain;) let us, as failing in His Greatness, that we may be refreshed by His Goodness, look to His works, and by His works praise the Worker; by what He hath made, the Maker; by His creation, the Creator. Let us look at what He hath done here, what is well known to us, what is open to our eyes. For how great things besides has His boundless Goodness and illimitable Greatness made, which we do not know! When we lift the gaze of our eyes even to the heaven, and then recall it from sun, moon, and stars to the earth, and there is all this space where our sight can wander; beyond the heavens who can extend the eyesight of his mind, not to say of his flesh? So far then as His works are known to us, let us praise Him through His works. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made. Generation and generation shall praise Thy works. Every generation shall praise Thy works. For perhaps every generation is meant by generation and generation. He did not mean to continue saying, generation and generation, till he had defined the number of all generations, but the repetition of the speaker led the mind of the thinker to infinity. Behold that generation which now is in the flesh, destined to pass from hence as it came, praiseth the works of God; and that for which it maketh way to succeed, will assuredly praise the works of God; and after that will be another, and unto the end of the world how many generations! This he meant when he said, generation and generation shall

praise Thy works. Did he perchance mean to imply two generations by that repetition? For we are in this generation sons of God, we shall be in another generation sons of the Resurrection. Scripture hath called us sons of the Resurrection; the Resurrection itself it hath called Regeneration. In the regeneration, it saith, when the Son of Man shall be seated in His Majesty. So also in another place: For they shall not marry, nor be given in marriage, for they are the sons of the Resurrection. Therefore generation and generation shall praise Thy works. We praise the works of the Lord now, while we are in this mortal nature: and if we praised while we are fettered, how shall we praise when we are crowned? Therefore let us now in this generation observe these works of the Lord, in Whose praise it is said, generation and generation shall praise Thy works, since of Thy Greatness there is no end. It is lawful to gaze on Thy works, that Thou mayest be praised Who doest such works.

7. And they shall tell out Thine excellence. For neither shall they praise Thy works, save in order to tell out Thine excellence. Boys at school are set to praise, and all such things are set before them to be praised, as God hath wrought: a mortal is set to praise the sun, the sky, the earth; to come to even lesser things, to praise a rose, or a laurel; all these are works of God: they are set, they are undertaken, they are praised: the works are lauded, of the Worker they are silent. I desire in the works to praise the Creator: I love not a thankless praiser. Dost thou praise what He hath made, and art silent of Him Who made? In that which thou seest, what is it that thou praisest? The form, the usefulness, some virtue, some power in the things. If beauty delight thee, what is more beautiful than the Maker? If usefulness be praised, what more useful than He Who made all things? If excellence be praised, what more excellent than He by Whom all things were made; by Whom too all things when made are not left alone, but are ruled and guided? Not then as some, who though eloquent are mute, since they praise the creature, but forget the Creator; not thus doth generation and generation among Thy servants praise Thee, when it praiseth Thy works. But how doth it praise? And they shall tell out Thine excellence. In praising Thy works, they shall tell out Thine excellence. Those praisers, faithful men, holy and good, true praisers; not ungrateful for grace, whence they praise this and that of God's works, above or below, in heaven or in earth, among those

works of God which they praise find themselves also, for they too are among the works of God. For He Who made all things, made us too among all things. Accordingly, if thou praisest the works of God, thou wilt have to praise thyself too, for thou too art a work of God. Where then is, Let not thine own mouth praise thee? Behold, a way is found whereby thou mayest praise thyself too, yet not be arrogant. Praise God in thee, not thyself: not because thou art what thou art, but because He made thee so; not because thou canst do any thing, but because He can do in thee and through thee. And by this means they shall praise Thee, and tell out Thine excellence; not theirs, but Thine. Learn then to praise: gazing on the works, admire the Maker; by giving thanks, not by claiming ought as thine. Praise Him, because He hath made, because He hath thus ordered, because He hath given such things.

8. Finally, see what followeth: They shall tell out Thine excellence, saith he, and they shall speak of the magnificence of the glory of Thy Holiness, and shall record Thy wondrous deeds. And the excellence of Thy fearful works shall they speak of; and Thy greatness, they shall relate it. The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth: none but Thine. See whether this man, meditating on Thy works, hath turned aside from the Worker to the work: see whether he hath sunk from Him Who made, to the things which He made. Of the things which He hath made, he hath made a step up to Him, not a descent from Him to them. For if thou love these more than Him, thou wilt not have Him. And what profit is it to thee to overflow with the works, if the Worker leave thee? Truly thou shouldest love them; but love Him more, and love them for His sake. Tell out His excellence; speak of the magnificence of the glory of His Holiness; recount His wondrous works; tell of the excellence of His terrible deeds. For He doth not hold out promises, without holding out threats also: if He held out no promises, there would be no encouragement; if He held out no threats, there would be no correction. They that praise Thee therefore shall speak also of the excellence of Thy terrible deeds; the excellence of that work of Thy hands which punisheth and administereth discipline, they shall speak of, they shall not be silent: for they shall not proclaim Thine everlasting kingdom, and be silent about Thine everlasting fire. For the praise of God, setting thee in the way, ought to shew thee both what thou

shouldest love, and what thou shouldest fear; what thou shouldest seek, and what thou shouldest shun; what thou shouldest choose, and what thou shouldest avoid. The time of choice is now, the time of receiving will be hereafter. Let then the excellence of Thy terrible things be told. And Thy greatness, they shall recount it. Unlimited as it is, though of Thy greatness there is no end, they shall not be silent about it. That Thy greatness, of which I had said above, and of Thy greatness there is no end, that they shall recount. How shall they recount it, if there is no end of it? They shall recount it when they praise it; and because there is no end of it, so of His praise also there shall be no end. Let us prove that of His praise there shall be no end. Blessed, saith the Psalmist, who dwell in Thy house; they will be always praising Thee. And Thy greatness, that, that boundless greatness, they shall recount it.

9. The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth. O happy feasts! What shall they eat, who thus shall pour forth! The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness. What is, the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness? Because Thou didst not forget us, when we had forgotten Thee. For all flesh had forgotten God, but He forgot not His own works. This remembrance of His concerning us, in that He forgot us not, is to be proclaimed, is to be told out; and because it is very sweet, it is to be eaten, and poured forth again. So eat, that thou mayest pour forth again; so receive, that thou mayest give. Thou eatest, when thou learnest; thou pourest forth again, when thou teachest: thou eatest, when thou hearest; thou pourest forth again, when thou preachest; but that thou pourest forth, which thou hast first eaten. Finally, that most eager feaster John, to whom the very table of the Lord sufficed not, unless he leaned on the Lord's breast, and of his inmost heart drank in divine secrets; what did he pour forth? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The remembrance, therefore, of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth. How is it that it sufficeth not to say, Thy remembrance; or, the remembrance of Thine abundance; or, the remembrance of Thy sweetness; but, the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness? Because, what availeth it if it be abundant, yet not sweet? So also it is annoying if it be sweet but too little.

10. Therefore, the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth: because Thou didst not forget us, and not forgetting, didst warn us, that Thou mightest bring us also to recollection. For all the ends of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. Because then they shall pour forth the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness, understanding that there is nought of good in themselves, which cometh not from Thee, and that they could not turn to Thee, unless they were warned by Thee, and that they could not be brought back to Thy recollection, if Thou forgattest them; considering these things by Thy grace, they shall also exult in Thy righteousness. Considering, I say, these things by Thy grace, they shall also exult in Thy righteousness, not in their own. Brethren, if ye wish to give forth grace, drink in grace. What is, drink in grace? Learn grace, understand grace. We, before we were, were not at all; and we were made men, when before we were nothing. And then when we were made men, from the stock of the first sinner we were also wicked, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Observe we then the grace of God, not only whereby He made, but also whereby He re-made us. To Whom therefore we owe that we are, to Him we also owe that we are justified. Let none seem to attribute to God that he is, and to himself that he is just. For better is that which thou wouldest attribute to thyself, than what thou wouldest attribute to Him. For it is a better thing that thou art righteous, than that thou art a man. Thou givest that which is lower to God, that which is higher to thyself. Give all to Him, in all praise Him: so wouldest thou not fall from the hand of thy Maker. Who made thee to be? Is it not written, that God took dust from the ground, and with it made man? Before thou wast man, thou wast dust; before thou wast dust, thou wast nothing. But give not thanks to thy Maker for this making alone; hear also another making, wherein He made thee. Not of works, saith Paul, lest any one should boast. But what said he? Not of works, lest any one should boast: what said he before this? By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. These are the words of the Apostle, not mine, by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that, namely, that ye should be saved through faith, not of yourselves. Although the very word which he had used, by grace, is clearly not of yourselves, yet he chose to set forth this still more plainly. Give me one that understandeth, and he hath said all. By grace are ye saved: when thou hearest by grace, understand ‘gratis.’ If then

it be gratis, thou hast wrought nothing of thine own, hast merited nothing. For if ought is to be repaid to merits, it is reward, not grace. By grace, saith he, ye are saved, through faith. Explain this yet more clearly, on account of the arrogant; on account of the self-complacent; on account of those who are ignorant of the righteousness of God, and desire to establish their own. Hear this same thing yet more openly: and this, that ye are saved by grace, is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. But we too perhaps have done somewhat, to earn the gifts of God. Not of works, saith he, lest any should boast. What then? do we no good works? Yes, we do. But how? By Him working in us: for by faith we give place in our hearts to Him, Who in us and through us doeth good works. For hear whence it is that thou doest good works: for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that we should walk in them. That is the abundant sweetness of His remembrance with regard to us. By uttering forth this, His preachers shall exult in His righteousness, not in their own. What then hast Thou done unto us, O Lord, Whom we praise, that we should be, that we should praise, that we should exult in Thy righteousness, that we should utter forth the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness? Let us tell it, and, as we tell, let us praise.

11. Merciful and pitiful is the Lord; long suffering, and very merciful. Sweet is the Lord to all, and His compassions reach into all His works. Were He not such as this, there would be no seeking to recover us. Consider thyself: what didst thou deserve, O sinner? Despiser of God, what didst thou deserve? See if ought occur to thee but penalty, if ought occur to thee but punishment. Thou seest then what was due to thee, and what He hath given, Who gave gratis. There was given pardon to the sinner; there was given the spirit of justification; there was given charity and love, wherein thou mayest do all good works; and beyond this, He will give thee also life everlasting, and fellowship with the angels: all of His mercy. Boast not at all of thine own merits, for thy very merits are His gifts. And in Thy righteousness they shall exult. Merciful and pitiful is the Lord; Thou Who hast done all gratis. Long suffering; for how great sinners doth He bear with. Merciful and pitiful is the Lord, toward those to whom He hath given pardon: toward those to whom as yet he hath not given, long suffering; not condemning, but waiting, by His very waiting crying out, Turn ye unto Me,

and I will turn to you: and in exceeding long suffering; I will not, saith He, the death of a sinner, but rather that he return, and live. He indeed is long suffering; but thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who shall render to every man according to his deeds. For He is not so long suffering now in enduring, as that He will never be righteous in punishing. He divideth the times: now He calleth thee; now He exhorteth thee: He waiteth till thou come to thyself; and dost thou tarry? Great is His mercy, in this too, that He hath made the days of thy life uncertain to thee, that thou shouldest not know when thou art to depart hence; and so, while thou daily lookest to depart, shouldest at length turn to Him; in this too, great is His mercy. But if He had fixed the day for all, He would make sins to abound by men's security. He gave thee hope of pardon, that thou mightest not by despairing sin more. Both hope and despair are to be feared in sins. Behold the voice of one who despairs, so as to increase his sins; and behold the voice of one who hopeth, so as to increase his sins; and see how the Providence and the Mercy of God meeteth each. Hear the voice of one who despaireth: 'Now,' saith he, 'I must be damned; why should I not do whatsoever I will?' Hear too the voice of one who hopeth: 'Great is the mercy of the Lord; whensoever I turn to Him, He will forgive me all: why should not I do whatsoever I will?' The one despairs, so as to sin; the other hopes, so as to sin. Both are to be feared, both are perilous: woe, because of despair! woe, because of hope! How doth the mercy of God meet both these perils, both these evils? What sayest thou, who through despair didst choose to sin? 'Now I must be damned: why should I not do whatsoever I will?' Hear the Scripture: I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn, and live. By these words of God, he is brought back to hope; but there is another snare to be feared, lest through this very hope he sin the more. What then didst thou also say, thou who through hope sinnest yet more? 'Whensoever I turn, God will forgive me all; I will do whatsoever I will.' Hear thou also the Scripture: Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, neither put off from day to day: for suddenly shall His wrath come forth, and in the time of vengeance He shall destroy thee. Say not then, 'To-morrow I will turn, to-morrow I will please God; and all to-day's and yesterday's deeds shall be forgiven me.' Thou sayest true: God hath

promised pardon to thy conversion; He hath not promised a to-morrow to thy delay.

12. Sweet is the Lord to all, and His compassions are over all His works. Why then doth He condemn? why doth He scourge? Are not they whom He condemneth, whom He scourgeth, His works? Plainly they are. And wilt thou know how His compassions are over all His works? Thence is that long suffering, whereby He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good. Are not His compassions over all His works, Who sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust? Are not His compassions over all His works? In His long suffering He waiteth for the sinner, saying, Turn ye to Me, and I will turn to you. Are not His compassions over all His works? And when He saith, Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, this is not His compassion, but His severity. His compassion is given to His works: His severity is not over His works, but over thy works. Lastly, if thou remove thine own evil works, and there remain in thee nought but His work, His compassion will not leave thee: but if thou leavest not thy works, there will be severity over thy works, not over His works.

13. Let all Thy works, O Lord, confess to Thee, and let Thy saints bless Thee. Let all Thy works confess to Thee. How so? Is not the earth His work? Are not the trees His work? Cattle, beasts, fish, fowl, are not they His works? Plainly they too are. And how shall these too confess to Him? I see indeed in the angels that His works confess to Him, for the angels are His works: and men are His works; and when men confess to Him, His works confess to Him; but have trees and stones the voice of confession? Yes, verily; let all His works confess to Him. What sayest thou? even the earth and the trees? All His works. If all praise, how do not all confess? For confession is said not only of sin, but of praise also: lest perchance, wherever ye hear ‘confession,’ ye think that it is of nought, save of sin. For so entirely is this thought, that whenever it soundeth in the word of God, forthwith it is the habit to beat the breast. Hear that there is confession of praise too. Had our Lord Jesus Christ any sin? And yet He saith, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. There is confession then in praise. Accordingly, how shall we take, let all Thy works confess to Thee, O Lord? Let all Thy works praise Thee. But there ariseth the same question

in regard of praise, as in regard of confession. For if earth and all things devoid of sensation therefore cannot confess, because they have no voice to confess with; neither will they be able to praise, because they have no voice to proclaim with. But do not those Three Children enumerate all things, as they walked amid the harmless flames, who had not only not to burn, but even to praise God? They say to all things, heavenly and earthly, Bless ye the Lord, praise Him, and magnify Him for ever. Behold how they praise. Let none think that the dumb stone or dumb animal hath reason wherewith to comprehend God. They who have thought this, have erred far from the truth. God hath ordered every thing, and made every thing: to some He hath given sense and understanding and immortality, as to the angels; to some He hath given sense and understanding with mortality, as to man; to some He hath given bodily sense, yet gave them not understanding, or immortality, as to cattle: to some He hath given neither sense, nor understanding, nor immortality, as to herbs, trees, stones: yet even these cannot be wanting in their kind, and by certain degrees He hath ordered His creation, from earth up to heaven, from visible to invisible, from mortal to immortal. This framework of creation, this most perfectly ordered beauty, ascending from lowest to highest, descending from highest to lowest, never broken, but tempered together of things unlike, all praiseth God. Wherefore then doth all praise God? Because when thou considerest it, and seest its beauty, thou in it praisest God. The beauty of the earth is a kind of voice of the dumb earth. Thou observest and seest its beauty, thou seest its fruitfulness, thou seest its strength, how it receiveth seed, how it often bringeth forth what is not sown; thou seest this, and by thy consideration of it, thou, as it were, questionest it; thy very inquiry into it, is questioning it. But when thou hast inquired into it in thine admiration, and hast searched it out, and hast discovered its mighty strength, and great beauty, and surpassing excellence, since it could not of itself and in itself have this excellence, it forthwith cometh into thy mind, that it could not be of itself, without Him, the Creator. And this which thou hast found in it, is the very voice of its confession, that thou praise the Creator. When thou hast thought on the universal beauty of this world, doth not its very beauty as it were with one voice answer thee, 'I made not myself, God made me?'

14. Therefore let all Thy works confess to Thee, O Lord, and let Thy saints bless Thee. That in confession of Thy works Thy saints may bless Thee, let Thy saints look into Thy creation confessing. And hear Thou their voice when they bless Thee. For when Thy saints bless Thee, what say they? They shall tell the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy Power. How powerful is God, Who hath made the earth! how powerful is God, Who hath filled the earth with good things! how powerful is God, Who hath given to the animals each its own life! how powerful is God, Who hath given different seeds to the womb of the earth, that they might make to spring up such various shoots, such beautiful trees! how powerful, how great is God! Do thou ask, creation answereth, and by its answer, as by the confession of the creature, thou, O saint of God, blessest God, and talkest of His power.

15. That they may make known to the sons of men Thy power, and the glory of the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom. Thy saints then commend the glory of the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom, the glory of the greatness of its beauty. There is a certain greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom: that is, Thy kingdom hath beauty, and great beauty. Since whatever hath beauty, hath beauty from Thee, how great beauty hath Thy whole kingdom! Let not the kingdom frighten us: it hath beauty also, wherewith to delight us. For what is that beauty, which the saints shall hereafter enjoy, to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, enjoy the kingdom? Whence shall they come? whither shall they come? Behold, brethren, and, if ye can, as far as ye can, think of the beauty of that kingdom which is to come; whence our prayer saith, Thy kingdom come. For that kingdom we desire may come, that kingdom the saints proclaim to be coming. Observe this world: it is beautiful. How beautiful are earth, sea, air, heavens, stars. Do not all these frighten him who considereth them? Is not the beauty of them so conspicuous, that it seemeth as though nothing more beautiful could be found? And here, in this beauty, in this fairness almost unspeakable, here worm and mice and all creeping things of the earth live with thee, they live with thee in all this beauty. How great is the beauty of that kingdom, where none but angels live with Thee? Too little then was it to say, the glory of the beauty. For we might speak of the glory of the beauty of any beautiful thing set on this earth, or that is green on the earth, or that shineth from heaven; but the greatness of the beauty of Thy

kingdom commendeth to us somewhat which as yet we see not; which, as yet unseen, we believe; which, believing, we long for, for longing for which we endure all things. There is then a greatness of a certain beauty; let it be loved before it is seen, that when it is seen, it may be retained.

16. Thy kingdom. What kingdom mean I? a kingdom of all ages. For the kingdom of this age too hath its own beauty, but there is not in it that greatness of beauty, such as in the kingdom of all ages. And Thy dominion is in every generation and generation. This is the repetition we noticed, signifying either every generation, or the generation which will be after this generation.

17. Faithful is the Lord in His words, and holy in all His works. Faithful is the Lord in His words: for what hath He promised that He hath not given? Faithful is the Lord in His words. Hereto there are certain things which He hath promised, and hath not given; but let Him be believed from the things which He hath given. Faithful is the Lord in His words. We might well believe Him, if He only spake: He willed not that we should believe Him speaking, but that we should have His Scriptures in our hands: as though thou shouldest say to a man when thou promisedst him something, 'Thou believest me not, behold, I write it for thee.' For because one generation goeth and another cometh, and so these generations hasten by as men retire and succeed one another, it was needful that the Scriptures of God should remain, and a kind of bond of God's, which all who pass by might read, and might keep to the path of its promise. And how great things hath He already paid in accordance with that bond! Do men hesitate to believe Him concerning the Resurrection of the dead and the Life to come, which alone now remaineth to be paid, when, if He come to reckon with the unbelievers, the unbelievers must blush? If God say to thee, 'Thou hast My bond: I have promised judgment, the separation of good and bad, everlasting life for the faithful, and wilt thou not believe? There in My bond read all that I have promised, reckon with me: verily even by counting up what I have paid, thou canst believe that I shall pay what still I owe. In that bond thou hast My only-begotten Son promised, Whom I spared not, but gave Him up for you all: reckon this then among what is paid. Read the bond: I promised therein that I would give by My Son the earnest of the Holy Spirit: reckon

that as paid. I promised therein the blood and the crowns of the glorious Martyrs; let the mass remind you that My debt has been paid. But that this glory of the Martyrs might be paid, which is promised thee in the bond, where it is written, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; that this might be paid, the nations raged, and the people imagined vain things; the kings of the earth stood up, and the princes came together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. The princes came together, conspiring against the Christians. Further, did I not promise in the bond that the kings should believe, and have I not fulfilled it in deed? Listen where I promised it: All kings shall worship Him, all nations shall serve Him. Ungrateful one! thou readest what was due, thou seest what has been paid, yet thou believest not what is promised. Read another thing in My bond: because the nations raged, because Mine enemies spake evil of Me, (that is, of Christ,) When shall He die, and His Name perish? because they did and said all these things, read what I promised, what I bound Myself to pay. The Lord shall prevail against them, and shall destroy all the gods of the nations of the earth; and they shall worship Him, every one from his place. Well, now He hath prevailed, He hath destroyed all the gods of the nations of the earth. Doth He not do this, and pay it? He setteth before the eyes of all His payment of His debts: some He hath paid in the time of our ancestors, which we saw not: some He hath paid in our times, which they saw not; throughout all generations He hath paid what was written. And what remaineth? Do men not believe Him, when He hath paid all this? What remaineth? Behold thou hast reckoned: all this He hath paid: is He become unfaithful for the few things which remain? God forbid! Wherefore? Because the Lord is faithful in His words, and holy in all His works.

18. The Lord strengtheneth all that are falling. But who are all that are falling? All indeed fall in a general sense, but he meaneth those who fall in a particular way. For many fall from Him, many also fall from their own imaginations. If they had evil imaginations, they fall from them, and God strengthened all that are falling. They who lose any thing in this world, yet are holy, are as it were dishonoured in this world, from rich become poor, from honoured of low estate, yet are they God's saints; they are, as it were, falling. But God strengtheneth. For the just falleth seven times, and riseth again; but the wicked shall be weakened in evils. When evils befall the

wicked, they are weakened thereby; when evils befall the righteous, the Lord strengtheneth all that are falling. Job had fallen from the brightness of the former light of temporal things, with which he had shone for a while; he had fallen from the glory of his house. Would ye know how far he had fallen? He sat on the dunghill: yet the Lord strengthened him when falling. How much did He strengthen him? So much that, even in the grievous wound wherewith he was smitten throughout his whole body, he answered his wife, when she, the only helper whom the devil had left him, tempted him, Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women: if we receive good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not also endure evil? How had He strengthened him when falling! The Lord strengtheneth all that are falling. When the righteous falleth, he shall not be troubled, for the Lord strengtheneth his hand. And lifteth up all those that have been cast down: all, that is, who belong to him; for God resisteth the proud.

19. The eyes of all hope upon Thee, and Thou givest them food in due season. Just as when thou refreshest a sick man in due season, when he ought to receive, then Thou givest, and what he ought to receive, that Thou givest. Sometimes then men long, and he giveth not: he who tendeth, knoweth the time to give. Wherefore say I this, brethren? Lest any one, if perchance he hath not been heard, when making some righteous request of God: (for when he maketh any unrighteous request, he is heard to his punishment:) but when making some righteous request of God, if perchance he have not been heard, let him not be down-hearted, let him not faint, let his eyes wait for the food, which He giveth in due season. When He giveth not, He therefore giveth not, lest that which He giveth do harm. For the Apostle made no unrighteous request, when he besought that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, whereby he was buffeted, might be taken from him: and yet he asked, and did not receive, because as yet it was the time for exercising his weakness, not the due season of food. My grace, He saith, is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. The devil asked permission to tempt Job, and received it. Learn here, my brethren, a great mystery, needful to be learned, repeated, kept in mind, never forgotten, on account of the abundance of temptations in this world. What shall I say? Is the Apostle really to be compared with the devil? The Apostle asketh, and receiveth not; the devil asketh, and receiveth. But the

Apostle received not, in order to his perfecting; the devil received, to his damnation. Finally, Job himself received healing in due season. He was put off, however, that he might be proved, and he sat long in his sores, and asked God that they might be taken from him, and yet God took them not away. More readily did He hear the devil for Job's trial, than Job himself for his healing. Learn then not to murmur against God, and, when ye are not heard, let not that fail in you which is written above, Every day will I bless Thee. Even the Son Himself, even the only-begotten Himself, came to suffer, to pay what He owed not, to die by the hands of sinners, to blot out with His own Blood the handwriting of our death; for this He came; and yet, that He might shew thee an example of patience, He changed the body of our humiliation, fashioning it like unto the body of His Glory. Father, He said, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. And that, although He received not what He seemed to ask, He might fulfil, Every day will I bless Thee, He said, Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt, Father. The eyes of all hope in Thee, and Thou givest them meat in due season.

20. Thou openest Thine Hand, and fillest every living thing with blessing. Though sometimes Thou givest not, yet in due season Thou givest: Thou delayest, not deniest, and that in due season.

21. Righteous is the Lord in all His ways. Both when He smiteth and when He healeth, He is righteous, and in Him unrighteousness is not. Finally, all His saints, when set in the midst of tribulation, have first praised His righteousness, and so sought His blessings. They first have said, 'What Thou doest is righteous.' So did Daniel ask, and other holy men: 'Righteous are Thy judgments: rightly have we suffered, deservedly have we suffered.' They laid not unrighteousness to God, they laid not to Him injustice and folly. First they praised Him scourging, and so they felt Him feeding. Righteous is the Lord in all His ways. Let no one think Him unrighteous, when perchance he suffereth ought of evil, but let him praise His righteousness, and accuse his own unrighteousness. Righteous is the Lord in all His ways, and holy in all His works.

22. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him. Where then is that, Then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear them? See then what follows: all who call upon Him in truth. For many call upon Him, but not in truth.

They seek something else from Him, but seek not Himself. Why lovest thou God? 'Because He hath made me whole.' That is clear: it was He that made thee so. For from none else cometh health, save Him. 'Because He gave me,' saith another, 'a rich wife, whereas I before had nothing, and one that obeyeth me.' This too He gave: thou sayest true. 'He gave me,' saith another, 'sons many and good, He gave me a household, He gave me all good things.' Dost thou love Him for this? Seekest thou then nothing more? Be hungry: still knock at the door of the Master of the household: still hath He somewhat to give. Thou art but a beggar with all these things which thou hast received, and Thou knowest it not. Thou bearest about as yet the ragged flesh of mortality: thou hast not yet received that glorious robe of immortality, and, as if already satisfied, dost thou cease to ask? Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Therefore if God is good, Who hath given thee what thou hast, how much more blessed wilt thou be when He hath given thee Himself! Thou hast desired all these things of Him: I beseech thee desire of Him Himself also. For these things are not truly sweeter than He is, nor in any way are they to be compared to Him. He then who preferreth God Himself to all the things which he has received, whereat he rejoiceth, to the things he has received, he calleth upon God in truth. For to tell you the truth, if to such men a question were put, and it were said, 'What, if God chose to take away from thee all those things wherein thou delightest?' then He would be no longer loved: there would be none to say, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath it been done; blessed be the Name of the Lord. But what saith he, from whom He hath taken these things away? 'What have I done to Thee, O God? wherefore hast Thou taken from me, and given to them?' Thou givest to the unrighteous, and takest from Thine own. Thou accusest God of being unrighteous, thou praisest thyself as righteous. Turn thee, accuse thyself, praise Him. Then wilt thou be right, when in all the good which He doth, God pleaseth thee; and in all the ills which thou sufferest, He displeaseth thee not. This is to call upon God in truth. Those who thus call upon God, He heareth: He is nigh: that is, not yet hath He given what thou wishest, yet there He is. Just as if perchance a physician lays either upon eyes or stomach what is to heal by burning, though the sick man ask that it be taken from him, the physician awaiteth the time, he doeth not what the sick man asketh; yet he departeth not from

him. He is near, yet he doeth it not: yea, all the more he doeth it not, because he is near. For to heal him he laid on what he hath laid on, and to heal him he doeth not what he is asked. He heareth him not in regard of his present will, yet he heareth him in regard of his future healing, and this at all events according to his will. For surely he wisheth to be made whole, even if he wish not to be burnt. Nigh then is the Lord to all that call upon Him. But what all? All that call upon Him in truth.

23. He will perform the will of them that fear Him. He will perform it, He will perform it: though He perform it not at once, yet He will perform it. Certainly if therefore thou fearest God, that thou mayest do His will, behold even He in a manner ministereth to thee; He doeth thy will. And He shall hear their prayer, and save them. Thou seest that for this purpose the Physician hears, that He may save. When? Hear the Apostle telling thee. For we are saved in hope: but hope which is seen is not hope: but if what we see not we hope for, then do we with patience wait for it: the salvation, that is, which Peter calleth ready to be revealed in the last time.

24. The Lord guardeth all that love Him, and all sinners He will destroy. Thou seest that there is severity with Him, with Whom is so great sweetness. He will save all that hope in Him, all the faithful, all that fear Him, all that call upon Him in truth: and all sinners He will destroy. What all sinners, save those who persevere in sin; who dare to blame God, not themselves; who daily argue against God; who despair of pardon for their sins, and from this very despair heap up their sins; or who perversely promise themselves pardon, and through this very promise depart not from their sins and impiety? The time will come for all these to be separated, and for the two divisions to be made of them, one on the right hand, the other on the left; and for the righteous to receive the everlasting Kingdom, the wicked to go into everlasting fire. And all sinners He shall destroy.

25. Since this is so, and we have heard the blessing of the Lord, the works of the Lord, the wondrous things of the Lord, the mercies of the Lord, the severity of the Lord, His Providence over all His works, the confession of all His works; observe how He concludeth in His praise, My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy Name for ever and ever.

PSALM 146

Sermon to the people.

1. The divine songs are the delights of our spirits, wherein even weeping is not without joy. To a faithful man, and one who is a stranger in the world, no remembrance is so joyous as that of the city whence he is a wanderer: but the recollection of his city in his wanderings is not without sorrow and sighing. Yet the sure hope of our return comforteth and cheereth us when sad with our wandering. Let the words of God seize upon your hearts, and let Him, Whose ye are, claim His own possession, that is, your mind, that they be not turned aside to ought else. Let each one of you so be entirely here, that he be not there: that is, let him give himself wholly to the word of God, which soundeth on earth, that by it he may be lifted up, and not be on earth. For therefore was He God with us, that we might be with Him. For He Who came down from heaven to be with us, maketh us ascend to Him, that we may be with Him. Meanwhile He scorned not our estrangement; for no where is He a stranger, Who made all things.

2. Behold the Psalm soundeth; it is the voice of some one, (and that some one are ye, if ye will,) of some one encouraging his soul to praise God, and saying to himself, Praise the Lord, O my soul. For sometimes in the tribulations and temptations of this present life, whether we will or no, our soul is troubled; of which troubling he speaketh in another Psalm, saying, Wherefore art thou sad, O my soul, and wherefore troublest thou me? But to remove this troubling, he suggesteth joy; not as yet in reality, but in hope; and saith to it when troubled and anxious, sad and sorrowing, Hope in God, for I will yet confess to Him. The hope wherewith he lifted himself up, he set in confession, as though his soul, which troubled him with sadness, said to him, Why sayest thou to me, Hope in God? I am called back therefrom by consciousness of sins: I know what I have committed, and thou sayest to me, hope in God. Thou hast committed these things, it is true: but whence

dost thou hope? Because, I will confess to Him. As God hateth one who defendeth his sin, so He helpeth one who confesseth. Having then received this hope, which hope cannot be without joy, although we be in circumstances most difficult as concerning this life, and full of storms and tempests, yet the soul uplifted by this hope, because it rejoiceth in hope, as the Apostle saith, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, hath received a sort of lifting up to God, to praise God; and to it is said, Praise the Lord, O my soul.

3. But who saith it, and to whom saith he it? What shall we say, brethren? Is it the flesh that saith, Praise thou the Lord, O my soul? And can the flesh suggest good counsel to the soul? However much the flesh be conquered, and subjected as a servant to us through strength which the Lord imparteth, that it serve us entirely as a bond slave, enough for us that it hinder us not. In the next place, surely, brethren, men seek counsel from their betters: and if our soul be in some sense good, and our flesh is in some sense good, because He created both Who created all things very good, although, I say, both be good in their several kinds, yet the Apostle saith, the body is dead because of sin. There is indeed that body also which is promised to us, which as yet we have not, in whose redemption we rejoice in hope, as the Apostle saith, We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. For we are saved in hope. But hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? but if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Although then our body be in some sense good, yet, so long as it is mortal because of sin, as long as it is needy, as long as it is corruptible, as long as it is so changeable, that even for a moment it abideth not, without doubt it is such, that we must wish for its redemption, whereby it will at length cease to be such. But what will it be hereafter? Such as the same Apostle saith in another place, For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But even when our body shall have become such as this, a body now heavenly and spiritual, a body angel-like in its fellowship with angels, not even then will it give counsel to the soul. For the body, inasmuch as it is the body, is even beneath the soul; and every soul, however vile, is found more excellent than the most excellent body.

4. And let not this seem to you to be wonderful, that even any vile and sinful soul is better than any great and most surpassing body. It is better, not in deserts, but in nature. The soul indeed is sinful, is stained with certain defilements of lusts; yet gold, though rusted, is better than the most polished lead. Let your mind then run over every part of creation, and ye will see that what we are saying is not incredible, that a soul, however blameable, is yet more praiseworthy than a praiseworthy body. There are two things, a soul and a body. The soul I chide, the body I praise: the soul I chide, because it is sinful; the body I praise, because it is sound. Yet it is in its own kind that I praise the soul, and in its own kind that I blame the soul: and so in its own kind I praise the body, or blame it. If you ask me which is better, what I have blamed or what I have praised, wondrous is the answer thou wilt receive. True, I praised the one and blamed the other, yet, when asked which is better, I answer that what I have blamed is better than what I have praised. If thou wonderest at these two things, observe the case of the two things ready to our hands, which I have already quoted, the gold and the lead. Observe: I have found fault with the gold: it is rusted: it shines not as much, it is not as clean: this lead is beautiful, as clean as can be. The former I have found fault with, the latter I have praised, and have set before you both, finding fault with the one, praising the other. After thus bestowing my blame and praise, ask me which of these is better: I shall answer, the gold, even though rusted, is better, is better than the lead when clear. How, better, and wherefore then hast thou found fault with it? Wherefore have I found fault with it? Because it is not yet the gold which it can be. What can it be? Cleansed and better. Because it hath not yet been cleansed, it is found fault with. Why hast thou praised the lead? Because it is already so clean that it cannot be better. So you speak of the best horse and the worst man; yet thou preferrest the man thou findest fault with to the horse thou praisest. For if thou wert asked which of these two was better, thou wouldest say, 'the man,' not by deserts, but by nature. So in trades, thou speakest of a first-rate cobbler, and findest fault with some lawyer, because he is ignorant of many laws: thou hast praised the cobbler, thou hast blamed the lawyer; yet ask which of these two is better, and the unskilled lawyer is preferred to the perfect cobbler. Observe, my beloved, after having in so many instances praised some things, blamed others, yet when asked, we for the most part prefer what we have blamed to what we have praised. The nature of the soul

is more excellent than the nature of the body: it surpasseth it by far, it is a thing spiritual, incorporeal, akin to the substance of God. It is somewhat invisible, it ruleth the body, moveth the limbs, guideth the senses, prepareth thoughts, putteth forth actions, taketh in images of countless things; who is there, in short, beloved brethren, who may suffice for the praises of the soul? And yet such is the grace given to it, that this man saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul. Who can praise God? If he said, 'praise thyself,' perchance it would fail: he saith, praise God. Endeavour with the affection of love, still thou wilt fall short in His praise. Better is it for thee to fall short in praising God, than to go forward in praising thyself. For when thou praisest God, and unfoldest not what thou wouldest, thy thought spreads inwardly, its very spreading maketh thee more able to contain Him Whom thou praiseth.

5. Who then is it, as I began to say, who saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul? It is not the flesh that saith it. Let the body be angel-like, still it is inferior to the soul, it cannot give advice to its superior. The flesh when duly obedient is the handmaid of the soul: the soul rules, the body obeys; the soul commands, the body performs; how then can the flesh give this advice to the soul? Who then is it who saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul? We find nothing more in man than flesh and soul: the whole man consists of this, of body and soul. Is it then perchance the soul herself, who saith to herself, and in a manner commandeth herself, and exhorteth and asketh herself? For through certain passions in one part of her nature she wavered; but in another part, which they call the reasonable mind, the wisdom whereby she thinks, clinging to God, and now sighing towards Him, she perceives that certain inferior parts of her are troubled by worldly emotions, and by a certain excitement of earthly desires, betake them to outward things, leaving God Who is within; so she recalleth herself from things outward to inward, from lower to higher, and says, Praise the Lord, O my soul. What pleaseth thee in the world? what is there which thou wishest to praise? what that thou wishest to love? Whithersoever thou turnest thyself with thy corporeal senses, there meeteth thee the sky, meeteth thee the earth; what thou lovest on earth, is earthly; whatever thou lovest even in the sky, is corporeal. Every where thou lovest, and every where thou praisest: how greatly is He to be praised, Who made these things which thou praisest!

Now then thou hast long lived in the midst of engagements, and hast been battered by various desires, so that thou art wounded, and bearest the mark of their blows: thou hast been distracted between many loves, ever disquieted, never free from care; concentrate thyself within thyself; whatever before pleased thee without thee, seek now Who was its Author. For instance, there is nothing better on earth than this and that; gold, for example, or silver, or animals, or trees, or beautiful places, or the whole earth together. What is there in the sky better than sun, moon, and stars? or consider if you will the whole heaven together. All these things together are very good; for God made all things very good. On all sides is the beauty of the work, which commendeth to thee the Maker. Thou admirest the workmanship, love the Worker. Be not taken up with that which is made, and withdraw from Him Who made it. For these things with which thou art taken up, He made beneath thee, Who made thee beneath Himself. If thou cling to Him Who is above thee, thou wilt trample under thee what is below thee: if thou withdraw thyself from Him that is above thee, these things will be turned into punishment for thee. For this is the case, my brethren; man received a body to be servant to him, having God as his Lord, his body as his servant: having above him his Creator, beneath him that which was created below him; while the reasonable soul, set in a sort of middle ground, had a law laid upon it, to cling to Him Who is above it, to rule that which is below it. It cannot rule that which is below it, unless it be ruled by Him that is better than it. If it be drawn away by what is beneath it, it has abandoned Him Who is better than it. It can no longer rule what it did rule, because it would not be ruled by Him, Who used to rule it. Now then let it return, let it praise. The soul itself giveth itself counsel from the light of God by the reasonable mind, whereby it conceiveth the wisdom fixed in the everlasting nature of its Author. It readeth there of somewhat to be feared, to be praised, to be loved, to be longed for, and sought after: as yet it graspeth it not, it comprehendeth it not; it is, as it were, dazzled with brightness; it has not strength to abide there. Therefore it gathers itself, as it were, into a sound state, and saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul.

6. And what is the case, brethren? Do we not praise the Lord? Do we not daily sing our hymn? Daily doth not our mouth sound, our heart utter, according to our measure, the praise of God? And what is it which we

praise? Great is that which we praise, but that wherewith we praise as yet is weak. When doth he who praiseth fully reach the excellence of Him he praiseth? Behold a man standeth up, he singeth unto God at great length, and often his lips are moving in song, while his thoughts are flitting through I know not what desires. Our mind then stood up, as it were, to praise God; our soul the while was drifting hither and thither amid divers desires or anxieties of business. The mind, as it were, from above observeth it, drifting hither and thither, and turning, as it were, to its disquiet in its anxieties, it saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul. Why busiest thou thyself in other things? Why art thou taken up with anxiety about things of earth, and of this life? Stand with me, and praise the Lord. And then the soul, weighed down, as it were, and unable to stand up as is fitting, answereth the mind, I will praise the Lord in my life. What is, in my life? Because now I am in my death. Therefore first encourage thyself, and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul. Thy soul answereth thee, I do praise so far as I can, slightly, poorly, weakly. Wherefore? Because, while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord. Wherefore thus praisest thou the Lord, not perfectly, not stedfastly? Ask Scripture: for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. Take me away the body that presseth down the soul, and I praise the Lord: take me away the earthly tabernacle that weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things, that from many things I may concentrate myself to one, and I praise the Lord: but, as long as I am thus, I cannot, I am weighed down. What then? Wilt thou be silent, and not praise the Lord perfectly? I will praise the Lord in my life.

7. What is, in my life? Thou art my hope here. Here we say, Thou art my hope; but my portion, not here, but, in the land of the living: for this is the land of the dying: we pass from hence; but it makes a difference whither. For both the evil man is a wanderer here, and the good man is a wanderer here. For it is not that the good passeth away, or the evil abideth here; or that the evil passeth away, and the good remaineth here: both pass away, but not both to one end. There were two men: a beggar full of sores, lying at the rich man's gate; and a rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: both were here; both passed away from hence; but not both to the same place: different places receive them, because different

deserts bring them thither. The beggar passed into Abraham's bosom, the rich man passed into the torments of hell. In body they were neighbours upon earth; one in the house, the other at the gate: after death they were so widely severed, that Abraham saith, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed. Therefore, brethren, since faith feeds us here, but our life is not perfect, save that which is promised to us, here we have groans, here temptations, here straits, here sorrows, here dangers; there our soul shall praise God as He is to be praised; according to what is said in another Psalm, Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, they shall be always praising Thee: when our whole business will be merely praise. But when will this be? In my life. Now what has it? It might answer thee, 'My death.' Whence, 'My death?' because I am absent from the Lord. For if to cling to Him is life, to depart from Him is death. But what comforteth thee? Hope. Now thou livest in hope: in hope praise, in hope sing. Thy death is from the sadness of this life, thou livest in hope of a future life. I will praise, saith he, my God in my life.

8. And how wilt thou praise thy Lord? I will sing unto my God, as long as I have my being. What sort of praise is this, I will sing unto my God as long as I have my being? Behold, my brethren, what sort of being this will be; where there will be everlasting praise, there will be also everlasting being. Behold, now thou hast being: dost thou sing unto God as long as thou hast being? Behold, thou wast singing, and hast turned thyself away to some business, thou singest no longer, yet thou hast being: thou hast being, yet thou singest not. It may be also thy desire turneth thee to somewhat; not only dost thou not sing, but thou even offendest His ears, yet thou hast being. What praise will that be, when thou praisest as long as thou hast being? But what meaneth, as long as I have being? Will there be any time when he will not be? Nay, rather, that long will be everlasting, and therefore it will be truly long. For whatever hath end in time, however prolonged it is, is yet not long. I will sing unto God as long as I have being.

9. Meanwhile it is well: thou shalt praise God in thy life, thou singest hereafter to thy God as long as thou hast being. It is well: whatever thou reliest on here, hope in Him. Let not hope desert us here, in this pilgrimage and trial, amid these wickednesses and snare of our enemy, while the

temptations of the world roar around us on all sides, while we are set in the midst of toils and distresses on all sides. What then shall we do? Hear what followeth. Put not your trust in princes. Brethren, here we receive a mighty task; it is a voice from heaven, from above it soundeth to us. For now through some kind of weakness the soul of man, whensoever it is in tribulation here, despaireth of God, and chooseth to rely on man. Let it be said to one when set in some affliction, 'There is a great man, by whom thou mayest be set free;' he smileth, he rejoiceth, he is lifted up. But if it is said to him, 'God freeth thee,' he is chilled, so to speak, by despair. The aid of a mortal is promised, and thou rejoicest; the aid of the Immortal is promised, and art thou sad? It is promised thee that thou shalt be freed by one who needeth to be freed with thee, and thou exuldest, as at some great aid: thou art promised that Liberator, Who needeth none to free Him, and thou despairest, as though it were but a fable. Woe to such thoughts: they wander far; truly there is sad and great death in them. Approach, begin to long, begin to seek and to know Him by Whom thou wast made. For He will not leave His work, if He be not left by His work. Turn thee then to Him, to Whom thou sayest, I will praise the Lord in my life, I will sing unto my God as long as I have being. For the Psalmist warneth us as one filled with the Spirit, and saith, as to men far distant and wandering, and not only not willing to praise God, but not as yet hoping in God, Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom is no salvation. In one Son of man alone is there salvation, and in Him, not because He is the Son of man, but because He is the Son of God; not on account of that which He took of thee, but of that which He retained in Himself. In no man then is there salvation, for even in Him there is salvation only because He is God, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Of Christ is said, Of whom according to the flesh Christ came. Of whom? Of the Jews, of the fathers in Christ according to the flesh: but is Christ entirely that which He is according to the flesh? No: for neither according to the flesh is He over all, God blessed for ever. Therefore in Him is salvation, for salvation is the Lord's. For another Psalm saith, Salvation is the Lord's, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. And without cause do men claim to themselves to give salvation. Let them give it to themselves. Reply to the proud man, Thou boastest in that thou sayest that thou givest me salvation: give it to thyself: see whether thou hast it; considering well thy frailty, thou seest that thou hast it not yet. Therefore

bid me not look for it from thee, but look thou for it with me. Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom is no salvation. Behold, certain princes come forth I know not whence, and say, I baptize, and what I give is holy: if thou receive from another, thou hast received nothing; if thou receivest from me, thou hast received something. O man, O prince, wishest thou to be among the sons of men, and among the princes in whom is no salvation? Have I therefore salvation, because thou givest? Is what thou givest thine own? Or is it true that thou givest it? or can we say that thou givest it? So the pipe may say, that it giveth water; so too may the gutter say, that it itself runs; so too may the usher say, that he setteth free. In the water I regard the fountain, in the voice of the usher I recognise the judge. Verily thou shalt not be the author of my salvation: He shall be, on Whom I can rely: of thee I am uncertain. If thou art not presumptuous, not only am I uncertain about thee, but thou art also about thyself. From Him then is my salvation, Who is over all, for salvation is the Lord's. Thou art amongst the sons of men, amongst the princes; but I hear the Psalm saying, Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, from whom is no salvation.

10. Looking to the multitude of men, what are these sons of men? Wilt thou know what they are? His breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth. Behold all which he saith, knowing not how long he shall say it: he threateneth, knowing not how long he shall live. On a sudden his breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth. Shall it be when he wisheth that his breath shall go forth? It shall go forth, and shall go forth when he wisheth it not, and when he knoweth not he shall return to his earth. When the breath goeth forth, the flesh shall return to the earth. But because it was flesh that thus spake; (for none would say, Rely on me, and I will give to thee, save they to whom it is said that they are flesh:) his breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth: in that day shall all his thoughts perish. Where is swelling? where is pride? where is boasting? But perhaps he will have passed to a good place, if indeed he have passed. For I know not whither he who spake thus hath passed. For he spake in pride; and I know not whither such men pass, save that I look into another Psalm, and see that their passage is an evil one. I beheld the wicked lifted up above the cedars of Libanus, and I passed by, and, lo, he was not; and I sought him,

and his place was not found. The good man, who passed by, and found not the wicked, reached a place where the wicked is not. Wherefore, brethren, let us all listen: brethren, beloved of God, let us all listen; in whatsoever tribulation, in whatsoever longing for the heavenly gift, let us not trust in princes, nor in sons of men, in whom is no salvation. All this is mortal, fleeting, perishable. His breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth: in that day all his thoughts shall perish.

11. What then must we do, if we are not to hope in sons of men, nor in princes? What must we do? Blessed is he, whose Helper is the God of Jacob: not this man or that man; not this angel or that angel; but, blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob: for to Jacob also so great an Helper was He, that of Jacob He made him Israel. O mighty help! now he is Israel, 'seeing God.' While then thou art placed here, and a wanderer not yet seeing God, if thou hast the God of Jacob for thy Helper, from Jacob thou wilt become Israel, and wilt be 'seeing God,' and all toil and all groans shall come to an end, gnawing cares shall cease, happy praises shall succeed. Blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob; of this Jacob. Wherefore is he happy? Meanwhile, while yet groaning in this life, his hope is in the Lord his God. Therefore is he blessed, because his hope is in the Lord his God. In Whom his hope is, in Him will be his whole. Brethren, am I perchance wrong in saying, that the Lord will be our whole? what if I should say that He will be our inheritance? Thou art my hope, and my portion, in the land of the living. Thou shalt be my portion. Thou shalt both be a possession, and shalt possess: thou shalt be God's possession, and God shall be thy Possession: thou shalt be His possession, to be cultivated by Him; He shall be thy possession, for thee to worship Him. For thou both worshippest God, and art cultivated by God. Rightly is it said, I worship God. But how am I cultivated by God? We find in the Apostle, Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. And the Lord saith, I am the Vine, ye are the branches; and, My Father is the Husbandman. God then cultivateth thee, that thou mayest be fruitful; thou worshippest God, that thou mayest be fruitful. It is good for thee that God cultivateth thee: it is good for thee that thou worshippest God. If God the Cultivator depart from man, man is abandoned: if man the worshipper depart from God, it is man himself who is abandoned. God neither increaseth by thy approach to Him, nor

decreaseth by thy withdrawal. He then will be our possession, that He feed us; we shall be His possession, that He rule us.

12. His hope is in the Lord his God. Who is this, Lord his God? Observe, my brethren. For many men have many gods, and call them their lords and their gods. But the Apostle saith, Although there be that be called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there are gods many and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things. Therefore let Him be thy hope, even the Lord thy God; in Him let thy hope be. His hope too is in the lord his god, who worshippeth Saturn; his hope is in the lord his god, who worshippeth Neptune or Mercury; yea more, I add, who worshippeth his belly, of whom is said, whose god is their belly. The one is the god of the one, the other of the other. Who of this blessed one? for his hope is in the Lord his God. But Who is He? Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them. My brethren, we have a great God; let us bless His holy Name, that He hath deigned to make us His possession. As yet thou seest not God; thou canst not fully love what as yet thou seest not. All that thou seest, He hath made. Thou admirest the world; why not the Maker of the world? Thou lookest up to the heavens, and art amazed: thou considerest the whole earth, and tremblest; when canst thou contain in thy thought the vastness of the sea? Look at the countless number of the stars, look at all the many kinds of seeds, all the different sorts of animals, all that swimmeth in the water, creepeth on the earth, flieth in the sky, hovereth in the air; how great are all these, how beautiful, how fair, how amazing! Behold, He Who made all these, is thy God. Put thy hope in Him, that thou mayest be happy. His hope is in the Lord his God. What God? Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them.

13. Observe, my brethren, the mighty God, the good God, Who maketh all these things. What then was God's thought in this, (if indeed we may say 'thought,' of God,) in making heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them? Perhaps this man was about to say, 'I see indeed that all these things are great; God hath made heaven and earth and the sea; where doth God reckon me among the things which He hath made, or do I truly partake of His care, or doth God now think of me, and know whether I am alive? What

is this which thou sayest? Let not an evil thought creep into thy heart: be of those, of whom we spake a little above, I will praise God in my life, I will sing unto God as long as I have being. But he is addressing others, some anxious ones, whom he cheereth, seeming to fear lest they despair about themselves, as though they are not even in the reckoning of God. For many have such thoughts. But therefore do they abandon God, and hurry through any kind of sin, because they believe not that God careth what they do. Hear the words of God's mouth, despair not of thyself. He Who cared to make thee, careth He not to remake thee? If he mentioned these things only, perhaps thou wouldest answer me, 'God, Who made heaven and earth and sea, is a great God: but doth He think of me?' It would be said to thee, 'He made thee.' How so? am I heaven, or am I earth, or am I sea? Surely it is plain; I am neither heaven, nor earth, nor sea: yet I am on earth. At least thou grantest me this, that thou art on earth. Hear then, that God made not only heaven and earth and sea: for He made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them. If then He made all that is in them, He made thee also. It is too little to say, thee; the sparrow, the locust, the worm, none of these did He not make, and He careth for all. His care refers not to His commandment, for this commandment He gave to man alone: for the Psalm saith, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast, according to the multitude of Thy mercy, O God. The multitude of Thy mercy, He saith: according to this, Thou shalt save both man and beast. And the Apostle saith, Doth God take care for oxen? In the one passage, God careth not for oxen; in the other, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast: are these contrary? For what is it that the Apostle saith? Doth God regard oxen? Where then is the command, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: hath not God there thought about oxen? He meant then certain other oxen to be represented. For God doth not take care to bid thee how to treat thy oxen, this human nature herself careth for. Man is so made, that he knoweth how to provide for his oxen; nor in regard of them hath he received commandments from God, but it has been implanted in him by God, so that he should know how to act even without commandment; such hath God made him. But as he ruleth his cattle, so is he to be ruled by Another: from Him by Whom he is ruled, he hath received a commandment. As regards then the tenor of the commandment, God doth not take care for oxen: as

regards His providential care of the universe, whereby He created all things, and ruleth the world, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast.

14. Attend, my beloved. Here perhaps some one may say to me, God careth not for oxen, comes from the New Testament: Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast, is from the Old Testament. There are some who find fault and say, that these two Testaments agree not with one another. That he may not, as is likely, say that there is one thing in the Old Testament, another in the New, and call upon me for a sentiment from the New Testament, such as this, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast, what do I? Nothing is so much the sum of the New Testament as the Gospel. In the Gospel I find, that God hath to do with all these things: none can gainsay it. For is the Apostle at variance with the Gospel? Let us hear the Lord Himself, the Chief and Master of the Apostles: Consider, saith He, the fowls of the air; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Therefore even beside men, these animals are objects of care to God, to be fed, not to receive a law. As far then as regards giving a law, God careth not for oxen: as regards creating, feeding, governing, ruling, all things have to do with God. Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing, saith our Lord Jesus Christ, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without the will of your Father: how much better are ye than they. Say not then, 'I have nought to do with God.' Thy soul belongeth to God, thy body belongeth to God, for God made both thy soul and thy body. Perhaps thou sayest, God counteth me not in this great multitude. There follows here a wondrous passage in the Gospel; the hairs of your head are all numbered.

15. He then is my God, and in Him is my hope, Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them. But as regardeth me, how dealeth He with me? Who keepeth truth for ever. He has commended to us a God to be loved and to be feared. Who keepeth truth for ever. What truth for ever? what truth doth He keep, and wherein doth He keep it for ever? Who executeth judgment for them that suffer wrong. He avengeth them that suffer wrong. My brethren, He executeth judgment for them. For whom? for them that suffer wrong, punishing all wrong-doers. If then He will favour them that suffer wrong, and punish the wrong-doers, consider now of which

number thou choosest to be. See, consider whether thou choosest to be among those who suffer wrong, or among those who do wrong. For there cometh at once to thee the voice of the Apostle; now therefore there is altogether a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather suffer wrong? He urgeth thee not to suffer annoyance, but to suffer wrong: for not every annoyance is wrong. For whatever thou sufferest lawfully is not a wrong; lest perchance thou shouldest say, I also am among those who have suffered wrong, for I have suffered such a thing in such a place, and such a thing for such a reason. Consider whether thou hast suffered a wrong. Robbers suffer many things, but they suffer no wrong. Wicked men, evil doers, house-breakers, adulterers, seducers, all these suffer many evils, yet is there no wrong. It is one thing to suffer wrong; it is another to suffer tribulation, or penalty, or annoyance, or punishment. Consider where thou art; see what thou hast done; see why thou art suffering; and then thou seest what thou art suffering. Right and wrong are contraries. Right is what is just. For not all that is called right, is right. What if a man lay down for you unjust right? nor indeed is it to be called right, if it is unjust. That is true right, which is also just. Consider what thou hast done, not what thou art suffering. If thou hast done right, thou art suffering wrong; if thou hast done wrong, thou art suffering right.

16. Wherefore have I said this, brethren? That heretics may not puff themselves up, when they happen to suffer ought from the orders of earthly powers; that they may not number themselves among those who suffer wrong, and say, Behold, the Psalm comforteth me, for I worship God. Who shall execute judgment for them that suffer wrong. Rightly do I ask, whether thou sufferest a wrong. If thou hast done right, it is a wrong thou sufferest. Is it right to renounce Christ? Is it right in rebellious pride to set up an altar? Is it right, when His persecutors spared Christ's robe, to rend Christ's Church? It follows then, that if this is not right, whatever thou sufferest for this is right. Thou art not then of those who suffer wrong. I read somewhat yet more clear in the Gospel; Blessed, it saith, are they who suffer persecution. Wait: why dost thou hurry? why dost thou say, 'I am such?' Wait, I say; I will read the whole. Thou hast heard, Blessed are they that suffer persecution: now thou hast begun to claim somewhat to thyself: allow me to read the whole: see what followeth. Blessed are they which

suffer persecution for righteousness' sake. Now say, 'I am such.' If thou darest to say, 'I am such,' let us retract what I have said above: or, not to be long, I ask thee one question; If thou wast to condemn one man, whose cause thou hadst not heard, wouldest thou dare to say thou maintainedst justice? or if thou hadst suffered any thing for this, wouldest thou call it a wrong? Thou settest up thyself on the rash tribunal of thy heart, from whence thou must be cast down; and darest thou pass sentence on a man whose cause thou hast not heard? If thou didst this in regard of one man, thou wouldest be unjust; thou doest it in regard of the whole world, and art thou just? Beloved brethren, who is it who suffereth the wrong, but the Catholic Church, which undergoeth all these things? Among all the scandals of heretics she groaneth; she seeth the weak drawn from her bosom by evil persuasion and deceit, her little ones dragged through I know not what secrets of wicked dens, sees them rebaptized, sees Christ destroyed in them; sees killed in them not their mortal being, whereby they are men, but that whereby they are to live for ever. A man is persuaded to say, 'I am not a Christian,' and it is called righteousness. 'Thou art about to go before a Bishop,' he saith to him; 'see thou sayest not that thou art a Christian; for, if thou sayest that thou art a Christian, thou wilt not receive; in order to receive, say that thou art not. What dost thou advise, O Christian? what dost thou teach? Certainly thou sufferest persecution. How much more truly art thou thyself a persecutor! When the Emperors persecuted the Christians, they compelled by threats, what thou effectest by persuasion. Thou persuadest a Christian to deny that he is a Christian: what thou effectest by persuasion, that the persecutor effected not by slaying. A man liveth under thee, who denieth that he is a Christian. He denies, and is he alive? Nay, he hath already lost his life: he is a corpse that speaketh to thee. He who hath been smitten with the sword of the persecutor hath fallen, and yet liveth; he to whom thou speakest standeth, yet hath fallen. When thou doest thus, will whatever thou sufferest be a wrong? I would not that thou shouldest flatter thyself: if all these things which thou doest are unjust, whatever thou sufferest will be just. But for whom doth He execute judgment, Who keepeth truth for ever? For them that suffer wrong.

17. Now go thou on, and prove with those fine arguments of thine, which seem so sharp and subtle, that thou feedest others: tell me, can a hungry

man feed others? that is, can a sinner give what is holy? Can a hungry man feed others? Can a sick man heal? Can one that is bound set free? Those arguments seem grand and subtle, wherewith they deceive the unskilled. Let this Psalm shut their mouths: Who giveth food to the hungry. Behold, from thee I look for nothing: God giveth food to the hungry. Who are the hungry? All. What is, all? To all things that have life, to all men He giveth food: doth He not reserve some food for His beloved? If they have another kind of hunger, they have also another kind of food. Let us first enquire what their hunger is, and then we shall find their food. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. We ought to be God's hungry ones. Let us beg in prayers before the gate of His presence: He giveth food to the hungry. Why dost thou, O heretic, boast thyself, that thou settest free, thou liftest up, thou enlightenest? Is it, forsooth, because thou art already enlightened, and standest upright, and art a light? Far be it from thee. Listen to what was said above: put not your trust in princes, or in the children of men, in whom is no salvation. They do not give salvation. Let the heretics then depart from before us. The Lord looseth them that are fettered; the Lord lifteth up them that are dashed down; the Lord maketh wise them that are blind. Perfectly hath he by this last sentence explained to us all the preceding ones: lest perchance, when he had said, the Lord looseth them that are fettered, we should refer it to those fettered ones, who for some crime are bound in irons by their masters: and in that he said, He lifteth up them that are dashed down, there should occur to our minds some one stumbling or falling, or thrown from a horse. There is another kind of fall, there are other kinds of fetters, just as there is other darkness and other light. Whereas he said, He maketh the blind wise; he would not say, He enlighteneth the blind, lest thou shouldest understand this also in reference to the flesh, as the man was enlightened by the Lord, when He anointed his eyes with clay made with spittle, and so healed him: that thou mightest not look for any thing of this sort, when He is speaking of spiritual things, he pointeth to a sort of light of wisdom, wherewith the blind are enlightened. Therefore in the same way as the blind are enlightened with the light of wisdom, so are the fettered set free, and those who are dashed down are lifted up. Whereby then have we been fettered? whereby dashed down? Our body was once an ornament to us: now, we have sinned, and thereby have had fetters put on us. What are our fetters? Our mortality. Hear the Apostle

Paul, for he too was as yet fettered in his pilgrimage here. How vast regions did he traverse in his fetters: his fetters were not heavy to him: with these fetters he preached the Gospel to the whole world: the spirit of love carried away his fetters, and he went about to the utmost of his power. Yet what saith he himself? Having a desire to be set free, and to be with Christ. What is, to be set free? From the fetters of mortality: and yet through compassion he still was willing to remain in fetters, for the sake of others who were fettered, that he might minister to them: to abide in the flesh is needful for you. The Lord, therefore, looseth them that are fettered, that is, from mortal. He maketh them immortal; the Lord lifteth up them that are dashed down. Wherefore were they dashed down? Because they were up-lifted. Wherefore are they lifted up? Because they first were humbled. Adam fell, was dashed down. He fell, Christ came down. Wherefore came He down? Who fell not, save that he might be lifted up, who did fall. The Lord maketh wise the blind; the Lord loveth the righteous. Therefore, He executeth judgment for them that suffer wrong.

18. And who are the righteous? How far are they righteous now? Just as thou hast; the Lord guardeth proselytes. Proselytes are strangers. Every Church of the Gentiles is a stranger. For it cometh in to the Fathers, not sprung of their flesh, but their daughter by imitating them. Yet the Lord, not any man, guardeth them. The orphan and widow He will take up. Let none think that He taketh up the orphan for his inheritance, or the widow for any business of hers. True, God doth help them; and in all the duties of the human race, he doeth a good work, who taketh care of an orphan, who abandoneth not a widow: but in a certain way we are all orphans, not because our Father is dead, but because He is absent. For among men one is an orphan whose father is dead. Yet if ye look at the truth, my brethren, since the soul dieth not, our parents are alive; and so, those who are orphans, are orphans rather because their parents are absent: if they have been evil, they are living in punishment; if good, they are living in rest: to their Creator all things remain. Yet so long as we are in this body, and inhabit the place of our wandering, our Father is absent, and we cry to Him, Our Father, Which art in Heaven. Therefore is the Church a widow, her Spouse, her Husband, being absent. Hereafter He will come, Who now protecteth her, not seen, but longed for. For we are seized with great

longing, and through love of Him Whom we see not, we long. We shall cling to His embrace when we see Him, if, while as yet we see Him not, we are filled with faith in Him. By orphan and widow then, what meant He to be understood, brethren? Those who are bereft of all hope and aid. Let the soul which is bereft in the world hope for the aid of God. Whatever thou hast here—hast thou gold, and dost thou rely on it? now thou art not a stranger, thou art not an orphan, thou art not reckoned as a widow. Hast thou a friend? if thou reliest on him and givest up God, thereby thou art no longer bereft. Hast thou all these things, and yet reliest not on them, pridest not thyself on them? Thou art God's orphan, God's widow. He taketh up the orphan, He taketh up the widow too.

19. And the way of sinners He shall root out. What is, the way of sinners? To mock at these things which we say. 'Who is an orphan, who a widow? What kingdom of heaven, what punishment of hell is there? These are fables of the Christians. To what I see, to that will I live: let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' Beware lest such men persuade you of ought: let them not enter through your ears into your heart; let them find thorns in your ears: let him, who seeketh to enter thus, go away pierced: for, evil communications corrupt good manners. But here perhaps thou wilt say, 'Wherefore then are they prosperous? Behold, they worship not God, and commit every kind of evil daily: yet they abound in those things, through want of which I toil.' Be not envious against sinners. What they receive, thou seest; what is in store for them, seest thou not? And how, saith he, do I see what is not seen? Verily faith hath eyes; eyes too, greater, and more powerful, and strong. These eyes have never deceived any one: let these eyes be ever unto the Lord, that He may pluck thy feet out of the net. The way of sinners pleaseth thee because it is broad, and many walk therein: thou seest its breadth, thou seest not its end. Behold, where it endeth is a precipice; where it endeth is a deep pit: in that end they who walk joyously along this road are whelmed. But thou canst not strain thine eyes so as to see the end: believe Him Who seeth it. And what man is there that seeth it? perhaps no man: but thy Lord hath come to thee, that thou mightest believe God. Wilt thou not believe even the Lord thy God, Who saith, Broad and spacious is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that walk by it? This way the Lord will root out, for this is the way of sinners.

20. And, when the way of sinners has been rooted out, what remaineth for us? Come, ye blessed of My Father, enjoy the Kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Herewith the Psalm concludeth: and the way of sinners He shall root out. And how shalt thou fare? The Lord shall reign for ever. Rejoice, for for thee He shall reign: rejoice, for thou shalt be His kingdom. For see also what followeth. Certainly thou art a citizen of Sion, not of Babylon, that is, not of the perishable city of this world, but of Sion, which for a while is in toil and wandering, but for eternity shall reign. Thou hast heard then the end: to it thou belongest. The Lord shall reign for ever, thy God, O Sion. O Sion, thy God shall reign for ever; surely thy God will not reign without thee. For generation and generation. He hath said it twice, because he could not say it for ever. And think not that eternity is bounded by finite words. The word eternity consists of four syllables; in itself it is without end. It could not be commended to thee, save thus, Thy God shall reign for generation and generation. Too little hath he said: if he spoke it all day long, it were too narrow: if he spoke it all his life, must he not at length hold his peace? Love eternity: without end shalt thou reign, if Christ be thine End, with Whom thou shalt reign for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 147

Sermon to the People of Carthage.

1. We listened attentively, while this present Psalm was being chanted: yet not all who heard, also understood. How much more attentively then should it now be listened to, if, as I hope and desire, with the help of the prayers of all who hear me, whatever in it is perhaps obscure, may, by God's grace, be revealed; that your hearing may be profitable; and that the hearer may not return empty, who when present listened with attention. Wherewith doth it begin? It is said to us, Praise the Lord. This is said to all nations, not to us alone. And these words, sounded forth through separate places by the Readers, each Church heareth separately; but the one same Voice of God proclaimeth unto all, that we praise Him. And as though we asked wherefore we ought to praise the Lord, behold what reason he hath brought forward: Praise the Lord, he saith, for a Psalm is good. Is this all the reward of them that praise? Let us praise the Lord. Wherefore? Because a Psalm is good. I would wish, saith one, to praise the Lord, if only He give me somewhat for my praise. For who praiseth for nothing even a man? Those who praise a man then look for some reward: ought he who praises God, to look for or seek or hope for no reward? The weak is praised, and somewhat is hoped for from him: the Almighty is praised, and is there no reward? Or do I perhaps desire that which He cannot give? What doth man desire, which is not in the hand of God? When thou hast praised a man, thou mayest perhaps desire that which he cannot supply; God thou mayest praise in safety; for none can say that He cannot supply ought that thou canst long for. Having then set before us the hope of some reward, we ought to praise God, not however as though He would give whatsoever we desire. For He is our Father; and whatever evil His sons desire, He giveth not. Let us praise and hope and long, not for this or that, but for what He, Whom we praise, judgeth meet to be given. For He knoweth what it is expedient should be

given us; let us observe what it is good for us to receive. The Apostle saith, We know not what to pray for as we ought. And this very same Apostle Paul hoped that it would be good for him that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, should be taken from him, as he himself confesseth, and saith, for this cause I besought the Lord thrice that it might be taken from me: and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. He desired a certain thing; it was not granted him as was his wish, but it might be granted as was for his health. Here then what is set before us? Praise, saith he, the Lord. Wherefore should we praise the Lord? Because a Psalm is good. The Psalm is praise of God. This then he saith, Praise the Lord, for it is good to praise the Lord. Let us not thus pass over the praise of the Lord. It is spoken, and hath passed: it is done, and we are silent: we have praised, and then rested; we have sung, and then rested. We go forth to some business which awaits us, and when other employments have found us, shall the praise of God cease in us? Not so: thy tongue praiseth but for a while, let thy life ever praise. Thus then a Psalm is good.

2. For a Psalm is a song, not any kind of song, but a song to a psaltery. A psaltery is a kind of instrument of music, like the lyre and the harp, and such kinds of instruments, which were invented for music. He therefore who singeth Psalms, not only singeth with his voice, but with a certain instrument besides, which is called a psaltery, he accompanieth his voice with his hands. Wilt thou then sing a Psalm? Let not thy voice alone sound the praises of God; but let thy works also be in harmony with thy voice. When then thou singest with thy voice, sometimes thou wilt be silent; sing with thy life in such wise, that thou be never silent. Thou art engaged in business, and meditatest some fraud: thou hast become silent from the praises of God; and, what is worse, not only hast become silent from His praise, but hast also gone on to blasphemy. For when by thy good work God is praised, thou art praising God by thy work: when by thy evil work God is blasphemed, thou art blaspheming God by thy work. To please then the ear, sing with thy voice; but with thy heart be not silent, with thy life be not still. Thou devisest no fraud in thy heart: thou singest a Psalm to God. When thou eatest and drinkest, sing a Psalm: not by intermingling sweet sounds suited to the ear, but by eating and drinking moderately, frugally,

temperately: for thus saith the Apostle, whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God. If then thou doest right in eating and drinking, if thou takest food to refresh thy body and reinvigorate thy limbs, giving thanks to Him Who gave to thee, mortal and frail as thou art, these comforting supplies, then both thy meat and thy drink praise God: but if by immoderate voracity thou exceedest the due bounds of nature, and gluttest thyself in excess of wine, however great praises of God thy tongue sound, yet thy life blasphemeth Him. After food and drink thou liest down to sleep: in thy bed neither commit any pollution, nor go beyond the licence given by the law of God: let thy marriage bed be kept chaste with thy wife: and if thou desire to beget children, yet let there not be unbridled sensuality of lust: in thy bed give honour to thy wife, for ye are both members of Christ, both made by Him, both renewed by His Blood: so doing thou praisest God, nor will thy praise be altogether silent. What, when sleep has come over thee? Let not an evil conscience rouse thee from rest: so doth the innocence of thy sleep praise God. If then thou praisest, sing not only with thy voice, but take to thee also the psaltery of good works, for a Psalm is good. Thou praisest in thy employment, thou praisest in thy eating and drinking, thou praisest while resting in thy bed, thou praisest in thy sleep: when dost thou not praise? We shall be perfect in praising God, when we come to that city, when we are made equal to the Angels of God, when no bodily craving in any part assails us, when no hunger or thirst interrupts us, no heat wearies, no cold freezes, no fever pulls down, no death endeth. For that most perfect praise let us practise ourselves, by praising here in good works.

3. Wherefore, when he had said, Praise the Lord, for a Psalm is good, he says, let praises be pleasant to our God. How will praise be pleasant to our God? If He be praised by our good lives. Hear that then praise will be pleasant to Him. In another place it is said, Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. If then in the mouth of a sinner praise is not seemly, neither is it pleasant, for that only is pleasant which is seemly. Wilt thou then that thy praise be pleasant to thy God? Be not out of tune with thy good song by ill behaviour. Let praise be pleasant to our God. What did he mean? Ye who praise, live aright: He regardeth more how ye live, than how ye speak. Surely thou desirest to have peace with Him Whom thou praisest: how dost thou seek peace with Him, when thou art at discord with thyself?

How, thou wilt say, am I at discord with myself? One thing thy tongue soundeth, another thy life discloseth. Let praise be pleasant to our God. For praise may be pleasant to a man, when he heareth one praising with neat and clever sentiments, and with a sweet voice; but let praise be pleasant to our God, Whose ears are open not to the mouth, but to the heart; not to the tongue, but to the life of him that praiseth.

4. Who is our God, that praise should be pleasant to Him? He maketh Himself sweet to us, He commendeth Himself to us; thanks to His condescension. For He deigneth to commend Himself to us, not as though we could supply ought to Him, but rather may receive much from Him. How then doth God commend Himself to us? But God commendeth His love to us. How doth He commend it? Harken: let the Apostle himself speak, that we may compare him with the Psalm: God commendeth, saith he, His love to us. How doth He commend it? In that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. What then hath He in store for them that praise, Who thus commendeth Himself to them that are sinners? Since then the Apostle hath said, that God so commended His love to us, as that Christ died for the ungodly, not that they should remain ungodly, but that by the death of the Righteous they should be healed of their unrighteousness; what hearest thou here after he had said, let praise be pleasant to our God? Let us see whether it be the commendation which the Apostle speaketh of, that Christ died for the sinners and ungodly: the Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of Israel. Behold the Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of her people. For the people of Jerusalem are the people of Israel. It is Jerusalem eternal in the heavens, whereof the Angels are citizens also. What then is Israel there? If thou considerest the man, the grandson of Abraham, who was called also Jacob, how understand we the Angels to be Israel? If we examine the meaning of the name, since Jacob too had his name changed, and was called Israel, greater then is the name Israel: and would that we too may follow, and be Israel. For what is the meaning of Israel? 'Seeing God.' All the citizens then of that city, through seeing God, rejoice in that great and wide and heavenly city; they gaze upon God Himself. But we are wanderers from that city, driven out by sin, that we should not remain there; weighed down by mortality, that we should not return thither. God looked back on our

wandering, and He Who buildeth up Jerusalem, restored the part that had fallen. How restored He the part that had fallen? Gathering the dispersions of Israel. A certain part fell, and became wanderers; this wandering part God in His mercy saw, and sought them that sought Him not. How sought He them? Whom sent He to our captive estate? He sent a Redeemer, according to what the Apostle saith, God commendeth His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He sent then to our captive estate His Son as a Redeemer. Take with Thee, said He, a bag, bear therein the price of the captives. For He put on Him our mortal flesh, and therein was the Blood, by the shedding of Which we were to be redeemed. With that Blood He gathered the dispersions of Israel. And if He gathered them that before were dispersed, how must we strive that they be gathered who now are dispersed? If the dispersed have been gathered, that in the Hand of the Builder they might be fashioned into the building, how should they be gathered who through disquiet have fallen from the Hand of the Builder? The Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem. Behold Whom we praise; behold to Whom we owe praise all our life long. The Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of Israel.

5. How doth He gather? What doeth He in order to gather? Who healeth the bruised in heart. Behold the way in which the dispersions of Israel are gathered, by the healing of the bruised in heart. They who are not of a bruised heart, are not healed. What is to bruise the heart? Let it be known, brethren, let it be done, that ye may be able to be healed. For it is told in many other places of Scripture; especially in the famous place, the Psalmist, singing as it were with our voice, said, for if Thou hadst desired a sacrifice, verily I would have given it. He said to God, if Thou hadst desired a sacrifice, verily I would have given it, but Thou wilt not be delighted with burnt-offerings. What then? shall we remain without offering any sacrifice? Hear what He desireth that thou shouldest offer. He goeth on and saith, the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, a bruised and contrite heart God will not despise. He healeth then the bruised in heart, for He draweth nigh unto them to heal them; as is said in another place, the Lord is nigh unto them who have bruised their heart. Who are they that have bruised their heart? The humble. Who are they that have not bruised their heart? The proud. The bruised heart shall be healed, the puffed up heart shall be dashed down. For

for this purpose perhaps is it dashed down, that being bruised it may be healed. Let not our heart then, brethren, desire to be set upright, before it be upright. It is ill for that to be uplifted which is not first corrected.

6. Who healeth the bruised in heart, and bindeth up their bruises. He healeth, saith he, the bruised in heart: He healeth then the humbled in heart, He healeth them who confess, He healeth them that punish themselves, who exercise a strict judgment upon themselves, that they may be able to feel His mercy. Such He healeth; but their perfect healing will take place when this mortal life is passed, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality: when there shall be nothing to tempt us through the sinfulness of the flesh: not only nothing for us to consent to, but not even any thing to be suggested by the flesh. For now, my brethren, how many unlawful delights assail the mind? And although we consent to them not, so that our members are servants to righteousness, not to iniquity, yet even to be pleased by such things, even though thou consent not, is as yet short of perfect soundness. Thou shalt then be healed, thou, man of a bruised heart, shalt be healed. Blush not, bruise thy heart; such are they whom God healeth. But thou wilt say, What must I do now? For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive under the law of sin. What must thou do now? Bruise thy heart, confess; go on, say what followeth, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For to say this, O wretched man that I am, is at once to bruise the heart. Let him hope for happiness, who confesseth unhappiness. Say then, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? that it may be said to thee in answer, The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. But how shall the grace of God, whereof we have now received the earnest, set us free? Hear the Apostle again; the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. If then the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead dwell in you, He Who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit, Which dwelleth in you. This then is the earnest which our spirit hath received, that we begin through faith to serve God, and through faith to be called righteous. For the just liveth by faith. But whatever in you still fighteth and

resisteth, is of the mortality of the flesh, and this shall be healed. For He shall quicken, saith the Apostle, your mortal bodies by His Spirit, Which dwelleth in you. For this He gave the earnest, that He will fulfil what He hath promised. What then now in this life, when as yet we are confessors, not yet possessors, what in this life is to be done? How shall it be healed? He healeth the bruised in heart: but perfect soundness will not be till the time we mentioned. What then now? He bindeth up their bruises. He, Who healeth the bruised in heart, whose perfect soundness will be in the resurrection of the just, now bindeth up their bruises.

7. What are the means whereby He bindeth up their bruises? Just as physicians bind up fractures. For sometimes, (observe this, beloved; it is well known to those who have observed it, or have heard it from physicians,) sometimes when limbs are sound, but are crooked and distorted, physicians break them in order to set them straight, and make a new wound, because the soundness which was distorted was amiss. Just so then Scripture saith, The ways of the Lord are straight, but the crooked-hearted shall stumble in them. Who is the crooked-hearted? The twisted-hearted: he that hath a twisted heart. He thinketh that all things which God hath said are twisted; he thinketh that all which God hath done is crooked; and all the judgments of God displease him, especially those whereby he himself is chastised; and he sitteth, and argueth how evilly God doeth, because He doeth not according to his will. It is not enough for the distorted heart not to set itself straight after God's pattern: it wisheth also to distort God after its own pattern. What then saith God from above? Thou art twisted, I am straight. If thou wast straight, thou wouldest see that I am straight. Just as if thou wast to lay on an even floor a crooked piece of timber, it would not rest in its place, it would totter in every direction, it would be swayed in every direction, which yet is not caused by the unevenness of the ground, but by the crookedness of the timber; so Scripture saith, How good is God to Israel, to the right of heart. Well then, how is the crooked heart straightened? It is both crooked and hard; being then both crooked and hard, let it be broken, let it be bruised, that it may be set straight. Thou canst not set thine own heart straight: do thou break it, let Him set it straight. How dost thou break it? how dost thou bruise it? By confessing and punishing thy sins. What else doth beating the breast mean?

Unless perhaps we think that our bones have sinned, when we beat our breasts. Nay, we mean that we bruise our heart, that it may be set straight by God.

8. He healeth then them that are bruised in heart, that have a bruised heart: and soundness of heart will then be perfected, when the restoration of the body also which is promised shall be fulfilled. Now in the mean while, what doeth the physician? He bindeth up thy bruises, that thou mayest arrive at most complete soundness, until that which has been broken and bound up may be firmly knit. What are these means whereby He bindeth? The sacraments of this present life. The means whereby He bindeth up our bruises to heal them, are the sacraments of this present life, whereby in the mean time we obtain our comfort: and all the words we speak to you, words which sound and pass away, all that is done in the Church in this present time, are the means whereby He bindeth up our bruises. For just as, when the limb has become perfectly sound, the physician taketh off the bandage; so in our own city Jerusalem, when we shall have been made equal to the Angels, think ye that we shall receive there, what we have received here? Will it be needful then that the Gospel be read to us, that our faith may abide? or that hands be laid upon us by any Bishop? All these are means of binding up fractures; when we have attained perfect soundness, they will be taken off; but we should never attain it, if they were not bound up. He healeth then the bruised in heart, and bindeth up their bruises.

9. Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names. What great matter is it for God to tell the number of the stars! Men even have endeavoured to do this; whether they have been able to achieve it, is their concern; they would not however attempt it, did they not think that they should achieve it. Let us leave alone what they can do, and how far they have attained; for God I think it no great matter to count all the stars. Or doth He perhaps go over the number, lest He should forget it? Is it any great thing for God to number the stars, by Whom the very hairs of your head are numbered? It is plain, my brethren, that God willeth that we should understand somewhat by what He saith, Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names. The stars are certain lights in the Church comforting our night, all of whom the Apostle saith, among whom

ye shine as lights in the world. In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, saith he, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding the Word of life. These stars God counteth; all who shall reign with Him, all who are to be gathered into the Body of His only-begotten Son, He hath counted, and still counteth them. Whoso is unworthy, is not even counted. Many too have believed, or rather may, with a kind of shadowy appearance of faith, have attached themselves to His people: yet He knoweth what He counteth, what He winnoweth away. For so great is the height of the Gospel, that it hath come to pass as was said, I have declared, and have spoken: they are multiplied above number: there are then among the people certain supernumeraries, so to speak. What do I mean by supernumeraries? More than will be there. Within these walls are more than will be in the kingdom of God, in the heavenly Jerusalem; these are above the number. Let each one of you consider whether he shineth in darkness, whether he refuseth to be led astray by the dark iniquity of the world; if he be not led astray, nor conquered, he will be, as it were, a star, which God already numbereth.

10. And calling them all by their names, he saith. Herein is our whole reward. We have certain names with God; that God may know our names, this we ought to wish, for this to act, for this to busy ourselves, as far as we are able; not to rejoice in other things, not even in certain spiritual gifts. Consider, beloved; there are many gifts in the Church, as the Apostle saith; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another working of cures; to another discerning of spirits, that is, to discover between good and bad spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another prophecy. How great, how many gifts hath he mentioned! Many who have used such gifts amiss, shall hear in the end, I know you not. And what will they say in the end who are to hear, I know you not? Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name cast out devils, and in Thy Name done many wondrous works? All this in Thy Name. And what will He say to them? I never knew you; depart from Me, ye who work iniquity. What is it then to be already a light in the sky, comforting the night and not overshadowing the night? Yet, saith he, I shew unto you a more excellent way. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling

cymbal. What a gift is it to speak with the tongues of men and of angels! Yet, if I have not charity, saith he, I am as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I know all mysteries, and all knowledge, saith he, although I have all prophecy, and all faith, so that I could remove mountains, (how great gifts are these!) and have not charity, I am nothing. How glorious a gift is it to be a martyr, and to give away all one's goods! Yet, though I give all my goods, saith he, to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Whoso then hath not charity, though for a time he have these gifts, yet they shall be taken from him. What he hath shall be taken from him, because a certain other thing he hath not. This certain thing he hath not, whereby the other may be preserved, and himself not perish. What is that which the Lord saith, he that hath, to him shall be given; but whoso hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath? He then who hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. He hath grace to possess, but he hath not love to use; since then he hath not this, even that which he hath shall be taken from him. Therefore, that the disciples, whom He willed to make stars in heaven, walking by the more excellent way, might have charity, He, Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, when the disciples returned from their mission exulting, and saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name—then He, I say, Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, knowing that many would say, have we not in Thy Name cast out devils? to whom He should say, I know you not, because He counted them not among the number of the stars, nor called them by their names—said, In this rejoice not, that the devils are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.

11. Great is our Lord. The Psalmist is filled with joy, he hath poured out his words wonderfully: yet somewhat he was unable to speak, and how availed he to think on it? Great is the Lord, and great is His power, and of His understanding is no numbering. He Who numbereth the multitude of the stars, Himself cannot be numbered. Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and of His understanding is no numbering. Who can expound this? who can worthily even imagine what is meant by, and of His understanding

is no number? And would that He may infuse Himself into you, and where we fail, in that He is mighty, He may Himself enlighten your minds, that ye may know what is the meaning of, of His understanding is no number. For ye see, brethren, of the sand is there any number? To us there is not, to God there is; by Whom the hairs of our head are numbered, by Him the sand also is numbered. Whatsoever then that is infinite this world containeth, though it be infinite to man, yet is not to God: too little is it to say, to God: even by the angels it is numbered. Of His understanding there is no number. His understanding surpasses all calculators; it cannot be counted by us. Numbers themselves who numbereth? Whatever is numbered, is numbered by numbers. If whatever is numbered, is numbered by numbers, of numbers there can be no number; numbers cannot by any means be numbered. What then is there with God? wherewith made He all things, and where made He all things, to Whom it is said, Thou hast arrayed all things in measure, number, and weight? Or who can number, or measure, or weigh, measure and number and weight themselves, wherein God hath ordered all things? Therefore, of His understanding is no number. Let human voices be hushed, human thoughts still: let them not stretch themselves out to incomprehensible things, as though they could comprehend them, but as though they were to partake of them, for partakers we shall be. We shall not be this which we do contain, nor shall we contain the whole; but we shall be partakers: for of Jerusalem, whose dispersions He gathereth, somewhat great is said: Jerusalem is built as a city, whose partaking is in the same. What meaneth he by the same, save that which cannot be changed? All other created things may be this way or that, but He Who created cannot be this way or that. He then is the same, for to Him is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. If then He is the same, and can in no degree be changed, by partaking of His divine nature, we too shall be immortal for ever. And this earnest is given us of the Son of God, as I have already said to you, holy brethren, that before we became partakers of His immortal nature, He should first become partaker of our mortal nature. But as He became mortal, not of His own substance, but of ours, so do we become immortal, not of our own substance, but of His. Partakers then we shall be: let none doubt it: Scripture saith it. And of what shall we be partakers, as though these were parts in God, as though God were divided into parts? Who then

can explain how many become partakers of one single substance? Require not then that which I think ye see cannot fitly be said: but return to the healing of the Saviour, bruise your heart; let the darkness of your heart be crushed, obstinacy of soul bruised; let it be accused in evil, be born again in good. He will guide it, He will bind it up where it is broken, He will make it perfectly sound; and then those things will not be impossible with us, which now are impossible. For it is good that he confess weakness, who desireth to attain to the divine nature. Of His understanding is no number.

12. What therefore thou shouldest do in this difficulty of understanding, he sheweth thee, when he goeth on to say, The Lord taketh up the gentle. For example; thou understandest not, thou failest to understand, canst not attain: honour God's Scripture, honour God's Word, though it be not plain: in reverence wait for understanding. Be not wanton to accuse either the obscurity or seeming contradiction of Scripture. There is nothing in it contradictory: somewhat there is which is obscure, not in order that it may be denied thee, but that it may exercise him that shall afterward receive it. When then it is obscure, that is the Physician's doing, that thou mayest knock. He willed that thou shouldest be exercised in knocking; He willed it, that He might open to thee when thou knockest. By knocking thou shalt be exercised; exercised, thou shalt be enlarged; enlarged, thou shalt contain what is given. Be not then indignant for that it is shut; be mild, be gentle. Kick not against what is dark, nor say, It were better said, if it were said thus. For how canst thou thus say, or judge how it is expedient it be said? It is said as it is expedient it be said. Let not the sick man seek to amend his remedies: the Physician knoweth how to temper them: believe Him Who careth for thee. Therefore what cometh next? The Lord taketh up the gentle. Resist not then against what God shutteth up: be gentle, that He may take thee up. But if thou resistest, hear what followeth; but humbleth the sinners even to the ground. Many kinds of sinners are there. He humbleth the sinners even to the ground. What sinners, save the opposite to the gentle? In fact, by what he hath said, The Lord taketh up the gentle, but humbleth the sinners even to the ground, he intended a certain sort of sinners to be understood, from the gentleness mentioned first. By sinners then in this place, we understand the fierce, and those who are not gentle. Wherefore

doth He humble them even to the earth? They carp at objects of understanding, they shall perceive only things earthly.

13. This did He to men, who chose to ridicule the Law before they knew it, because they were not gentle. Understand me, beloved. There arose a certain most accursed sect, the Manichees, who ridiculed the Scriptures when they had received and read them; they chose to find fault with what they understood not, and by attacking and finding fault with what they understood not, they ensnared many. But they who chose to do this have been humbled even to the earth. They were not permitted to understand heavenly things: they savoured earthly things. All that thou hearest in their fables is nought but blasphemy and certain devices of bodily forms: for when they would understand God, they attained to the thought of this visible light, but could not advance beyond it, and they made such fields of light in the kingdom of God, as they saw our sun to be, looking on it as a sort of product of that light. For all this which is reached by means of the earth of the flesh, is earth in God's eyes. For we have that whereby we see, hear, smell, taste, touch: our flesh by means of those messengers, so to speak, which we call senses, perceives only corporeal things: but things of the intellect and spirit, are taken in by the mind. Because then they ridiculed the obscurity of the Scriptures, which for this reason were shut, that they might be exercised in knocking, not that the Scriptures should be refused to babes, they were humbled even to the earth, so that they could not any longer take in any thing save what is perceived by earth. And what mean I by earth? I mean the flesh. For the flesh is earth, and is made of earth. Whatsoever thou takest in by the eyes belongeth to earth: whatever by the ear, whatever by the smell, whatever by the taste, whatever by the touch, pertaineth to the earth, for by earth it is taken in. They therefore were not able to understand His understanding of which there is no end, for of His understanding is no end. Because they found fault with the Scriptures, which healthfully conceal understanding under certain mysteries, that the little ones may be exercised; and by this very finding fault being made ungentle, which is the opposite to gentle, they were humbled even to the earth, that they should not be able to perceive God Who is incorporeal, and that whatever thoughts they had of God, should be only corporeal thoughts.

14. God then humbleth sinners, even to the earth. What then ought we to do, if we would not be humbled even to the earth? For it is a great thing to advance to things of the understanding, it is a great thing to advance to things spiritual, it is a great thing for the heart to advance so far as to know that there is somewhat which is neither extended through space, nor varied in time. For what is the appearance of wisdom? who imagineth it? Is it long? is it square? is it round? is it now here, and now there? One man thinketh of wisdom in the east, another thinketh of it in the west; if they think of it aright, set as they are in such utterly different places, to both it is entirely present. What is this? who can take it in? Who can take in this substance, this divine and unchangeable nature? Be not in haste; thou wilt be able to take it in. Begin to the Lord in confession. Begin with this, if thou wouldest arrive at a clear understanding of the truth. If thou wilt be brought from the road of faith to the profession of the reality, begin in confession. First accuse thyself: accuse thyself, praise God. Call on Him, Whom as yet thou knowest not, to come and be known; not to come to thee Himself, but to lead thee to Him. For how can He come thither, whence He never departeth? For this is the very perfection of wisdom; it is every where, yet it is far from the wicked. It is, I say, every where; yet it is far from the evil who are every where. From whom, I ask you, is that far off which is every where? How think ye, save because they lie in their unlikeness, driving out in themselves the likeness of God? Having become unlike, they have withdrawn: when refashioned, let them return. Whence, saith he, shall we be refashioned? when shall we be refashioned? Begin to the Lord in confession. What after confession? Let good works follow. Sing unto our God upon the harp. What is, Upon the harp? As I have already explained, just like the Psalm upon the psaltery, so also is the harp: not with voice only, but with works. Sing unto our God upon the harp.

15. Behold, ye confess, ye work works of mercy; sing unto our God. What God? Who covereth the heaven with clouds. What is, Who covereth the heaven with clouds? Who hideth Scripture under figures and sacraments. He Who humbleth sinners even to the earth, He Who taketh up the gentle, covereth the heaven with clouds. Who then can see the heaven, which is covered with clouds? Fear not: hear what followeth. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth. Who covereth the

heaven with clouds: now thou art alarmed, because thou canst not see the heaven: when it hath rained thou shalt gather fruit, and shalt see clear sky. He covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth: perhaps our God hath done this. For had we not the obscurity of Scripture as an occasion, we should not say to you those things wherein ye rejoice. This then perhaps is the rain whereat ye rejoice. It would not be possible for it to be expressed to you by our tongue, were it not that God covereth with clouds of figures the heaven of the Scriptures. For this purpose then doth He cover the heaven with clouds, that He may prepare rain for the earth. For this purpose willed He that the words of the Prophets should be obscure, that the servants of God might afterwards have that by interpreting which they might flow over the ears and hearts of men, that they might receive from the clouds of God the fatness of spiritual joy. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth.

16. Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. Behold the fruit of the rain. Who maketh, saith he, grass to grow upon the mountains. Doth it not also grow upon the low ground? Yes, but it is a great thing that it groweth on the mountains. By mountains he meaneth the high ones of the world: by mountains understand in this place, those who are endowed with some great dignity. And it is not wonderful that a certain widow cast two mites into the treasury; that the earth brought forth grass over the low ground: the mountain also brought forth even Zaccheus the chief of the publicans. This was more wonderful, that the mountains brought forth grass. For the more men are exalted, the more grasping are they; and the greater they are in this world, the more do they love their riches. And so the man went away sorrowful, who asked of the Lord counsel about eternal life, and called Him Good Master, saying, What shall I do that I may have eternal life? And the Lord said to Him, Keep the commandments. Which? The commandments of the Law, said He. All these have I kept from my youth. One thing, said He, thou lackest. Wilt thou be perfect? Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me. What said the Lord? Behold, thou art a mountain; receive rain, give forth grass. For what is it that thou wilt give? Is it not grass? For all that is given to the Church for the needs of God's servants by the rich, what is it but grass? For they are carnal things,

which appear but for a time: but it is not any thing carnal which is gained by them. Hear what thou buyest with these worthless things. For thus saith the Apostle, shewing that these things are grass: if we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? Hear also that carnal things are grass. All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof is as the flower of grass. He then went away sorrowful: and the Lord said, How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven! This then is great, that He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. And how maketh He grass to grow upon the mountains, if that rich man, when he had heard that he ought to give to the poor, went away sorrowful? How did He afterwards answer the Apostles when they were saddened? The things which are difficult with men, are easy with God. He then maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, to Whom all things are easy. For nothing could be more barren than the hard mountains. He raineth, Who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. What service? Listen to Paul himself. And ourselves, saith he, your servants for Jesus Christ's sake. He who said, If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? yet said, that he was a servant. For we are your servants, brethren. Let none of us speak of himself, as though he were greater than you. We shall be greater if we are more humble. But whosoever will be great among you, (it is the Lord's saying,) shall be your servant. Therefore, He maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. Paul the Apostle, indeed, living by his own labour, refused even to receive the grass of the mountains; he chose to want; nevertheless, the mountains gave grass. Because he chose not to receive, ought the mountains therefore not to give, and so to remain barren? Fruit is due to the rain, food is due to the servant, as the Lord saith, Eat such things as they give you: and that they should not think that they gave ought of their own, He added, for the labourer is worthy of his hire.

17. Therefore, brethren, since it has been given to me to say somewhat to you upon this opportunity, specially since we who speak to you seek no such things from you, and therefore speak the more freely: (though even if we did seek, we should be seeking your profit, and not your riches, but your righteousness;) yet I warn you in few words, since we have already said much, and our discourse must at length come to an end; if ye would not be

barren, repay the rain by fruitfulness, lest hereafter your barrenness be condemned; for the Lord threateneth the barren and thorn-bearing land with fire, even as He prepared His granary, for the fruitful: take heed to exact of yourselves; be your own exactors. Christ silently exacteth; and louder is His Voice though He be silent, in that He is not silent in the Gospel. For He is not truly silent, since He saith, Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they too may receive you into everlasting habitations. He is not silent; hear His Voice. For none can exact of you: unless perhaps there is need of exacting, that they who serve you in the Gospel, ask of you. If it come to this, that they have to ask, take heed lest what ye ask of God, ye ask in vain. Be then your own exactors, lest they who serve you in the Gospel, I do not say be compelled to ask of you, for perhaps they ask not even when compelled, but by their silence accuse you. Wherefore it is written, Blessed is he who understandeth concerning the poor and needy. When he saith, who understandeth concerning the poor and needy, he waiteth not for him to ask. Understand concerning him. One needy man seeketh thee, another needy man thou oughtest to seek. Both are said, my brethren: just now has been read, Give to every one that asketh of thee; and in another place Scripture saith, Let alms sweat in thy hand, till thou findest a righteous man to whom to give it. One there is who seeketh thee, another thou oughtest to seek. Leave not indeed him who seeketh thee empty, for, give to every one that asketh of thee; yet still there is another whom thou oughtest to seek; let alms sweat in thine hand, till thou findest a righteous man to whom to give it. Ye will never do this, unless ye have somewhat set aside from your substance, each what pleaseth him according to the needs of his family, as a sort of debt to be paid to the treasury. If Christ have not a state of His own, neither hath He a treasury. For know ye what ‘fiscus’ means? ‘Fiscus’ is a bag, and from the same source come also the words ‘fiscella,’ and ‘fiscina.’ Think not that fiscus is a kind of dragon, because men are alarmed when they hear of the collector of the fiscus: the ‘fiscus’ is the public purse. The Lord had one here on earth when He had the bag: and the bag was entrusted to Judas. The Lord endured Judas, who was both a traitor and a thief, in him shewing to all the world His long-suffering; yet they who contributed, contributed to the Lord’s treasury. Unless perchance ye think that the Lord went and sought, or was in need when Angels served Him, and He fed so many thousands with five loaves.

Wherefore then willed He to want, save to shew an example to the mountains to bring forth grass, that they should not repay the rain with barrenness. Cut off then and prune off some fixed sum either from thy yearly profits or thy daily gains, else thou seemest as it were to give of thy capital, and thy hand must needs hesitate, when thou puttest it forth to that which thou hast not vowed. Cut off some part of thy income; a tenth if thou choosest, though that is but little. For it is said that the Pharisees gave a tenth; I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And what saith the Lord? Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. He whose righteousness thou oughtest to exceed, giveth a tenth: thou givest not even a thousandth. How wilt thou surpass him whom thou matchest not? Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth; Who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men.

18. And giveth unto the cattle their food. These are the cattle he meaneth, even God's flocks. God defraudeth not His flock of their food through men, for whose service He maketh the grass to grow. Whence the Apostle saith, Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Who giveth unto the cattle their food, and to the young of the ravens that call upon Him. Shall we perchance think this, that the ravens call upon God to give them their food? Think not that the unreasoning creature calls upon God: no creature knows how to call upon God, save the reasonable alone. Consider it as spoken in a figure, lest thou think, as some evil men say, that the souls of men migrate into cattle, dogs, swine, ravens. Give this no place in your hearts or in your faith. The soul of man is made after the image of God: He will not give His image to dog or swine. What is then, And to the young of the ravens that call upon Him? Who are the young of the ravens? The Israelites used to say that they alone were righteous, because to them the Law had been given: all other men of every nation they used to call sinners. And in truth all nations were given up to sin, to idolatry, to the worship of stones and stocks: but did they continue so? Although the ravens themselves, our fathers, did not, yet we, the young of the ravens, do call upon God. He giveth to the cattle their food, and to the young of the ravens who call upon Him. They are the young of the ravens, to whom Peter saith,

Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. For the young of the ravens, who seemed to worship the images of their forefathers, have advanced, and turned to God. And now thou hearest the young of the ravens calling upon the one God. What then? Sayest thou to the young of the ravens, 'hast thou left thy father?' Plainly I have, saith he; for he is a raven who calls not upon God, I, the young of the raven, do call upon God. And to the young of the ravens who call upon Him.

19. In the power of an horse He will not take pleasure. The power of an horse is pride. For the horse seemeth adapted as it were to bear a man aloft, that he may be more uplifted as he goes. And in truth he has a neck which typifieth a sort of pride. Let not men exalt themselves upon their worth, let them not think themselves uplifted by their distinctions; let them beware lest they be thrown by an untamed horse. For see what is said in another Psalm, Some in chariots and some in horses, but we will exult in the Name of the Lord our God. What therefore happeneth to them? See what followeth, They have been bound and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright. In the power of an horse He will not take pleasure: nor in the tabernacle of a man will He delight. In the tabernacle, saith he, of a man. For the tabernacle of the Lord is the Holy Church spread throughout the whole world. Heretics, separating themselves from the Church's tabernacles, have set up tabernacles for themselves; in the tabernacle of a man God will not delight. But observe the young of the raven, saying, I have chosen to be vast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. For if perchance it be the lot of any, who is good and pious, who confesseth his own weakness, who is the young of a raven that calleth on God, not to enjoy worldly distinction, he goeth not out of the Church, he setteth not up for himself a tent outside the Church, wherein God will not delight. But what saith he? I have chosen to be cast away in the house of God, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. For in the tabernacle of a man will He not delight.

20. But what addeth he? The Lord will delight in them that fear Him, and in them that hope in His mercy. The Lord delighteth in them that fear Him. But is the Lord feared in the same way as a robber? For a robber is feared,

and a wild beast is feared, and an unjust and powerful man is much feared. The Lord will delight in them that fear Him. Fear Him, how? And in them that hope in His mercy. Behold, Judas, who betrayed our Lord, feared, but he did not hope in His mercy. For afterward he repented of having betrayed the Lord, and he said, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. It is well indeed that thou hast feared, but only if thou trustedst in His mercy, Whom thou hast feared. He in despair went and hanged himself. In such wise then fear the Lord, that thou trust in His mercy. If thou fearest a robber, thou hopest for help from another, not from him whom thou fearest: thou askest aid from him whom thou fearest not, against him whom thou fearest. If thou fearest God in this wise, and fearest Him because thou art a sinner, from whom wilt thou get aid against God? Whither wilt thou go? What wilt thou do? Wilt thou flee from Him? flee to Him. Wilt thou flee from His wrath? flee to His ruth. And thou wilt make Him ruthless, if thou hope in His mercy, and so avoid sin for the future, as to pray to Him for past sins, that they may be forgiven thee by the Lord, to Whom belongeth honour, and the kingdom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever. Amen.

PSALM 147 PART II

Exposition

Sermon to the people, wherein he argueth against the games and shows, and also against the Donatists.

1. Ye remember, beloved, that we put off till to-day the discussion of the Psalm which we have just sung. For it is the very Psalm which was read on the Lord's Day, and which we had undertaken to handle. But at that time we were moved by the Gospel which was read, and, through the greatness of our fear, and for your greater profit, we dwelt upon the Lord's commending to us the last day, and how He willed that we should with care and watching look out for His coming, frightening us by an example, that He may not condemn us in the judgment, saying, that the coming of the Son of Man should be as it was in the days of Noe: they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until Noe entered into the Ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. In our anxiety then, and through great fear which shook us, (for who, if he believes, would not fear?) we dwelt, so far as we could, on this, speaking at length in our discourse, how you and all of us should act and live, so that we may be able not only to await that day without dread, but even to long for it. For, if we love Christ, surely we ought to long for His coming. For it is a contradiction, and cannot, I think, be true, to fear the coming of Him Whom thou lovest; to pray, Thy kingdom come, and to fear lest thou be heard. And whence is this fear of the Judge's coming? Is He unjust? is He spiteful? is He envious? lastly, doth He wait to hear thy cause from another, so that perhaps he whom thou hast instructed, either may cheat thee by making but a sham defence, or, through deficiency of eloquence and ability, may be unable to prove in words thy goodness and innocence? It is none of these. Who is it then that is to come? wherefore dost thou not rejoice? Who is coming to judge thee, save He, Who came to be judged for thee? Thou

needest not fear the accuser, of whom He Himself said, Now is the prince of this world cast out. Thou needest not fear the weakness of thy advocate, for He is now thy Advocate, Who then will be thy Judge. He will be there, and thou, and thy case: the statement of thy case will be the testimony of thy conscience. Whosoever then thou art that fearest thy Judge that is to be, amend at once thy conscience that is now. Is it too little for thee, that He will not require what is past? No space of time will then be left, when He shall judge: now how great a space is left while He enjoine! Then it will no longer be possible to amend: now, who hindereth thee? While we were earnestly commending this to you on the Lord's Day, because this, I might almost say this alone, is really needful to be spoken, a considerable space of time passed, and we were compelled to defer to this day the Psalm which we had undertaken to handle. Now it is before us: let us give heed to it, or rather to God, Who in His mercy has deigned to dispense to us these discourses in His Spirit, as He Himself knows to be expedient for our infirmities. For doth ever a sick man dare to give counsel to his Physician?

2. While it was being read, ye all of you, I imagine, or many at all events, observed that it containeth several verses, for the opening of which we must needs knock: specially where it saith, Who giveth snow like wool, Who scattereth mist like ashes: Who sendeth forth His crystal like morsels of bread: Who can stand before His cold? For if any, when he has heard this, taketh it literally, he has indeed thought of works of God: for who giveth snow, save God? who scattereth mist, save God? who hardeneth crystal, save He? and each of these has a fitting similitude set over against it: for wool is not unlike snow, nor ashes unlike mist, nor morsels of bread to the cleanness and whiteness of white crystal. For crystal is in appearance like glass, but it is white. Now, with regard to this crystal, it is told by those who know, (and therefore we ought not to doubt it, for Scripture, which is most worthy of belief, giveth testimony thereto,) it is told, I say, that crystal, being made of snow, which has hardened through many years and never melted, becomes so solid, that it cannot easily be melted. Summer at its coming easily melteth the snow of the preceding winter, for it hath not yet antiquity besides to increase its hardness. But when many snows for many years have fallen upon one another, and their abundance has become too great for the power of the summer to master, (I mean not one summer, but

many, and especially in these parts, that is, in the north, where even in summer the sun is not found extremely hot,) then this abiding and lasting hardness creates this which is called crystal. Observe, beloved. What then is crystal? It is snow hardened by frost for many years, so that it cannot easily be melted either by sun or fire. I have explained this at somewhat greater length, because many are ignorant of it, and they who happen to know it ought not to consider a statement of what they know burdensome, seeing it is brought forward not for their sake, but for the sake of those who know it not. When then ye heard the Reader sounding out these words, I doubt not that different thoughts presented themselves to you; that some said, and said truly, Great are the works of the Lord, whereof but a small portion, and that an earthly one, and known to almost all, has been here mentioned, how God snows, how He scattereth mist, how He maketh the crystal solid: others said to themselves, Thinkest thou that all this is set down without reason in Scripture, or that this means nothing more than it sounds? Is not somewhat suggested to us by the snow and the wool, by the mist and ashes, by the crystal and bread? But why hath Scripture willed to speak thus, by certain darkneses, so to speak, of similitudes? how much better for it to speak more openly? why have I so much as to seek or hesitate what these words mean? why am I at fault when I hear them? why when I have heard a Psalm do I generally go away never the wiser? This is it, which I said a little above, ‘Suffer thyself to be cured: thus art thou to be healed.’ Very proud and presumptuous is that sick man, who dares to advise his physician, even though he be but a man. Shall the sick man dare to give advice to the physician? When man is sick, and God is curing him, it is a great beginning of reverence and soundness, before thou knowest wherefore a thing has been said, to believe that it was right for it to be said in the way in which it has been said. For this reverence will make thee capable of seeking what is said, of finding when thou hast sought, of rejoicing when thou hast found. Let us have then this sympathy of your prayers with our Lord God; may He deign, if not for our sakes yet for yours, to give unto us what here lieth hidden. Look on it then now as though we had promised you a day of some heavenly show and exhibition, and, having read these verses and not yet expounded them, have brought before you some of our Exhibitor’s dresses wrapped up. Verily it is for this cause that they are brought forth folded up,

that ye may await their being unfolded: but ye are preparing not only to gaze on them, but to be clothed with them.

3. We said on the Lord's Day, if ye, beloved, who were present remember, that the Gospel which detained us so long that we had to defer the exposition of the Psalm, yet harmonized well with the Psalm. This we then said, but were not able to prove, because we deferred discussing the Psalm. To-day then we ought also to set forth this harmony. In that Gospel we were alarmed concerning the last day. That alarm produces safety: for through being alarmed we take precautions, by taking precautions we shall be safe. For just as unseasonable security driveth into alarms, so well-regulated anxiety produceth security. And for this cause doth God alarm us, that we do not so love this present life, so frail, so fleeting, so transitory, as though there were no other: for if there be no other, let us love this present one. If there is no other life, they are more happy than we, who to-day have watched in the amphitheatre. For what saith the Apostle? If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. There is then another life. Let each ask Christ, that is, his own faith. But faith is asleep. Rightly art thou tossed, for Christ is asleep in the ship. For Jesus slept in the ship, and the ship was tossed by many waves and storms. The heart then is tossed, when Christ sleepeth. Christ ever waketh; what then is meant by Christ is asleep? Thy faith is asleep. Why art thou still tossed with the storm of doubt? Awaken Christ, awaken thy faith, behold with the eye of faith the future life, for the sake of which thou hast believed, for the sake of which thou art signed with His mark, Who for this cause lived here on earth, that He might shew thee how despicable is this life which thou didst love, and how much to be hoped for that wherein thou didst not believe. If then thou awake faith, and turn its eyes upon the last things, and upon the future life wherein we shall rejoice, after the Lord's second coming, after the conclusion of the Judgment, after the kingdom of heaven has been delivered to the saints; if thou think upon this life, and the restful business of this life, of which we have often spoken, beloved, there our business will not be tossed about, our restful business, full of nought but sweetness, interrupted by no annoyances, worn by no weariness, troubled by no cloud. What will then be our business? To praise God: to love and praise, to praise in love, to love in praises. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, for ever and ever

they will be praising Thee. Wherefore, save because for ever and ever they will love Thee? And wherefore this, save because for ever and ever they will love Thee? What a show will that be, when they see God! Men see one who fights with wild beasts, and are gladdened: woe to them if they amend not themselves. For they who see him that fights with wild beasts, and are gladdened, shall see the Saviour, and be saddened. What more wretched than they to whom the Saviour shall not be for salvation! No wonder then that they who delight in a man fighting, are not saved by a God freeing. But we, brethren, if we remember that we are among His members, if we long and persevere, shall see and be glad. That will be a city, all whose citizens shall be cleansed, wherein no seditious or turbulent one shall be mingled; the enemy who now grudges our reaching our country, there cannot lay snare for any, for he is not even permitted to be there. For if he is now excluded from the hearts of believers, how shall he then be excluded from the city of the living? What will it be, brethren, what will it be, to be in that city, of which even to speak is so great a joy! For this future life we ought to prepare our hearts; whoever prepares his heart for it, despises this life entirely; his despising it makes him to await without anxiety that day, by the awaiting which the Lord frightened him.

4. Since then this Psalm speaks and sings to us about that future life, while the Gospel alarmed us about the present, the Psalm maketh us to love the future less, the Gospel to fear the present. Not that the language of the New Testament is silent about future delight; nay, much more is it set forth in it, wherein what is to be understood is not brought forth, as it were, under a veil, but there it is seen open, that here it may be understood though obscure. Seeing then that the Gospel said to us, Watch for the coming of the last day, the day of the coming of the Son of Man, for to their ruin will it find those, who now are secure, because they are perversely secure; for they are secure in the pleasures of the world, whereas they ought to be secure in having tamed the desires of the world; already surely the Apostle hath prepared us for that life, in words which I quoted then also: for the rest, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that buy, as though they bought not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not; for

the fashion of this world passeth away. I would have you without carefulness. He that setteth all his happiness in eating and drinking, in marrying, buying, selling, in using this world, such an one too is without carefulness; but, since he is outside-the ark, woe to him from the deluge. But he who, whether he eateth or drinketh, or whatsoever he doeth, doeth all to the glory of God; who, if he have any sorrow about matters of this world, so weepeth as within in hope to rejoice; if he have any joy in matters of this world, so rejoiceth as within in spirit to fear; who giveth himself neither to prosperity to corrupt, nor to adversity to crush, (and this is to weep as though he wept not, and to rejoice as though he rejoiced not;) he who, if he have a wife, sympathiseth with her weakness, and payeth to her her due, rather than exacteth his own; or, if he marrieth on account of his own weakness, doeth it rather in sorrow that he could not remain without a wife, than in joy because he has one; he who selleth because he knoweth, that, even if it remained, it could not make him happy; he who knoweth that what he buyeth is but fleeting, and on all that he hath, though it be abundant and overflowing, presumeth not, and of what he hath sheweth mercy to him that hath not, that he too may receive what he hath not from Him Who hath all things;—he who is such as this awaiteth in safety the last day, because he is not outside the ark; already is he reckoned among the undecaying timbers whereof the ark is built. Let him not then fear the Lord's coming, but hope and long for it. For to him He will come, not to inflict punishment, but to end his troubles. And this is accomplished by longing for that city. What the Gospel then warned us to do, is fulfilled by longing for that city, whereof the Psalm singeth: so doth the Gospel accord with this Psalm.

5. Now let us hear what city it is that the Psalm singeth of. Let us hear, and let us sing: our joy, when we hear, is a song to our God. For we sing not only when with voice and lips we sound forth a song; there is an inward song too, for there is One Whose Ears are within. We sing with the voice, to arouse ourselves; we sing with the heart, to please Him. The Psalm is called 'a Psalm of Haggai and Zacharias.' Haggai and Zacharias were prophets, and they were prophets during the captivity of that Jerusalem, which bore on earth the shadow of a certain city in heaven. Being then in the captivity of that city in Babylon, these prophets prophesied the restoration of Jerusalem; they prophesied that the people should be freed from captivity,

and that a new city should arise by the restoration of the old. We know what this captivity is, if we truly know our own state as wanderers. For in this world, in these present tribulations of the world, in the manifold crowd of offences, we, in a manner, are groaning in captivity; but we shall be lifted up: our new city is foretold to us, destined to be equal to the old. For after their prophesying too, the event happened visibly, so that the whole was unfolded, which was needed to fulfil the foreshadowing. Jerusalem was restored after seventy years of captivity. Thus, by these seventy years, does Jeremiah mark out by the number seven the whole course of time: for these days of ours, as ye know, advance in sevens, they go and return. After seventy years then, when Jeremiah promised that the city Jerusalem should be restored, it came to pass that therein too was set forth an image of things to come: it was set forth to us, that after this whole course of time, which is signified by the number seven, that city of ours will be in eternity, in one day. For in that dwelling time rolls not on, for the dweller passeth not away. The prophets, seeing this in spirit, saw the heavenly, spake of the earthly. But they said of the latter, what might guide to the former: and all the things which were done in time, in bodily movements, in acts of men, were signs and fore-announcements of things to come.

6. Let us now hear that city sung of, and lift up ourselves to it. For the Spirit of God commendeth it much to us, shedding into us the love of it, that we sigh unto it, and groan in our wanderings, and long to reach it. Let us love it: the very love is walking. Behold, let us love it from the hallowed mouth, from the mouth prophetic speaking by the Spirit of God: Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God. Abiding yet in captivity, they behold those flocks, or rather, the one flock of all its citizens, gathered from all sides into that city; they see the joy of the mass, now after threshings and winnowings placed in the garner, fearing nothing, suffering no toil nor trouble; and, as yet abiding here, in the midst of the threshing they send forward their joy of hope, and pant for it, joining as it were their hearts to the Angels of God, and to that people which shall abide with them in joy for ever. Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God. For what wilt thou then do, O Jerusalem? Surely toil and groaning will pass away. What wilt thou do? wilt thou plough, or sow, or plant vines, or make voyages, or trade? What wilt thou do? Will it still be thy duty to be engaged in the works thou now doest, good though they are,

and spring from mercy? Consider thy numbers, consider on all sides thy company: see whether any hungers, for thee to give bread to; see whether any thirsts, for thee to give a cup of cold water to; see whether any is a stranger, for thee to take in; see whether any is sick, for thee to visit; see whether any is at strife, for thee to reconcile him; see whether any is dying, for thee to bury him. What then wilt thou do? Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God. Behold, this is thy business. As is wont to be said in inscriptions, 'Use it and be happy.' Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God.

7. Be ye Jerusalem; remember of whom it is said, Lord, in Thy city their image Thou shalt bring to nought. These are they who now rejoice in such pomps; among them are they who have not come hither to-day because there is a show. To whom is it a gift? to whom is it a loss? or why is it a gift? why is it a loss? For not they only who exhibit such shows are smitten with loss, but with much greater loss are they smitten who delight in gazing on them. The former have their chest drained of its gold, the latter have their breast robbed of the riches of righteousness. Most of the exhibitors of shows have to mourn for selling their estates; how ought the sinners to mourn, for losing their souls! Was it then for this that the Lord cried out on the Lord's Day, 'Watch ye,' that to-day men should watch in this way. I beseech you, ye citizens of Jerusalem, I beseech you by the peace of Jerusalem, by the Redeemer, the Builder, the Ruler of Jerusalem, that ye address your prayers to God for them. May they see, may they feel, that they are trifling; and, intent as they are on the sights which please them, may at length look on themselves, and be displeased. For in many we rejoice that this has already been done: and once we too sat there and were mad: and how many think we now sit there, who shall yet be, not only Christians, but also Bishops! From what is past, we conjecture what is to be: from what has already been done, we announce beforehand what God will do. Let your prayers be wakeful, ye groan not for nothing. Certainly they who have already escaped, praying for those who are still in danger, because they too having been among those in danger, are heard; and God shall drag His people out of the captivity of Babylon; by all means He shall redeem and deliver them, and the number of the saints who bear the image of God shall be perfected. They shall not be there, whose image in His city God shall spurn and bring to nought, because they too in their city, that is in

Babylon, have brought His image to nought. There shall be the people praising the Lord, whom now the Spirit of prophecy foreseeeth, and bids us exult in hope, and long for the reality. Praise in unison thy God, O Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Sion. Praise in unison, because thou consistest of many: praise, because thou hast been made one. We being many, saith the Apostle, are one in Christ. As then we are many, we praise in unison; as we are one, we praise. The same are many and one, because He in Whom they are one is ever One.

8. Wherefore, saith this Jerusalem, do I praise in unison the Lord, and, as Sion, praise my God? Jerusalem is the same as Sion. For different reasons has it the two names. Jerusalem meaneth 'visions of peace;' Sion meaneth 'watching.' See whether these words do not sound like sights; that the Gentiles may not think that they have sights and we have none. Sometimes after the theatre or amphitheatre breaks up, when the crowd of lost ones begins to be vomited forth from that den, sometimes, retaining in their minds images of their vain amusements, and feeding their memory with things not only useless but even hurtful, rejoicing in them as if they were sweet, while they are really deadly; they see often, it may be, the servants of God pass by, they recognise them by their garb or head-dress, or they know them by sight, and they say to one another, or inwardly, 'Wretched people, how much they lose!' Brethren, let us return their good will (for they do mean it well) with prayers to the Lord. They wish us well; but he that loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. If he hateth his own soul, how shall he love my soul? Yet with a perverse, and empty, and vain good will, if indeed it may be called good will, they grieve that we lose what they love: let us pray that they lose not what we love. Behold of what character that Jerusalem is to be which he exhorteth to praise, or rather foreseeeth will praise. For the praises of that city, when we shall see and love and praise, will not need to be urged on and stirred up by the voice of prophecy; but the Prophets now say this, to drink in as far as while they remain in this flesh they can, the future joys of the blessed, and then giving them forth into our ears, to arouse in us love of that city. Let us burn with longing, let us not be slothful in spirit.

9. But see of what character that Jerusalem is to be, which is to praise God, and how it is to praise; in a sort of perfection of bliss. Praise in unison, saith he, O Jerusalem, the Lord; praise thy God, O Sion. And, as though it said, how shall I be safe to praise? he saith, for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. Observe, brethren. He saith, He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. The making bars strong is not for open gates, but shut ones, wherefore most manuscripts read, He hath made strong the bolts of thy gates. Observe, beloved. He biddeth Jerusalem when closed in to praise the Lord. We praise in unison now, we praise now; but it is amid offences. Many where we wish not, enter in: many though we wish it not, go out: therefore offences are frequent. And because iniquity hath abounded, saith the Truth, the love of many waxeth cold: because men come in whom we cannot discern, because men go out whom we cannot retain. Wherefore is this? Because not yet is there perfection, not yet is there the bliss that shall be. Wherefore is this? Because as yet it is the threshing-floor, not yet the garner. What therefore will be then, save no fear that aught of this kind will happen? For praise in unison, O Jerusalem, the Lord; praise thy God, O Sion: for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. He hath made strong. He said not only, He hath set, but, He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. Let none go out, let none come in. Let none go out, we rejoice: let none come in, we fear. Nay, fear not this: when thou hast entered it will be said: only be thou in the number of virgins, who carried their oil with them.

10. For those virgins signify souls. For there were not really five, but among those five are thousands. For in the number five are understood thousands, not only of women but of men: for either sex is called woman, because they are the Church: and either sex, that is, the Church, is called a virgin. I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. Few have virginity in the flesh: all ought to have in heart. Virginity of the flesh is a body unsullied; virginity in heart is a faith uncorrupted. The whole Church therefore is called 'a Virgin,' and, in the masculine gender, 'the people of God,' and, 'one people,' and 'a single people,' and 'one Church,' and 'one dove:' and in this virginity are thousands of saints. The five virgins therefore signify all souls that are to enter into the kingdom of God, not without reason expressed by the number five, for the senses of the body known to all are five. For by five doors

entereth every thing through the body into the soul: either by the eye entereth what thou lookest after amiss, or by the ears, or by the smell, or by the taste, or by the touch. Whosoever hath admitted nothing that corrupteth by these five gates, is reckoned among the five virgins. Corruption is admitted through unlawful desires: but what is lawful and what not, the books of Scripture fully tell. Thou must then be among these five virgins: so shalt thou not fear that which is said, 'Let none enter:' for this is said, and shall be fulfilled; but it will be when thou hast entered; none shall shut the door against thee, but when thou hast entered, the gates of Jerusalem shall be shut, and the bars of its gates be made strong. For if thou chooseth either not to be a virgin in heart, or, though a virgin, among the foolish virgins, thou shalt remain outside, and knock in vain.

11. Who are the foolish virgins? They also are five: who, but they who have indeed continence of the flesh, so as to avoid the corruptions which come from all the senses, which I just enumerated? They avoid, so to speak, the corruptions which come from all sides; yet they bear not their good in their consciences before the eyes of God, but desire to please men therewith, and follow the judgment of others. They hunt after the good opinions of the multitude; they are of little value to themselves, while they desire to be dear to those who see them: their own conscience sufficeth them not. Rightly do they carry no oil with them. For oil is the state of glory itself, on account of its brightness and splendour. But what saith the Apostle? Behold the wise virgins carrying oil with them: but let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself alone, and not in another. These then are the wise virgins. But the foolish light indeed their lamps, that is, their works seem indeed to shine; but they shall fail and be extinguished, because they are not fed with oil from within. And while the Bridegroom tarrieth, they all sleep: for both sorts of men fall asleep in death, both the foolish and the wise; while the Lord delayeth His coming, they sink into this bodily, visible death, which all Christians know that Scripture describes by sleep: as the Apostle said of them that were sick, For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. By sleep, he meaneth, die. But, lo, the Bridegroom shall come, and all shall rise, but not all shall enter. The works of the foolish virgins shall fail, because they have not the oil of conscience: nor shall they find from whom to buy, what their flatterers used to sell to

them. For they are mocking, not grudging, who say to them, Go and buy for yourselves. For the foolish had begged of the wise, and had said to them, Give us oil, for our lamps are gone out. What said the wise? Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and you, go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. This was in fact reminding them, ‘What do they now profit you, from whom ye were wont to buy flattery?’ And while they were going, Scripture saith, the others went in, and the door was shut. While they are going in heart, while they are thinking on these things, while they, putting off from them their former purpose, are recalling back their past deeds, they, as it were, are going to them that sell: and they find not others to aid them, they find not then to praise them those by whom they were wont to be praised, and to be roused, as they thought, to good works, not by the strength of a good conscience, but by the incitement of another’s tongue.

12. Those words too, lest perchance there be not enough for us, are said with great humbleness of thought. For the oil which we bear in our consciences is our judgment of our own character, and it is difficult for a man to judge perfectly concerning himself. My brethren, however much a man advance, however much he reach forth unto those things which are before, and forget those things which are behind, if he once say to himself, ‘It is well,’ there cometh forth a rule from the storehouse of God; it examineth him accurately, and who shall boast that he hath a pure heart, who shall boast that he is clean from sin? But what saith Scripture, Judgment without mercy to him who hath shewed no mercy. However much progress thou makest, thou must hope in mercy. For if justice without mercy be brought forth, in any one it will find what it may condemn. And what Scripture comforteth us? That which exhorteth us to shew mercy, that we be altogether frequent in giving what we have beyond our needs. For we have many superfluities, if we keep nothing but what is necessary; for if we seek empty vanities, nothing is enough. My brethren, seek what is enough for God’s work, not what is sufficient for your greediness. Your greediness is no work of God. Your self, your body, your soul, this is all God’s work. Enquire what is enough for them, and thou shalt see how little it is. Two pieces of money were enough for the widow to shew mercy with: two pieces of money were enough to buy the Kingdom of God. What is enough for the giver of shows to clothe them that fight with wild beasts so often?

See that not only is it little which is enough for yourselves, but neither doth God Himself require much from thee. Find out how much He hath given thee, and take of that what is enough: all other things which remain as superfluities are the necessities of others. The superfluities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. Thou possessest what belongs to others, when thou possessest more than thou needest.

13. If then thou doest deeds of mercy of this kind, and specially that which costeth thee nothing, namely, forgive as we forgive, (wherein thou spendest nought but charity, which groweth in the spending,) if thou doest, I say, and art fervent in these good works of mercy, (which good works themselves will be needless then, because then there will be no one miserable, to whom mercy may be shewn,) thou wilt await in safety the judgment, in safety not so much on account of thy righteousness, as on account of the mercy of God, because thou too hast first shewed mercy. For judgment without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy: and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. Think not, brethren, that then He is not just when He sheweth us no mercy, or that He departeth from the standard of His justice. Both when He condemneth, He is just, and when He sheweth mercy, He is just. For what so just as to repay mercy to one who sheweth it first? What so just, as that in what measure ye mete, it be measured to you again? Give to thy brother in need. What brother? To Christ. If then because in giving to thy brother, thou givest to Christ, and in Christ to God, Who is over all, blessed for ever; God hath willed to need at thy hand, and dost thou hold thy hand back? Certainly thou stretchest out thine hand, and askest of God: hear then the Scripture; let not thine hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldest give. God willeth that somewhat be spent upon Him, of that which He hath given. For what givest thou, which He gave not? For what hast thou, which thou hast not received? or rather, not to say to God, dost thou give aught to any one of what is thine own? Of His thou givest Who biddeth thee give. Prefer to spend rather than to seize. If then thou doest this, and in true humility sayest of that oil, test haply there be not enough for us, then thou enterest in, and the door is shut. Hear the Apostle saying so: to me it is a very small thing to be judged of you. For how can ye judge my conscience? How can ye examine with what mind I do what I do? How far can men judge of their neighbour? Surely a man can judge better about

himself: but better can God judge about a man, than the man about himself. If then thou shalt have been such as this, thou shalt enter, thou shalt be among the five virgins; the other foolish ones shall be shut out. For this thou hast in the Gospel. The door shall be shut, and they shall stand and cry, Open unto us, and it shall not be opened: for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates: He hath made strong, saith he, the bars of thy gates: now thou art safe: in safety praise: praise without end. Firmly are thy gates shut: no friend goeth out: no enemy cometh in. He hath made strong the bars of thy gates.

14. He hath blessed thy children within thee. They roam not without, they wander not; within they rejoice, within they praise, within they are blest: within they no longer are in travail, for now they give not birth to any. They are sons, they are holy. These holy sons, now praising and rejoicing, their mother, love, has already travailed with and given birth to; they are shut within, because love has gathered them. Hear love travailing with them: for the Apostle Paul, filled with love, having not only a father's but a mother's heart toward his sons, saith, My children, of whom I travail in birth again. When Paul travailed in birth with them, it was love that travailed in birth; when love travailed in birth with them, it was the Spirit of God that travailed: for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us. Let Him then gather whom He has travailed in birth with, and brought forth. Now the sons are within, they are safe. They have flown from the nest of fear, they have flown to the heavenly places, they have flown to everlasting abodes: they fear no longer any thing temporal.

15. He hath blessed thy children within thee. Who? He Who hath set peace as thy borders. How ye all exult! Love peace, my brethren. Greatly are we delighted, when the love of peace crieth from your hearts. How greatly doth it delight you! I had said nothing: I had explained nothing: I but read the verse, and ye shouted. What was it that shouted in you? The love of peace. What have I shewn to your eyes? Wherefore shout ye, if ye love not? Wherefore love ye, if ye see not? But peace is invisible. What eye is there that hath seen her, so as to love her? Yet would ye not shout, if ye loved not. These are the shows which God exhibiteth of things invisible. With how

great beauty hath the perception of peace smitten your hearts! Why should I go on to speak of peace, or of the praises of peace? Your feelings have anticipated all my words: I cannot attain to it: I am unable: I am too weak. Let us all defer the praises of peace, till we come to the country of peace. There we shall praise it more fully, for we shall enjoy it more fully. If thus we love it when it is but begun in us, how shall we praise it when it is perfected? Behold, this I say, O beloved sons, O children of the kingdom, O citizens of Jerusalem, in Jerusalem is the vision of peace: and all who love peace are blest in her, and they enter in, when the doors are being shut, and the bars made strong. This, which when but named ye so love and esteem, this follow after, this long for: this love in your home, in your business, in your wives, in your sons, in your slaves, in your friends, in your enemies.

16. This is the peace which heretics have not. What doeth peace, while still in the uncertainties of this present region, in this pilgrimage of our mortal nature? wherein none is manifest to another, none can see the heart of another? What doeth peace? It judgeth not about things uncertain; it establisheth not things unknown: it is more ready to believe well of a man than to suspect ill. It grieveth not, as having made a grievous error, when it thinketh well even of a bad man; it doth grieve, as having made a deadly error, when it hath happened to think evil of a good man. 'I know not what he is; what loss is it, if I believe that he is good. If it be uncertain, thou mayest be cautious, lest perchance it be true; yet thou mayest not condemn, as though it were true.' Thus doth peace bid thee. Seek peace, she saith, and ensue it. What doth heresy bid? It condemneth those whom it knoweth not; it condemneth the whole world: the whole world, it saith, hath perished; there is no Christian left, Africa alone remaineth. Thou hast judged well. From what tribunal dost thou pass sentence on the whole world? In what court hath the world stood before thee? I do not desire men to believe me, but that they believe not thee either: let Christ be believed, let the Spirit of God in the prophets be believed, let the law of Moses be believed. What said Moses of these times which were to come? To Abraham it was said, in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. Dost thou doubt what is meant by 'the seed of Abraham?' When the Apostle hath spoken, I think thou wilt not doubt; or if thou doubtest about the Apostle too, wherefore peace, peace, when there is no peace? What saith the Apostle? To Abraham

and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Lo, hundreds of years before it was said to Abraham, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. What was said hundreds of years before, and believed by one man, that we now see fulfilled. Here we read it, here we see it, and dost thou come athwart it and refuse it? What wilt thou say? Believe not. Believe not whom? The Spirit of God? God speaking to Abraham? And whom am I to believe? Thee? I say not this, thou wilt say. What then dost thou say to me? This man and that have handed it down. Dost thou quote this from the Gospel, from the Apostle, from the Prophets? Examine all the Scriptures: read me this from what I believe; for thee I believe not. From whence wilt thou read? This, my father, saith he, told me; this, my grandfather; this, my brother; this, my bishop. Yes; but this God said to Abraham, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. One man heareth this, and believeth, and it happeneth in many cases after many ages. When it is said, it is believed; when it is fulfilled, is it doubted? This then Moses said; let the Prophets speak also. Behold the barter of our purchasing. Christ hangeth on the wood: behold the Price at which He bought, and so shalt thou see what He bought. He is about to buy somewhat: what that somewhat is as yet thou knowest not. Behold, behold the Price, and thou shalt see the thing. His own Blood He shed; with His own Blood He bought; with the Blood of the immaculate Lamb He bought; with the Blood of the only-begotten Son of God He bought. What was bought with the Blood of the only-begotten Son of God? Look still what the Price was. The Prophet said long before it took place, They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they counted all My Bones. I behold, O Christ, a mighty Price; let me see what Thou hast purchased. All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. In one and the same Psalm I see the Purchaser, and the Price, and the Purchase. The Purchaser, is Christ; the Price, His Blood; the Purchase, the world. Let us hear the very words of prophecy contradicting heretical questioners. Behold the Purchase of my Lord. Wilt thou that I read it in the Psalm? All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord, and all the countries of the Gentiles shall worship before Him. Behold Him too contending, behold Him defending the right: for the Kingdom is His, and He shall rule over the Gentiles. Yes, He Who bought, even Christ, not he who apostatised, Donatus. They shall worship.

Rightly shall all the countries of the Gentiles worship before Him. Wherefore rightly? Because the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the Gentiles. So spake Moses, so spake the Prophets, and thousands of other things have they said too. Who can count the testimonies to the Church scattered throughout the whole world? Who can count them? there are not as many heresies against the Church, as there are testimonies of the Law for the Church. What page soundeth not thus? what verse speaketh not this? All cry out for the Lord's unity, because He hath made the borders of Jerusalem peace. Dost thou, O heretic, bark against this? Therefore is it rightly said in reference to that city, as it is written in the Apocalypse, without are dogs. Thou barkest against this. Where hast thou passed judgment on the whole world, as I said at the beginning? on what tribunal? Why, on the arrogance of thine own heart. A lofty tribunal, but one that shall fall. Thus spake Moses, thus spake the Prophets, and yet they believe not, who would be thought Christians.

17. A certain rich man was tormented in hell, and longed for a drop of water from the finger of the poor man who had lain despised before his gate, because he was burned in the flames. And when this was not granted to him, because there shall be judgment without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy; when, I say, this was not granted to him, he said to Abraham, Father Abraham, I have five brethren; send Lazarus to tell them what I am suffering here, that they come not also into this place of torment. And what said Abraham to him? They have there Moses and the Prophets. And he said, My father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. Then said Abraham, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one went unto them from the dead. Of whom said he, they have there Moses and the Prophets? Surely of those who were yet alive, who had yet abundant time of amendment, who had not yet come into those regions of torments. They have there, he saith, those whom they may hear, Moses and the Prophets. They believe not these, but if one went unto them from the dead they will believe. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one went unto them from the dead. This is Abraham's statement. Abraham's statement where and whence? From some place on high, and full of rest and happiness, which he who was being tormented in the flame lifted up his

eyes and saw; when in his bosom, that is in his secret place, he saw the poor man in happiness and exaltation, thence was that statement made. There God dwelleth, for God dwelleth in His saints. Wherefore the Apostle wisheth and saith, To be dissolved and to be with Christ is far better. So to the thief it is said, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise. The Lord then, dwelling with Abraham and in Abraham, uttered that statement, They have there Moses and the Prophets; if they hear not them, neither, though one rose from the dead, will they believe him. Ye have here, O ye heretics, Moses and the Prophets; as yet ye are alive, as yet ye can hear, as yet ye can amend, as yet it is allowed you to bridle your violence, to hold the truth: consider with yourselves whether it be right to listen to Moses and the Prophets, who have given so great proofs of their credibility, when we see the affairs of men running in the course which they foretold. Why do ye still hesitate to believe Moses and the Prophets? Why do ye hesitate to listen? Do ye perchance seek one rising from the dead, whether He too can tell you about His Church? This is what the rich man in hell sought; he was blamed because he sought this; Moses and the Prophets ought to have been enough for his brethren. For this cause did he ask in vain, that ye now, being warned by his example, might not ask in vain and too late, and be tormented like him. Hear Moses and the Prophets. What said Moses? In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. What said the Prophets? All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. Wilt thou still say to me, 'Let one rise from the dead; I believe not, unless one come from thence and tell me?' O Lord, thanks to Thy mercy: Thou didst will to die, that one might rise from the dead; and that one, not any body, but the Truth, Who rose from the dead. He Who could have spoken the truth concerning the place of the dead, though He went not thither, yet on account of what foolish and wicked men say, lo, He died, lo, He rose from the dead. What sayest thou, O heretic, what sayest thou? Now let me hear thee; all thy excuses are at an end; though thou wast to speak the words of the rich man in hell, Christ hath risen from the dead: deignest thou to listen even to Him? Behold, what thou alive longedst for, like the rich man when dead: He is risen from the grave: it is not thy father nor thy grandfather that have risen: it is not they, who have discredited some with the name of 'traditores.' But suppose they have not discredited them, but have spoken the truth: wilt thou know how little it is to me? Let us hear at the same time

what He said, Who hath risen from the grave. Why should I delay longer? Let us hear, let the Gospel now be opened, let what was done be read as if it were being done: let things which have been done be set before our eyes, that we may avoid what are to come. Behold, Christ rising from the dead, shewed Himself to His disciples. This was His bridal: He is the Bridegroom; the Church, His Spouse. Behold the Bridegroom, Who was said to be dead, destroyed, at an end; behold, He hath risen whole as before; behold, He is shewn to the eyes of His disciples; behold, He is offered to the handling of their hands; behold, they touched the scars, which were despaired of as wounds. He manifested Himself for their eyes to see, for their hands to handle; they think Him a spirit, for they despaired of His safety. He encourageth them, He strengtheneth them in the faith; Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. They touch, they rejoice, they tremble: and while they yet trembled for joy: thus thou hast it written. Things which are exceedingly joyful, though they are sure, yet are they not believed. A certain doubt, as though a man were slow to believe, hides the feelings of him who has what he sought. A man must needs rejoice the more, when what he despaired of has come to him. So to season and increase their joy, He willed not to be at once known. He held the sight of His disciples, specially of those two whom He found conversing by the way, already in despair, and saying, But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel. This they had thought, but now thought no longer. Hope was no longer with them, yet Christ was with them: but He Who gave them back Himself, gave them back hope too. Afterwards then, after that they had recognised Him in the breaking of bread, when He shewed Himself to the other disciples, and they thought that He was a spirit, He said, Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And while they yet trembled for joy, He saith unto them, Have ye here any meat? He took, He blessed, He ate, He gave to them. The truth of His Body was set forth, all suspicion of deceit was removed. What then? Knew ye not that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me? And because they believed Moses and the Prophets, (for that was true which Abraham said, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead:) because, I say, they believed Moses and the Prophets, and were not of the number of those

whom Abraham found fault with, they heard what the Lord said, Knew ye not that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me? Behold them who believed Moses and the Prophets, see how on their testimony they believe Him Who rose from the dead. Then opened He their understanding that they should understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day.

18. Here thou hast the Bridegroom of the Church. And about Him Moses was not silent, the Prophets were not silent, that Christ should rise from the dead on the third day; that He should suffer, and then rise. The Bridegroom is described to us, that we may make no mistake. But certain persons come forward, and, because we are not wrong in the Bridegroom, they themselves too seem to believe the same as we do about the Bridegroom, that they may draw us away from the members of the Bridegroom; they say to us, 'Yes, He is the Bridegroom, Whom ye believe, and we believe Him too, but the Bride is not the Church, whom ye hold to be.' What then is? 'The party of Donatus.' And this what thou sayest: dost thou say this, or the Bridegroom? Dost thou say it, or God by Moses? Behold, through Moses I hold the Church: it is said by Moses, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. Dost thou say it, or the Spirit of God by the Prophets? Behold, through the Prophets I hold the Church: it is said by the Prophet, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. Behold, already I hold the testimony of the Law and the testimony of the Prophets: let us hear moreover Him Who rose from the dead. He sheweth Himself as the Bridegroom: we hold Him. He confirmed this by proof, by exhibiting testimonies. For this Moses and the Prophets said, that it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day. Now then since we both hold the Bridegroom from these words, and I think that thou now art beginning with me to believe both these words of Moses and the Prophets, let us believe Him also Who rose from the dead. Let Him go on, and say, 'O Lord, I see now Christ the Bridegroom: it is done; let none separate me from the members of Thy Bride, and so Thou be not to me the Head, if I be not among her members. Tell me somewhat about the Church too, for I no longer doubt about her Bridegroom.' Hear about the Church too: He goeth

on and saith, that in His Name should be preached repentance and remission of sins. Nothing could be truer: that in His Name should be preached repentance and remission of sins. But where? For some say, lo here, others say, lo there. And what saith He Himself? Believe them not, for there shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall say, lo here, and, lo there. For they say not of the Head Himself, lo here, and, lo there; for it is well known that Christ is in heaven; but of the Church, where Christ is, Who saith, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. But the Lord saith, Believe them not. He who saith, lo here, and lo there, pointeth to parts: I have bought the whole. Let the Gospel tell me this: let Him Himself tell this from the Gospel; for Thou hast risen from the dead, that they may believe Thee, who believe Moses and the Prophets: do Thou tell me this. I hear, It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. What is it, O heretic? Certainly, when I was quoting Moses and the Prophets, thou didst wait for Him Who should rise from the dead: lo, He hath risen; lo, He hath spoken; as truly is there no doubt of the Church of Christ, and the Spouse of Christ, as there was none of the Body of Christ, when shewn to the eyes and handled by the hands of the disciples. Lo, He Who rose from the dead sheweth both: He sheweth the Head, He sheweth the members: He sheweth the Bridegroom, He sheweth the Bride: either believe both with me, or else thou believest what thou dost to thy condemnation. For why believest thou that He rose from the dead, that He rose in the same Body? 'On good grounds: because He shewed the scars of His wounds: because, as He was crucified and buried, so was He restored and proved.' Thou believest quite right. Now hear Him in Whom thou believest, speaking: That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name. Where? Throughout the broad earth. If I chose to say this, now struggling against heretics, now fighting, now having a contest with them on so important a question, I should not say it against present heretics as strongly as He said what He did say against future ones. What wouldest thou have more? Remission of sins is preached in Christ's Name. Where? Throughout all nations. Whence? Beginning at Jerusalem. Communicate with this Church. Wherefore do we contend? For this Church began from the earthly Jerusalem, that from thence it may rejoice unto God in the other, the heavenly Jerusalem. From

this it beginneth, in that it endeth. In that the Church will be entire, from this it took the beginning of its faith.

19. Read the Acts of the Apostles, and see whether I lie, how there the disciples were gathered together, when the Holy Ghost came; that that which the Lord said may be proved to thee, beginning from Jerusalem; how they on whom the Spirit came, spake in the tongues of all men. Wherefore wilt thou not speak in the tongues of all men? Lo, there were heard the sounds of all tongues. Wherefore doth not he, to whom the Holy Ghost is given, now speak in the tongues of all men? For this was then the token of the Holy Ghost coming upon men, that they spake in the tongues of all men. What wilt thou say now, O heretic? that the Holy Ghost is not given? I say not where it is given; but is it not given? If it is not given, what is it that ye do, preaching, baptizing, blessing? What is it that ye do? These are empty celebrations. He is then given. If He is given, wherefore do not they to whom He is given speak in the tongues of all men? Hath the gift of God failed, or is the fruit thereof less? The tares grew, but the wheat grew also. Let both grow together till the time of the harvest. He said not, 'Let the tares grow, let the wheat decrease;' both grew. Wherefore doth not the Holy Ghost now manifest Himself in the tongues of all men? Yea rather, He doth manifest Himself in all tongues: for then the Church was not spread throughout the world, so that the members of Christ should speak in all tongues. Then was fulfilled in one what was foretold in all. Now the whole Body of Christ speaketh in the tongues of all, and in whatsoever it speaketh not, it will speak. For the Church shall increase till it filleth every tongue. That which ye have abandoned, how great hath it grown! Advance with us whithersoever it hath approached, that with us ye may reach places whither it hath not yet approached. I dare to say to thee, I speak in the tongues of all men: I am in the Body of Christ, in the Church of Christ: if the Body of Christ now speaketh in the tongues of all men, I also am in all tongues: mine is the Greek, mine the Syrian, mine the Hebrew, mine the tongues of all nations, because I am in the unity of all nations.

20. So then, brethren, the Church began from Jerusalem, and spread through all nations. What is more clear than this testimony of the Law, the Prophets, and of the Lord Himself? The voices of the Apostles sound every

where, giving testimony of our hope in the unity of the Body of Christ. Rejoice over the wheat, tolerate the tares, groan in the threshing, sigh for the garner. The time will come when we shall rejoice, when the bars of the gates of Jerusalem are made strong. Let him enter, who is to enter. He who shall enter there manifested, here entereth not disguised. But he who entereth here disguised, is really without. He is without, and knows it not: the fan will prove it, the bars will prove it. He who now is truly and truthfully within, there will be finally within: he who now is within by enduring, there will be within in rejoicing. For the borders of Jerusalem are peace; for he saith, He hath set peace for thy borders. Now we long for peace, which here we have but in hope. For as yet in ourselves what sort of peace is there? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Where is full peace even in one man? When there shall be full peace in one man, then shall there be full peace in all the citizens of Jerusalem. When will there be full peace? When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then will be full peace, then will be firm peace: then nothing contendeth against the soul in man, not itself against itself, being wounded in one part; not frailty of flesh, not want of body, not hunger, not thirst, not cold, not weariness, not any need, no provocation of strife, certainly not the anxious care at once to avoid and to love one's enemy. All these things, brethren, contend against us, not yet is there full and perfect peace. What ye cried out awhile ago at the very mention of peace, ye cried from longing: your cry was from thirst, not from fulness; for there will be perfect righteousness where will be perfect peace. Now we hunger and thirst after righteousness. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. How shall they be filled? When we have arrived at peace. Therefore when he had said, Who hath set peace for thy borders, because there is fulness and no want, he added at once, and filleth thee with the fat of wheat.

21. Brethren, since this peace whereof we speak is not yet entirely in us, that is, entire in each one of us, it delighteth perhaps your spirits to go on yet to listen: but if there be nothing in the body which resists and rebels, let us finish the Psalm. I never find you weary, yet I fear, God knoweth, lest I be a burden to you, or to some of the brethren: and I see how zealously many of you demand of me this toil and effort, which I believe will not be

unfruitful in the Lord. I rejoice that ye find such pleasure in the truth of the Word of God, that your good zeal in what is good and concerning what is good, surpasses the zeal of the madmen who are in the amphitheatre. Would they still be at their show, if they had to stand so long? Therefore, brethren, let us hear the rest, since so ye will. May the Lord be with us, may He be with our strength and our understandings. Who hath set peace for thy borders, he saith to the Jerusalem that is to be, and satisfieth thee with the fat of wheat. Hunger and thirst after righteousness pass away, plenty succeedeth. What will then be the fat of wheat, save that Bread which came down from heaven to us! In our true country how will He satisfy us, Who in our pilgrimage hath thus fed us!

22. Now he is about to speak of this our pilgrimage, whereby we come to that Jerusalem, where we shall praise in unison the Lord; where we shall praise the Lord our God, ourselves Jerusalem, ourselves Sion; when the bars of our gates shall be made strong. For He Who then will satisfy us with the fat of wheat, what doeth He in this our pilgrimage? Who sendeth forth His Word to the earth. Behold, on earth we toil, weary, fainting, sluggish, cold: when should we be raised up to the fat of wheat that satisfieth, did not He send His Word to the earth, whereby we were weighed down, to the earth, whereby we were hindered from returning? He sent His Word, He deserted us not even in the wilderness, He rained manna from heaven. Who sendeth forth His Word to the earth; and to earth His Word came. How? or what is His Word? Even unto swiftness His Word runneth. He said not, 'His Word is swift,' but, His Word runneth even unto swiftness. Let us understand, my brethren: He could not have chosen a better word. He who is hot grows hot by heat, he who is cold grows cold by cold, he who is swift becometh swift by swiftness. What is hotter than heat itself, whereby whatever is hot groweth hot? what is colder than cold itself, whereby whatever is cold groweth cold? What then is swifter than swiftness itself, whereby whatever runneth swiftly is made swift? Many things may be called swift, some more, some less; and in that degree is each thing swift, in which it is partaker of swiftness. This thing is in a greater degree partaker of swiftness, therefore it is swifter: this thing is in a less degree partaker of swiftness, therefore it is less swift. Than swiftness itself then, what is swifter? To what degree then doth it run? Even to swiftness. Increase as

much as you will the swiftness of the Word, and say, It is as swift as this or that, as birds, as the winds, as the Angels; is any of these as great as swiftness itself, even unto swiftness? What is swiftness itself, brethren? It is every where; it is not in part. This belongeth to the Word of God, not to be in part, to be every where by Himself the Word, whereby He is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, before He had taken flesh upon Him. If we think of God in the Form of God, the Word equal to the Father, this is the Wisdom of God, of Which is said, It reacheth from one end to the other mightily. What mighty speed! It reacheth from one end to the other mightily. But perhaps it reacheth without being moveable. If without being moveable it filleth any space like some mass of stone, it is said to reach from one end to the other of the same space, yet not by motion. What say we then? Hath then that Word no motion, and is that Wisdom senseless? Where is then that which is said of the Spirit of Wisdom? After much else, it is called quick, full of motion, plain, undefiled. Thus then the Wisdom of God is evidently endowed with motion. If then it be endowed with motion, when it toucheth this, doth it not also touch that? Where then is swiftness? Swiftness maketh it to be every where always, yet no where to be imprisoned and detained. But these things are beyond our thoughts: we are too sluggish for them. Who can think on these things? And in truth, brethren, I have spoken as I could, (if indeed I could, if indeed I understood,) and ye have understood as ye were able. But what saith the Apostle? Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. What meaneth he here? That however often we have understood, we have not understood Him as He is. Wherefore is this? Because the corruptible body presseth down the soul. Therefore on earth are we cold, for swiftness is hot; and all that is hot is swift, all that is cold, slow. We are slow, therefore we are cold. But Wisdom runneth even unto swiftness. Therefore it is exceeding hot, and there is nothing that can hide itself from the heat thereof.

23. We then are burdened by the sluggishness of this cold body, and the bonds of this earthly and corruptible life; have we no hope of receiving the Word, Which runneth even unto swiftness? or hath He abandoned us, though by the body we are depressed to the lowest depths? Did not He predestinate us, before we were born in this mortal and sluggish body? He

then, Who predestinated us, gave snow to the earth, even ourselves. For now let us come to those somewhat obscure verses of the Psalm, let those entanglements begin to be unrolled: since the Word of God findeth you the more eager, the more it is uttered to you by us. Behold, we are sluggish on this earth, and are as it were frozen here. And just as happens to the flakes of snow, for they freeze above, then fall down; so as love groweth cold, human nature falleth down to this earth, and involved in a sluggish body becometh like snow. But in that snow are predestined sons of God. For, He giveth snow like wool. What is, like wool? It meaneth, of the snow which He hath given, of these, who are as yet slow in spirit and cold, whom He hath predestinated, He is about to make somewhat. For wool is the material of a garment: when we see wool, we look on it as a sort of preparation for a garment. Therefore since He hath predestinated these, who at present are cold and creep on earth, and as yet glow not with the spirit of love, (for as yet He speaketh of predestination,) God hath given these as a sort of wool: He is about to make of them a garment. Rightly did the raiment of Christ shine on the mountain, like snow. The raiment of Christ did shine like snow, as though of that snow a garment had already been made: of which wool, that is, of the snow which He gave like wool, they being as yet predestined, were sluggish: but wait, see what followeth. Since He gave them as wool, a garment is made of them. For as the Church is called the Body of Christ, so is the Church also called the garment of Christ: hence cometh that which is said by the Apostle, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle. Let Him then present unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle; let Him make Himself a garment of that wool, which He had predestinated in the snow. While men are yet unbelieving, and cold, and sluggish, let Him make a garment of this wool. That it may be washed from spots, let it be cleansed by faith: that it may have no wrinkle, let it be stretched out upon the cross. Who giveth snow like wool.

24. Now if they are predestined, they are to be called. For whom He predestined, them He also called. Now how are they called from the sickness of the body, to become sound? How are they called? Hear the Gospel: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. That snow then beginneth at once in predestination to acknowledge its

sluggishness, to accuse its sins; it beginneth, being called, to come to repentance. Rightly then is it said. Who giveth snow like wool, on account of the completion of the garment that is to be; and also on account of the calling to repentance, He scattereth mist like ashes. He scattereth, saith the Psalmist, mist like ashes. Who? He Who giveth snow like wool. For whom He predestined, He calleth to repentance; for whom He predestined, them He also called. But ashes are connected with repentance. Hear Him calling to repentance, when He upbraided certain cities, saying, Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they had long ago repented in dust and ashes. Therefore, He scattereth mist like ashes. What is, He scattereth mist like ashes? When a man is called to learn about God, and it is said to him, 'Receive the Truth;' he beginneth to wish to receive the Truth, but is not able; he seeth that He is under a sort of darkness, which before he saw not. For this purpose then is that mist, that thou mayest know that thou knowest nothing, and that thou mayest know what thou oughtest to know, and mayest see that thou art too weak to know what ought to be known. For if while in this mist thou presumest that thou knowest, thou shalt hear from the Apostle, He who thinketh he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. Therefore as yet thou hast not comprehended, as yet thou art under a mist. But He hath not abandoned thee, Who lit up for thee the lamp of His Flesh. Wander not in the mist, follow in faith. But forasmuch as thou endeavourest to see and art not able, repent of thy sins, for mist is scattered like ashes. Repent thee now of having been obstinate against God, repent of having followed thine own evil ways. Thou hast come into this state where it is difficult for thee to see the vision of bliss, and the mist will be healthful to thee, which God scattereth like ashes. Thou thyself art as yet a mist, but like ashes. For they that are penitent, as yet roll themselves in ashes, my brethren, testifying, as it were, that they are like it, saying unto God, 'I am ashes.' For a certain Scripture saith, I have despised myself, and wasted away, I have reckoned myself earth and ashes. This is the humility of the penitent. When Abraham speaketh to his God, and wisheth the burning of Sodom to be disclosed to him, he saith, I am but earth and ashes. How hath this humility ever been found in great and holy men! He scattereth their mist like ashes.

Wherefore? Because whom He predestinated, them He also called, Who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

25. Who sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread. We need not spend our toil again in saying what crystal is. We have already said it, and I do not think that ye, beloved, have forgotten it. What is then, He sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread? Just as that snow is His, because it is of the predestinated; just as that mist is His, because they are called to repentance, who are predestinated to salvation, so the crystal is in a manner His. What is crystal? It is very hard, it is very tightly congealed; it cannot, like snow, be easily melted. Snow, hardened by many years' duration, and by the succession of ages, is called crystal, and this He sendeth like morsels of bread. What meaneth this? They were too hard, no longer fit to be compared to snow, but to crystal; but they too are predestinated and called, and some of them even so as to feed others, to be useful to others also. And what need is there to enumerate many, whom we happen to know, this one and that one? Every one when he thinks can recall to mind how hardened and obstinate some of those whom he knows have been, how they have struggled against the truth; yet now they preach the truth, they have been made morsels of bread. Who is that one Bread? We being many, saith the Apostle, are one Body in Christ; he saith also, we being many are one Bread and one Body. If then the whole Body of Christ is one Bread, the members of Christ are morsels of Bread. Of some that are hard He maketh members of Himself, and useful for feeding others. Why go we through many instances? Let us look on the well-known Apostle Paul. Nothing is better known to us than he, nothing sweeter, nothing in all Scripture more familiar. And if there have been, who from being as hard as he was have been made Bread, let his example set before us recall all, that the meaning may be unfolded of, He sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread. Behold, the Apostle Paul was a crystal, hard, resisting the truth, crying out against the Gospel, hardening himself, as it were, against the sun. How hard was he, profiting in the law, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, a teacher of the law. He heard not Moses and the Prophets preaching Christ. Great hardness this. True, the Gentiles had not heard the Prophets, had not heard Moses; they were cold, but they were not crystal. He who believed words that preached Christ, but believed not Christ when He came, he was exceeding

hardened. Since then he was crystal, he appeared clear and white, but he was hard and very cold. How was he bright and white? An Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee. Behold the brightness of crystal. Now hear the hardness of crystal. As touching zeal, persecuting the Church of Christ. Among the stoners of the holy martyr Stephen, was he, hard, perhaps harder than all. For he kept the raiment of all who were stoning, so that he stoned by the hands of all.

26. Thus then we see the snow, the mist, the crystal: it is good that He blow and thaw them. For if He blow not, if He Himself thaw not the hardness of this ice, in the face of His cold who shall stand? In the face of His cold: whose? God's. Whence is His cold? Behold, He abandoneth a sinner, behold, He calleth him not; behold, He openeth not his perception; behold, He poureth not in grace; let the man thaw himself, if he can, from the ice of folly. He cannot. Wherefore can he not? In the face of His cold who shall stand? Behold him then growing harder, and saying, I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and enslaving me to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Behold, I am growing cold, behold, I am growing hard, what heat shall thaw me that I may run? Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? In the face of His cold who shall stand? And who shall free himself, if God abandon him? Who is it that freeth? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Hear here also the grace of God: Who sendeth forth His crystal like morsels of bread; who shall stand in the face of His cold? Are we then to despair? God forbid. For it goeth on, He shall send out His Word, and melt them. Let not then the snow despair, nor the mist, nor the crystal. For of the snow, as of wool, a garment is being made. That mist findeth safety in repentance: for, whom He predestinated, them He also called. But even though they be the very hardest among the predestinated, though they have been for a long time hardening, and are become crystal, they will not be hard to the mercy of God. He shall send out His Word, and melt them. What is melt? Understand not melt in an ill sense: it meaneth, He shall liquify He shall thaw them. For they are hard through pride. Rightly is pride called also dulness: for whatever is dull, is also cold. It is an every day saying of men when they are chilled, 'I was dulled.' Pride then is dulness. He shall send out His

Word, and melt them. And, in truth, heaps of snow, when they are heated, melt in humility. Just then as cold heapeth up snow into mountains, as it were, so doth pride lift up fools. He shall send out His Word, and melt them. Behold that crystal Saul, after the slaughter and stoning of Stephen, came dull with a kind of hardness against Christ, and asked letters of the high priest that he might every where inform against the Christians, breathing out slaughters. Hard he is and cold against the fire of God. But hard and cold though he was, behold, He Who shall send out His Word, and melt them, called from heaven with heat, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? By that one word, all that great hardness of crystal was melted. He shall send out then His Word, and melt them. Despair not of the crystal, much less of the snow, or of the mist. Despair not even of the crystal. Hear a saying of the crystal. Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But wherefore doth God melt the crystal? That the snow despair not of itself. For he saith, For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that hereafter should believe on Him unto eternal life. God then calleth unto the Gentiles, 'Be melted, O crystal; come, ye snows.' He shall send forth His Word, and melt them. His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow. Lo, the crystal and the snows are melted, they turn into water, let them that thirst, come and drink. Saul, hard as crystal, persecuted Stephen unto death; Paul, now in the living water, calleth the Gentiles to the Fount. His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow: the fervent spirit; whence it is said in another Psalm, Turn our captivity, O Lord, as a torrent in the south wind. For captive Jerusalem had, as it were, frozen in Babylon: the south wind blows, the chill of captivity is dissolved, the warmth of love runneth to God. His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow. He shall become in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

27. Announcing His Word unto Jacob, His Righteousnesses and Judgments unto Israel. What Righteousnesses, what Judgments? Because whatever mankind had suffered here before, when it was snow and mist and crystal, it suffered for the deserts of its pride and uplifting against God. Let us go back to the origin of our fall, and see that most truly is it sung in the Psalm, Before I was troubled I went wrong. But he who says, Before I was troubled I went wrong, saith also, It is good for me that Thou hast humbled

me, that I may learn Thy Righteousnesses. These righteousnesses Jacob learnt from God, Who made him to wrestle with an Angel, under the guise of which Angel God Himself wrestled with him. He held Him, he exerted violence to hold Him, he prevailed to hold Him: He caused Himself to be held, in mercy, not in weakness. Jacob therefore wrestled, and prevailed: he held Him, and when he seemed to have conquered Him, asked to be blessed of Him. How did he understand with Whom he had wrestled, Whom he had held? Wherefore did he wrestle violently, and hold Him? Because the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Wherefore then did he wrestle? Because it is with toil. Wherefore do we with difficulty hold, what we so easily lose? Lest, easily getting back what we have lost, we learn to lose that which we hold. Let man have toil to hold: he will hold firmly, what he has only held after toil. These His judgments therefore God manifested to Jacob and Israel. I will speak yet more openly: I mean, that even the righteous, while here, endure toils, dangers, annoyances, sufferings, for their deserts, by the righteous judgment of God. For He alone can say that He suffered here without cause: (though in this way He did not suffer without cause, in that He suffered for us: Who alone can say, I paid them then the things which I took not: Who alone could say, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and shall find nothing in Me. And as though it were said to Him, ‘Why then dost Thou suffer?’ He goeth on and saith, But that all men may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go hence. All others, who suffer for their own deserts by the judgment of God, and according to righteousness, let them not lay claim to suffering innocently as Christ did. Hear the Apostle Peter. It is time that judgment begin at the house of God. Exhorting the martyrs and witnesses of God to endure with perfect patience all the threats of the raging world, he saith to them, It is time that judgment begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Announcing His word unto Jacob, His righteousnesses and judgment to Israel.

28. He hath not done so to the whole race. Let none deceive you: it is not announced to any nation, this judgment of God; namely, how the righteous and the unrighteous suffer, how all suffer for their deserts, how the

righteous themselves are freed by the grace of God, not in their own merits. This is not announced to the whole race, but only to Jacob, only to Israel. What then do we, if He hath not announced it to the whole race, but only to Jacob, only to Israel? Where will we be? In Jacob. He hath not manifested His judgments to them. To whom? To all nations. How then are the snows called, when the crystal is melted? How are the nations called, now Paul is justified? How, save to be in Jacob? The wild olive is cut off from its stock, to be grafted into the olive: now they belong to the olive, no longer ought they to be called nations, but one nation in Christ, the nation of Jacob, the nation of Israel. Wherefore the nation of Jacob, and the nation of Israel? Because Jacob is the son of Isaac, Isaac of Abraham. But to Abraham what was said? In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. This was also said to Isaac and to Jacob. Wherefore we belong to Jacob, because we belong to Isaac, and to Abraham. For the seed of Abraham, as not I or any common man, but the Apostle himself, explaineth it, is Christ: he himself saith, He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. If we be one seed, we are one Jacob, one Israel, yea all nations are one man in Christ. That then belongeth to all nations, which He hath revealed to Jacob, to Israel: and they only are to be reckoned among the other nations, who, refusing to believe in Christ, refuse to leave the wild olive, and be grafted into the olive. They will remain among the wild trees, barren branches and bitter. Let Jacob rejoice. What is Jacob? The supplanter: because Jacob supplanted his brother. For blindness in part is happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in. Of Jacob is made Israel. What is Israel? Now let us all listen, all who are Israel, whether ye who are here among the members of Christ, or those who are without yet not without, and throughout all nations every where without, every where within; let Israel himself hear, who of Jacob was made Israel. What is Israel? 'Seeing God.' Where shall he see God? In peace. What peace? The peace of Jerusalem; for, saith he, He hath set peace for thy borders. There shall we praise: there shall we all be one, in One, unto One: for then, though many, we shall not be scattered.

PSALM 148

Exposition

Sermon to the People.

1. The subject of our meditation in this present life should be the praises of God; for the everlasting exaltation of our life hereafter will be the praise of God, and none can become fit for the life hereafter, who hath not practised himself for it now. So then now we praise God, but we pray to Him too. Our praise is marked by joy, our prayer by groans. For somewhat is promised to us, which as yet we have not: and so, because He Who hath promised is true, we rejoice in hope; but, because as yet we have not, we groan in longing. It is good for us to persevere in longing, till what is promised come, and so groaning pass away, praise alone succeed. On account of these two seasons, one, that which now is in the temptations and tribulations of this life, the other, that which is to be hereafter in everlasting rest and exultation; we have established also the celebration of two seasons, that before Easter and that after Easter. That which is before Easter signifieth tribulation, in which we now are; that which we are now keeping after Easter, signifieth the bliss in which we shall hereafter be. The celebration then which we keep before Easter is what we do now: by that which we keep after Easter we signify what as yet we have not. Therefore we employ that time in fastings and prayer, this present time we spend in praises, and relax our fast. This is the Halleluia which we sing, which, as you know, meaneth in Latin, Praise ye the Lord. Therefore that period is before the Lord's Resurrection, this, after His Resurrection: by which time is signified the future hope which as yet we have not: for what we represent after the Lord's Resurrection, we shall have after our own. For in our Head both are figured, both are set forth. The Baptism of the Lord setteth forth to us this present life of trial, for in it we must toil, be harassed, and, at last, die; but the Resurrection and Glorification of the Lord setteth forth to us the life

which we are to have hereafter, when He shall come to recompense due rewards, evil to the evil, good to the good. And now indeed all the evil men sing with us, Halleluia; but, if they persevere in their wickedness, they may utter with their lips the song of our life hereafter; but the life itself, which will then be in the reality which now is typified, they cannot obtain, because they would not practise it before it came, and lay hold on what was to come.

2. Now then, brethren, we exhort you that ye praise God; this is what we all say to one another, when we say, Halleluia. 'Praise the Lord,' thou sayest to thy neighbour, he to thee: when all are exhorting each other, all are doing what they exhort others to do. But praise with your whole selves: that is, let not your tongue and voice alone praise God, but your conscience also, your life, your deeds. For now, when we are gathered together in the Church, we praise: when we go forth each to his own business, we seem to cease to praise God. Let a man not cease to live well, and then he ever praiseth God. Then dost thou cease to praise God, when thou turnest aside from righteousness and from all that pleaseth Him. For, if thou never turn aside from a good life, though thy tongue be silent, yet thy life crieth out, and the ears of God are open to thy heart. For just as our ears are open to our voices, so God's ears are open to our thoughts. But it is impossible for a man's acts to be evil, whose thoughts are good. For acts issue from thought: nor can a man do any thing or move his limbs to do aught, unless the bidding of his thought precede: just as in all things which ye see done throughout the provinces, whatsoever the Emperor biddeth goeth forth from the inner part of his palace throughout the whole Roman Empire. How great commotion is caused at one bidding by the Emperor as he sits in his palace! He but moveth his lips, when he speaketh: the whole province is moved, when what he speaketh is being executed. So in each single man too, the Emperor is within, his seat is in the heart. If he be good and biddeth good things, good things are done: if he be bad and biddeth evil things, evil things are done. When Christ sitteth there, what can He bid, but what is good? When the devil is the occupant, what can he bid, but evil? But God hath willed that it should be in thy choice for whom thou wilt prepare room, for God, or for the devil: when thou hast prepared it, he who is occupant will also rule. Therefore, brethren, attend not only to the sound; when ye praise God, praise with your whole selves: let your voice, your life, your

deeds, all sing. And if there be still groaning, tribulation, temptation, hope that they will all pass away, and then the day will come when ye will praise without failure. This present Psalm is clear, and we may run over it quickly. For it arrayeth all creation to praise God, and as it were exhorteth it to praise, as though it had found it holding its peace.

3. Praise ye the Lord from heaven. As though he had found things in heaven holding their peace in the praise of the Lord, he exhorteth them to arise and praise. Never have things in heaven held their peace in the praises of their Creator, never have things on earth ceased to praise God. But it is manifest that there are certain things which have breath to praise God in that disposition wherein God pleaseth them. For no one praiseth ought, save what pleaseth him. And there are other things which have not breath of life and understanding to praise God, but yet, because they also are good, and duly arranged in their proper order, and form part of the beauty of the universe, which God created, though they themselves with voice and heart praise not God, yet when they are considered by those who have understanding, God is praised in them; and, as God is praised in them, they themselves too in a manner praise God. For instance, in heaven all things praise God, which have the breath of life, and a pure intelligence to contemplate and love Him without disgust or weariness. But on earth men praise God by their understanding whereby they discern good and evil, by their understanding whereby they know the creature and the Creator, because they can think of these things, because God has given them a mind to discern them, to love, and to praise. This man can do; but surely beasts have not this sort of understanding: if they had, God would not say to us, Be ye not like unto horse and mule, which have no understanding. When He exhorteth us not to be like beasts, which have no understanding, He sheweth us that to man He hath assigned an understanding whereby to praise God. And the trees surely have not so much as the life whereby they may have senses, like the beasts. For though the beasts have not the inner sense of reason, and an understanding, and a discerning mind, which man has, to praise God withal, yet they have an outward and visible life, as we all know, whereby they seek food, take what is for their good, reject what is harmful; they have senses whereby to discern corporeal things, sight to distinguish colour, hearing to distinguish sounds, smell to distinguish

odours, taste to distinguish flavours; they naturally move towards what pleases, away from what annoys them. This we understand and see before our eyes. They have not reason to understand with, but they have the breath of a living body, and a visible life: the trees have not even this; yet all of them praise God. Wherefore do they praise God? Because when we see them, and think upon the Creator Who made them, they cause to arise within us praise to God; and, since through consideration of them God is praised, all things praise God. He begins then with heaven: all things praise, and yet he says, Praise ye. Wherefore doth he say, Praise ye, when they are praising? Because he delighteth in their praising, and therefore it pleaseth him to add, as it were, his own encouragement. Just as, when you come to men who are doing any good work with pleasure in their vineyard or in their harvest field, or in some other matter of husbandry, you are pleased at what they are doing, and say, 'work on,' 'go on:' not that they may begin to work, when thou sayest this, but, because you are pleased at finding them working, you add your approbation and encouragement. For by saying, 'work on,' and encouraging those who are working, you, so to speak, work with them in wish. In this sort of encouragement then the Psalmist, filled with the Holy Ghost, saith this.

4. And it is a Psalm of Haggai and Zachariah: so the title runneth. These two Prophets prophesied at the time when the people was kept captive in Babylon, and foretold the coming end of the captivity, that the city of Jerusalem which had been destroyed in war, should be restored. They set forth to us then in a mystery the life to come, wherein we shall praise God, when the captivity of this present life is at an end, when shall be restored that mighty city Jerusalem, in wandering from whence we sigh, prisoners as yet under the burden and weight of this mortal body: wherefore as yet we groan in our pilgrimage, but we shall exult when we reach our country. But he, who groaneth not as a pilgrim, shall not rejoice as a citizen, because there is no longing in him. Those holy Prophets then gave great comfort to the people, who were then captives according to the flesh, that is, who were placed in Babylon under strange sovereigns. For they shewed in prophecy, that a time should come when they should be freed from their captivity, and Jerusalem should be restored. But all these things were done in a figure, they contain their own truth; they were figured in what happened of old,

they are set forth really present among us. Now then what saith the Apostle? While we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord. As yet we are not in our country: when shall we be? When we shall triumph for victory over our enemy the devil; when death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is thy strife? where, O death, is thy sting? When then shall there be no more strife of death, which now there is, and maketh us groan at the failure and changeableness of things, at the frailness of man's flesh? Daily temptations strive with us, daily delights: even though we consent not, yet we suffer annoyance, and strive: and great is the peril, lest he who striveth be conquered: and even if by not consenting we conquer, yet we suffer annoyance in resisting delights. The enemy ceaseth not, dieth not, save in the resurrection of the dead. But let us hope, let us trust: Haggai and Zacharias lift us up, they sing our coming liberation. If they sang to that people, and it hath been fulfilled, shall what is sung to the Christian people not be fulfilled? Be not troubled: only take heed how ye act in this pilgrimage of life. Let not love of Babylon please you, lest ye forget your city Jerusalem. Though your body is yet detained in Babylon, let your heart be sent forward to Jerusalem. Let then the whole creation praise the Lord: for there we shall do what here we practise beforehand.

5. Praise ye the Lord from heaven: praise Him in the high places. First he saith, from heaven, then from earth; for it is God that is praised, Who made heaven and earth. All in heaven is calm and peaceful; there is ever joy, no death, no sickness, no vexation; there the blessed ever praise God; but we are still below: yet, when we think how God is praised there, let us have our heart there, and let us not hear to no purpose, 'Lift up your hearts.' Let us lift up our heart above, that it become not corrupted on earth: for we take pleasure in what the Angels do there. We do it now in hope: hereafter we shall in reality, when we have come thither. Praise Him then in the high places.

6. Praise Him, all ye angels of His, praise Him, all His powers. Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all ye stars and light. Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens, and waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise the Name of the Lord. When can he unfold all in his enumeration? Yet he hath in a

manner touched upon them all summarily, and included all things in heaven praising their Creator.

7. And as though it were said to him, ‘Why do they praise Him? what hath He conferred on them, that they should praise Him?’ he goeth on, for He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. No wonder if the works praise the Worker, no wonder if the things that are made praise the Maker, no wonder if creation praise its Creator. In this Christ also is mentioned, though we seem not to have heard His Name. Who is Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. By what were they made? By the Word? How doth he shew in this Psalm, that all things were made by the Word? He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. No one speaketh, no one commandeth, save by word.

8. He hath established them for the age, and for age upon age. All things in heaven, all things above, all powers and angels, a certain city on high, good, holy, blessed; from whence because we are wanderers, we are wretched; whither because we are to return, we are blessed in hope; whither when we shall have returned, we shall be blessed indeed; He hath established them for the age, and for age upon age: He hath given them a law which shall not pass away. What sort of command, think ye, have things in heaven and the holy angels received? What sort of command hath God given them? What, but that they praise Him? Blessed are they whose business is to praise God! They plough not, they sow not, they grind not, they cook not; for these are works of necessity, and there is no necessity there. They steal not, they plunder not, they commit no adultery; for these are works of iniquity, and there is no iniquity there. They break not bread for the hungry, they clothe not the naked, they take not in the stranger, they visit not the sick, they set not at one the contentious, they bury not the dead; for these are works of mercy, and there there is no misery, for mercy to be shewn to. O blessed they! Think we that we too shall be like this? Ah! let us sigh, let us groan in sighing. And what are we, that we should be there? mortal, outcast, abject, earth and ashes! But He, Who hath promised, is almighty. If we regard

ourselves, what are we? if we regard Him, He is God. He is almighty. Cannot He make of a man an angel, who made man out of nothing? Or doth God count man of little value, for whom He willed that His only-begotten Son should die? Let us observe the proof of His love. These are the pledges which we have received of the promise of God: we have already the Death of Christ, we have already the Blood of Christ. Who is it that did die? The Only-begotten. For whom did He die? Would that it were for the good, would that it were for the righteous. But what? Christ, saith the Apostle, died for the ungodly. He Who gave to the ungodly His Death, what reserveth He for the righteous but His Life? Let then frail man lift himself up, let him not despair, let him not dash himself down, let him not turn away, let him not say, 'I shall not be one.' He Who hath promised is God; and He came to promise; He appeared unto men, He came to take upon Him our death, to promise us His Life. He came to the region where we were strangers, here to receive all that aboundeth here, disgrace, scourges, buffetings, spitting in the face, insults, a crown of thorns, the hanging on the tree, the cross, death. These things abound in our region, these He came to barter for. What gave He here, what received He? He gave exhortation, He gave teaching, He gave remission of sins: He received insults, death, the cross. He brought to us, from the region where He was, good things; He endured, in the region where we were, evil things. Yet hath He provided to us that we shall be in the place from whence He came, and saith, Father, I will that where I am, there they may be with Me also. So great is the love that hath gone before. For where we were, He hath been with us; where He is, we shall be with Him. What hath God promised thee, O mortal? That thou shalt live for ever. Dost not thou believe? Believe it, believe it. For greater is what He hath done already, than what He hath promised. What hath He done? He hath died for thee. What hath He promised? That thou shalt live with Him. More incredible is it, that the Immortal should die, than that the mortal should live for ever. Already we have what is the more incredible. If God died for man, shall not man live with God? Shall not the mortal live for ever, for whom He, Who liveth for ever, died? But how did God die? and by what means did He die? and can God die? He took of thee that, whereby He might die for thee. Nought could die, save flesh: nought could die, save a mortal body: He put on Him that wherein He might die for thee; He will put on thee that wherein thou shalt live with Him. Where did

He clothe himself with death? In the womb of His Virgin Mother. Where will He clothe thee with life? In His equality with the Father. He chose for Himself here a chaste chamber, where the Bridegroom might be wedded to the Bride. He was the Word made flesh, that He might become the Head of the Church. For the Word Himself is not part of the Church: but, that He might become the Head of the Church, He took upon Him flesh. Somewhat of us is already above, that which He took here, where He died, where He was crucified. Already a sort of first-fruits of thee are gone before, and doubttest thou that thou wilt follow?

9. Let him then turn himself to things on earth too, since he hath already spoken the praises of things in heaven. Praise ye the Lord from the earth. For wherewith began he before? Praise ye the Lord from heaven: and he went through things in heaven: now hear of things on earth. Dragons and all abysses. Abysses are depths of water: all the seas, and this atmosphere of clouds, pertain to the abyss. Where there are clouds, where there are storms, where there is rain, lightning, thunder, hail, snow, and all that God willeth should be done above the earth, by this moist and misty atmosphere, all this he hath mentioned under the name of earth, because it is very changeable and mortal; unless ye think that it raineth from above the stars. All these things happen here, close to the earth. Sometimes even men are on the tops of mountains, and see the clouds beneath them, and often it raineth: and all commotions which arise from the disturbance of the atmosphere, those who watch carefully see that they happen here, in this lower part of the universe. Therefore the devil was condemned to these regions of darkness, that is, to this air, as to a prison, when he fell with his Angels from the force of the Angels above; for the Apostle saith this of him, According to the prince of the power of this air, who now worketh in the children of disobedience. And another Apostle saith, For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to the prisons of lower darkness, and delivered them to be kept for punishment at the judgment; calling this region the lower, because it is the lower part of creation. For think not what the devil received, but what he lost. Thou seest then what kind all these things are, changeable, troublous, fearful, corruptible: yet they have their place, they have their rank, they too in their degree fill up the beauty of the universe, and so they praise the Lord. He turns then to them, as though He would exhort them

too, or us, that by considering them we may praise the Lord: (for thus is it that they praise God, when the consideration of them begetteth praise of God;) he beginneth to say, Praise the Lord from earth, ye dragons and all abysses. Dragons live about the water, come out from caverns, fly through the air; the air is set in motion by them: dragons are a huge kind of living creatures, greater there are not upon the earth. Therefore with them he beginneth, Dragons and all abysses. There are caves of hidden waters, whence springs and streams come forth: some come forth to flow over the earth, some flow secretly beneath; and all this kind, all this damp nature of waters, together with the sea and this lower air, are called abyss, or abysses, where dragons live and praise God. What? Think we that the dragons form choirs, and praise God? Far from it. But do ye, when ye consider the dragons, regard the Maker of the dragon, the Creator of the dragon: then, when ye admire the dragons, and say, 'Great is the Lord Who made these,' then the dragons praise God by your voices. Dragons and all abysses.

10. Fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storms, which do His word. Wherefore added he here, which do His word? Many foolish men, unable to contemplate and discern creation, in its several places and rank, performing its movements at the nod and commandment of God, think that God doth indeed rule all things above, but things below He despiseth, casteth aside, abandoneth, so that He neither careth for them, nor guideth, nor ruleth them; but that they are ruled by chance, how they can, as they can: and they are influenced by what they say sometimes to one another, (but let them not say it to thee, that is, do not thou by listening consent when they say these things: for they are blasphemers, and accursed in the sight of God:) for instance; 'If it were God that gave rain, would He rain into the sea? What sort of Providence,' they say, 'is this? Getulia is thirsty, and it rains into the sea.' They think that they handle the matter cleverly: one should say to them, 'Getulia does at all events thirst, thou dost not even thirst.' For good were it for thee to say to God, My soul is as a land without water to Thee: as is openly said in another place, My soul hath thirsted for Thee, in how many ways for Thee my flesh also. And the Lord saith in the Gospel, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. For he that thus argueth is already satisfied; he thinketh himself learned, he is not willing to learn, therefore he thirsteth not. For if he

thirsted, he would be willing to learn, and he would find that every thing happeneth upon earth by God's Providence, and he would wonder at the arrangement of even the limbs of a flea. Attend, beloved. Who hath arranged the limbs of a flea and a gnat, that they should have their proper order, life, motion? Consider one little creature, even the very smallest, whatever thou wilt. If thou considerest the order of its limbs, and the animation of life whereby it moveth; how doth it shun death, love life, seek pleasures, avoid pain, exert divers senses, vigorously use movements suitable to itself! Who gave its sting to the gnat, for it to suck blood with? How narrow is the pipe whereby it sucketh! Who arranged all this? who made all this? Thou art amazed at the smallest things; praise Him that is great. Hold then this, my brethren, let none shake you from your faith or from sound doctrine. He Who made the Angel in heaven, the Same also made the worm upon earth: the Angel in heaven to dwell in heaven, the worm upon earth to abide on earth. He made not the Angel to creep in the mud, nor the worm to move in heaven. He hath assigned dwellers to their different abodes; incorruption He assigned to incorruptible abodes, corruptible things to corruptible abodes. Observe the whole, praise the whole. He then Who ordered the limbs of the worm, doth He not govern the clouds? And wherefore raineth He into the sea? As though there are not in the sea things which are nourished by rain; as though He made not fishes therein, as though He made not living creatures therein. Observe how the fishes run to sweet water. And wherefore, saith he, doth He give rain to the fishes, and sometimes giveth not rain to me? That thou mayest consider that thou art in a desert region, and in a pilgrimage of life; that so this present life may grow bitter to thee, that thou mayest long for the life to come: or else that thou mayest be scourged, punished, amended. And how well doth He assign their properties to regions. Behold, since we have spoken of Getulia, He raineth here nearly every year, and giveth corn every year; here the corn cannot be kept, it soon rotteth, because it is given every year; there, because it is given seldom, both much is given, and it can be kept for long. But dost thou perchance think that God there deserteth man, or that they do not there after their own manner of rejoicing both praise and glorify God? Take a Getulian from his country, and set him amid our pleasant trees; he will wish to flee away, and return to his bare Getulia. To all places then, regions, seasons, God hath assigned and arranged what fits them. And it

were a long task to go through a more accurate enumeration of all these matters. Who could unfold it? Yet they who have eyes see many things therein: when seen, they please; pleasing, they are praised; not they really, but He Who made them; thus shall all things praise God.

11. It was in thought of this that the spirit of the Prophet, after he had said, Fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storm, added, because all these seem to some foolish persons to be all confusion, and, as it were, moved hither and thither by chance, the words, which do His word. Think not then that these things are moved by chance, which in every motion of theirs obey God. Whither God willeth, thither the fire spreads, thither the cloud hurries, whether it carry in it rain, or snow, or hail. And wherefore doth the lightning sometimes strike the mountain, yet strikes not the robber? I will say what I can, according to the capacity of my mind, so much as God deigneth to give me: greater men may know greater things, and understand more, and may God give to you to be wiser than my words, only let it be with moderation, without pride. I then, in my measure, can give a reason why it strikes the mountain and strikes not the robber; because perhaps He yet seeketh the robber's conversion, and therefore is the mountain which feareth not smitten, that the man who feareth may be changed. Thou also sometimes, when maintaining discipline, smitest the ground to terrify a child. Sometimes too He smiteth a man, whom He will. But thou sayest to me, Behold, He smiteth the more innocent, and passeth over the more guilty. Wonder not; death, whencesoever it come, is good to the good man. And whence dost thou know what punishment is reserved in secret for that more guilty man, if he be unwilling to be converted? Would not they rather be scorched by lightning, to whom it shall be said in the end, Depart into everlasting fire? The needful thing is, that thou be guileless. Why so? Is it an evil thing to die by shipwreck, and a good thing to die by fever? Whether he die in this way or in that, ask what sort of man he is who dieth; ask whither he will go after death, not how he is to depart from life. We shall depart from hence by whatever may befall us. By what deaths were the martyrs thought worthy to die? Was it by fevers? How is it that many wish to be set free by fever? Some perished by a single blow of the sword, some by fire, some by wild beasts. Wild beasts devoured the bodies of the martyrs, yet feared they not that their bodies would perish. For God will

bring back from all quarters the bodies of the saints, God by Whom the very hairs of our head are numbered. When He willed too, He delivered the Three Children from the fire. Did He therefore desert the Maccabees in the fire? The former He openly set free, the latter He secretly crowned. God then knoweth what He doeth. Do thou fear, and be good. For whatsoever way He will that thou depart hence, let Him find thee ready. For here thou art a sojourner, not a possessor of the house. For the house is let to thee, this house is let to thee, not given: loth though thou be, thou must depart from it: neither hast thou received it on such terms, as that thou hast any fixed time. What said thy Lord? ‘Whensoever I will, whensoever I shall say, Depart, be thou ready. I drive thee from thy lodging, but I will give thee a home: thou art a sojourner on earth, thou shalt be possessor in heaven.’

12. Whatever then happeneth here contrary to our wish, thou wilt know that it happeneth not, save by the will of God, by His providence, by His ordering, by His nod, by His laws: and if we understand not why any thing is done, let us grant to His providence that it is not done without reason: so shall we not be blasphemers. For when we begin to argue concerning the works of God, ‘why is this?’ ‘why is that?’ and, ‘He ought not to have done this,’ ‘He did this ill;’ where is the praise of God? Thou hast lost thy Halleluia. Regard all things in such wise as to please God and praise the Creator. For if thou wert to happen to enter the workshop of a smith, thou wouldest not dare to find fault with his bellows, his anvils, his hammers. But take an ignorant man, who knows not for what purpose each thing is, and he findeth fault with all. But if he have not the skill of the workman, and have but the reasoning power of a man, what saith he to himself? Not without reason are the bellows placed here: the workman knoweth wherefore, though I know not. In the shop he dareth not to find fault with the smith, yet in the universe he dareth to find fault with God. Therefore just as fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storms, which do His word, so all things in nature, which seem to foolish persons to be made at random, simply do His word, because they are not made save by His command.

13. Then he mentioneth, that they may praise the Lord, mountains and hills, fruitful trees and all cedars: beasts and all cattle, creeping things, and winged fowls. Then he goeth to men; kings of the earth and all people,

princes and all judges of the earth; young men and maidens, old men and young, let them praise the Name of the Lord. Ended is the praise from heaven, ended is the praise from earth.

14. For His Name only is exalted. Let no man seek to exalt his own name. Wilt thou be exalted? Subject thyself to Him Who cannot be humbled. His Name only is exalted.

15. His confession is in earth and heaven. What is, His confession is in earth and heaven? Is it the confession wherewith He confesseth? No, but that whereby all things confess Him, all things cry aloud: the beauty of all things is in a manner their voice, whereby they praise God. The heaven crieth out to God, 'Thou madest me, not I myself.' Earth crieth out, 'Thou createdst me, not I myself.' How do they cry out? When thou regardest them, and findest this out, they cry out by thy voice, they cry out by thy regard. His confession is in earth and heaven. Regard the heavens, it is beautiful: observe the earth, it is beautiful: both together are very beautiful. He made them, He ruleth them, by His nod they are swayed, He ordereth their seasons, He reneweth their movements, by Himself He reneweth them. All these things then praise Him, whether in stillness or in motion, whether from earth below or from heaven above, whether in their old state or in their renewal. When thou seest all these things, and rejoicest, and art lifted up to the Maker, and gazest on His invisible things understood by the things which are made, His confession is in earth and heaven: that is, thou confessest to Him from things on earth, thou confessest to Him from things in heaven. And since He made all things, and nought is better than He, whatsoever He made is less than He, and whatsoever in these things pleaseth thee, is less than He. Let not then what He hath made so please thee, as to withdraw thee from Him Who made: if thou lovest what He made, love much more Him Who made. If the things which He hath made are beautiful, how much more beautiful is He Who made them: His confession is in earth and heaven.

16. And He shall exalt the horn of His people. Behold what Haggai and Zachariah prophesied. Now the horn of His people is humble in afflictions, in tribulations, in temptations, in beating of the breast; when will He exalt the horn of His people? When the Lord hath come, and our Sun is risen, not

the sun which is seen with the eye, and riseth upon the good and the evil, but That Whereof is said, To you that fear God, the Sun of Righteousness shall rise, and healing in His wings; and of Whom the proud and wicked shall hereafter say, The light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. This shall be our summer. Now during the winter weather the fruits appear not on the stock; thou observest, so to say, dead trees during the winter. He who cannot see truly, thinketh the vine dead; perhaps there is one near it, which is really dead; both are alike during winter; the one is alive, the other is dead, but both the life and death are hidden: summer advanceth; then the life of the one shineth brightly, the death of the other is manifested: the splendour of leaves, the abundance of fruit, cometh forth, the vine is clothed in outward appearance from what it hath in its stock. Therefore, brethren, now we are the same as other men: just as they are born, eat, drink, are clothed, pass their life, so also do the saints. Sometimes the very truth deceiveth men, and they say, ‘Lo, he hath begun to be a Christian: hath he lost his headache?’ or, ‘because he is a Christian, what gaineth he from me?’ O dead vine, thou observest near thee a vine that is bare indeed in winter, yet not dead. Summer will come, the Lord will come, our Splendour, that was hidden in the stock, and then He shall exalt the horn of His people, after the captivity wherein we live in this mortal life. Wherefore the Apostle saith, Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, Who shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and then shall every one have praise of God. But thou sayest unto me, Where is my stock? where is my fruit? If thou believest, thou knowest where thy root is. For it is there, where thy faith is, where thy hope and charity are. Hear the Apostle; For ye are dead. In the winter they seemed to be dead; hear that they are alive: and your life is hid with Christ in God. There is where thou hast thy root. When then shalt thou be adorned with splendour? when shalt thou be made abundant with fruit? Hear how he goeth on: When Christ, Who is your Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And He shall exalt the horn of His people.

17. An hymn to all His Saints. Know ye what an hymn is? It is a song with praise of God. If thou praisest God and singest not, thou utterest no hymn: if thou singest and praisest not God, thou utterest no hymn: if thou praisest ought else, which pertaineth not to the praise of God, although thou singest

and praisest, thou utterest no hymn. An hymn then containeth these three things, song, and praise, and that of God. Praise then of God in song is called an hymn. What then meaneth, An hymn to all His Saints? Let His Saints receive an hymn: let His Saints utter an hymn: for this is what they are to receive in the end, an everlasting hymn. Therefore in another place a Psalm saith, The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way wherein I will shew him My salvation. And again, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will praise Thee for ever and ever. This is the meaning of, An hymn to all His Saints. Who are His Saints? To the sons of Israel, to the people that draweth nigh unto Him. Let none say, I am not a son of Israel. Think not that the Jews are sons of Israel, and that we are not sons of Israel: I dare to say to you, brethren, that they are not sons, and we are. I will tell you why: because greater is he that is born after the Spirit, than he that is born after the flesh. Whose son was Israel? Abraham's: for Isaac was Abraham's son, and Israel Isaac's. And how did Abraham please God? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Whosoever imitateth Abraham is a son of Abraham: whosoever hath degenerated from the faith of Abraham, hath lost the stock of Abraham. The Jews have degenerated, and have lost the stock; we have imitated, and have found it. I will shew that they have lost it: what saith the Lord to them when they say, we are the sons of Abraham? They dared to boast themselves, to hold up their head on the nobility of their righteous descent: and what saith the Lord to them? If ye were sons of Abraham, ye would do the deeds of Abraham. If then they lost the being sons of Abraham, we have found the being sons of Abraham. We, that is, by believing have found, what they by not believing have lost. For Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness: and Christ is the seed of Abraham, and we are in Christ; and of Israel is the people, of which people was Mary, of which Mary was Christ, in Which Christ we are: therefore we are sons of Israel. And what hath he added, in order to distinguish us? To the sons of Israel, to the people that draweth nigh unto Him. Observe the Jews: if they draw nigh, they are they. 'And perhaps they do draw nigh,' saith some one to me: they also daily sing their Psalm, they sing hymns to God. Hear ye not what the Prophet said unto them? This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. If their heart is far, yet our heart is most nigh, because we believe, because we

hope, because we love, because we are joined to Christ, because we have been made His members. Are the members far from the head? If they were afar they would be severed: He would not say, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the aye. If they were severed, He would not cry from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? If He were not in us, He would not say, I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat. Then when they said to Him, When saw we Thee an hungered? He answered, Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me. Behold the people, behold Israel that draweth nigh: they draw nigh now in hope; hereafter they shall in reality.

PSALM 149

Exposition

Sermon to the People.

1. Let us praise the Lord both in voice, and in understanding, and in good works; and, as this Psalm exhorteth, let us sing unto Him a new song. For thus it beginneth: Sing ye to the Lord a new song. The old man hath an old song, the new man a new song. The Old Testament is an old song, the New Testament a new song. In the Old Testament are temporal and earthly promises. Whoso loveth earthly things singeth an old song: let him that desireth to sing a new song, love the things of eternity. Love itself is new and eternal; therefore is it ever new, because it never groweth old. For if thou consider well, this is old. How then is it new? Is it so, my brethren, that everlasting life is but lately born? Christ Himself is everlasting life, and as touching His Godhead, He is not lately born; for, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. If the things which were made by Him are old, what is He by Whom they were made? What, but everlasting, and coeternal with the Father? But we have sunk into sin; we have reached old age. For those are our words in the Psalm, I have grown old among all mine enemies. Man grew old by sin; he is renewed by grace. All then who are renewed in Christ, that they may begin to appertain unto everlasting life, sing a new song.

2. And this song is of peace, this song is of charity. Whoso severeth himself from the union of the saints, singeth not a new song; for he hath followed old strife, not new charity. In new charity what is there? Peace, the bond of an holy society, a spiritual union, a building of living stones. Where is this? Not in one place, but throughout the whole world. This is said in another

Psalm, Sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth. From this is understood, that he who singeth not with the whole earth, singeth an old song, whatever words proceed out of his mouth. For why should I care to hear what he saith, when I know what he thinketh? Sayest thou, canst thou see what he thinketh? Yes, his deeds declare it. For the eye penetrateth not into the conscience. I observe what he doeth, and therein I understand what he thinketh. For neither if any one, for instance, taketh another in the act of theft, or homicide, or adultery, doth he see his thoughts in his heart, but in his deeds? There are some things which lie hid within; but there are many also which come forth into works, and are manifest even to men. Although then they who severed themselves from the bond of the love of Christ, and the society of the holy Church, were inwardly in themselves evil, yet none knew it, save God. The time came: He severed them, and so made manifest to men what God alone had known before. For the fruit is not shewn, save in deeds. Wherefore it is said, by their fruits ye shall know them. For the Lord said it to some who clothe themselves in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves: lest human frailty should perhaps be unable to distinguish the wolf under the sheep's skin, He saith, By their fruits ye shall know them. We seek the fruits of love, we find the thorns of dissension. By their fruits ye shall know them. Their song then is an old one, let us sing a new song. We have already said, brethren, that all the earth singeth a new song. He who singeth not with the whole earth a new song, let him sing what he will, let his tongue sound forth Halleluia, let him utter it all day and all night, my ears are not so much bent to hear the voice of the singer, but I seek the deeds of the actor. For I ask, and say, 'What is it that thou singest?' He answereth, 'Halleluia.' What is, 'Halleluia?' 'Praise ye the Lord.' Come, let us praise the Lord together. If thou praisest the Lord, and I praise the Lord, why are we at variance? Charity praiseth the Lord, discord blasphemeth the Lord.

3. And now would ye know where ye may sing a new song? See how and where all that he is about to mention in this Psalm is done, whether it be in any one part of the world; so shall ye more fully understand to whom the new song appertaineth. That then is clear which I have quoted from another Psalm, Sing ye to the Lord a new song: and to shew that in this new song is the fruit of charity and unity, he added, Sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Let

none sever himself, let none disunite himself: thou art wheat, bear with the chaff till the winnowing. Dost thou wish to be put forth from the floor? wheat though thou be, yet if thou wert outside the floor, the fowls of the air would find thee, and gather thee up. Nay more; in the very fact that thou departest and fliest, thou shewest that thou art chaff; so, because thou wast light, the wind came, and thou wast carried away from under the feet of the oxen. But they who are wheat bear the threshing, rejoice because they are wheat, groan amid the chaff, await Him as Winnower Whom they know to be Redeemer. Sing ye unto the Lord a new song: His praise is in the Church of the saints. This is the Church of the saints, the Church of the wheat scattered throughout the whole world, sown throughout the Lord's field, that is, this world, as the Lord Himself explained, when He said of the sower, A man sowed good seed in his field, and the enemy came and sowed tares over it; and the owner's servants said, Didst not thou sow good seed in the field? whence are these tares here? He answered, An enemy hath done this. They desired to gather up the tares, but he restrained them, saying, Let both grow till the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but store up the wheat in my garner. Afterwards His Disciples asked Him, saying, Expound unto us the parable of the tares. And He expoundeth it all to them, that no man may attribute to his own wisdom what he hath understood therein, but to the Lord of heaven Who expoundeth it. Let none say, 'He hath expounded it according to His will.' If the Lord expounded the parable of the prophets, when He by them spake what they said, who would dare to say that He ought not to expound it as He does: much more, when He Himself expounded what He Himself set forth, who shall dare to contradict a manifest truth? Our Lord then, expounding this parable, saith, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the good seed are the children of the kingdom: (that is, the Church of the saints:) the tares are the children of the wicked one: the field is the world. See then, my brethren, that the good seed is sown throughout the world, and throughout the world the tares are sown also. It is not, is it, in one part wheat, in another tares? The field of the Lord is the world, not Africa. It is not with the Lord's field, as it is without these fields of ours, where Getulia bears sixty or an hundred fold, Numidia only ten fold: every where fruit is borne to Him, both an hundred fold, and sixty fold, and thirty fold: only do thou choose what thou

wilt be, if thou thinkest to belong to the Lord's Cross. The Church then of the saints is the Catholic Church. The Church of the saints is not the Church of heretics. The Church of the saints is that which God first prefigured before it was seen, and then set forth that it might be seen. The Church of the saints was heretofore in writings, now it is in nations: the Church of the saints was heretofore only read of, now it is both read of and seen. When it was only read of, it was believed; now it is seen, and is spoken against. His praise is in the Church of the saints.

4. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him. What is, Israel? 'Seeing God:' for this is the meaning of the name Israel. He who seeth God, rejoiceth in Him by Whom he was made. What is it then, brethren? we have said that we belong to the Church of the saints: do we already see God? and how are we Israel, if we see not? There is one kind of sight belonging to this present time; there will be another belonging to the time hereafter: the sight which now is, is by faith; the sight which is to be will be in reality. If we believe, we see; if we love, we see: see what? God. Ask John: God is love; let us bless His holy Name, and rejoice in God by rejoicing in love. Whoso hath love, why send we him afar to see God? Let him regard his own conscience, and there he seeth God. If love dwelleth not there, neither doth God; but if love dwell there, so doth God. Perchance he wisheth to see Him seated in heaven; let him have love, and so He dwelleth in him, as He doth in heaven. Let us then be Israel, and let us rejoice in Him that made us. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him. In Him Who made him let him rejoice, not in Arius, not in Donatus, not in Cæcilian, not in Proculian, not in Augustin. In Him Who made him let him rejoice. We, my brethren, commend not ourselves to you: we commend God to you, for we commend you to God. How do we commend God to you? For you to love Him for your own good, not for His good; for if ye do not love Him, it is to your own hurt, not to His. For God will not the less possess His Godhead, because man hath not love towards Him. Thou increasest through God, not He through thee: and yet so greatly did He love us first before we loved Him, that He sent His only-begotten Son to die for us. He Who made us, became one of us. How made He us? All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. How became He one of us? The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. This then is He in Whom we ought to rejoice. Let no man

claim to himself what belongs to Him: from Him is the joy, which maketh us happy. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him.

5. And let the sons of Sion exult in their King. The sons of the Church are Israel. For Sion indeed was one city, which fell: amid its ruins certain saints dwelt after the flesh: but the true Sion, the true Jerusalem, (for Sion and Jerusalem are one,) is eternal in the heavens, and is our mother. She it is that hath given us birth, she is the Church of the saints, she hath nourished us, she, who is in part a pilgrim, in part abiding in the heavens. In the part which abideth in heaven is the bliss of angels, in the part which wandereth in this world is the hope of the righteous. Of the former is said, Glory to God in the highest; of the latter, and on earth peace to men of good will. Let those then who, being in this life, groan, and long for their country, run by love, not by bodily feet; let them seek not ships but wings, let them lay hold on the two wings of love. What are the two wings of love? The love of God, and of our neighbour. For now we are pilgrims, we sigh, we groan. There has come to us a letter from our country: we read it to you.

6. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him, and the sons of Sion exult in their King. He means the same by Him Who made him, and by their King. Israel that I have spoken of is the same as the sons of Sion, Him Who made him, the same as their King. The Son of God, Who made us, was made one of us: and He rules us as our King, because He is our Creator, Who made us. But He by Whom we were made is the same as He by Whom we are ruled, and we are Christians because He is Christ. He is called Christ from Chrism, that is, Anointing. Kings and Priests used to be anointed: He was anointed as both King and Priest. As King, He fought for us, as Priest He offered Himself for us. When he fought for us, He seemed indeed to be conquered, but in reality He conquered: for He was crucified, and by His cross, whereon He was nailed, He slew the devil, and thereby is He our King. But whereby is He our Priest? Because He offered Himself for us. Give to the Priest somewhat to offer. What could man find which he could give as a clean victim? What victim? what clean thing can a sinner offer? O unrighteous, O sinful man, whatever thou offerest is unclean, and somewhat that is clean must be offered for thee. Seek what thou hast in thee to offer, nought wilt thou find. Seek what thou hast beyond thyself to offer: He

delighteth not in rams, nor in goats, nor in bulls. All things are His, even though thou offer them not. Offer then to Him a clean sacrifice. But thou art a sinner, thou art ungodly, thou hast a defiled conscience. Thou wilt perchance be able to offer somewhat clean, when thou hast been cleansed; but that thou mayest be cleansed, somewhat must be offered for thee. What then wilt thou offer for thyself that thou mayest be cleansed? When thou hast been cleansed, thou wilt be able to offer what is clean. Let then the Priest that is clean offer Himself, and cleanse thee. This is what Christ did. He found in man nothing clean for Him to offer for man: He offered Himself as a clean Victim. Happy Victim, true Victim, spotless Offering. He offered not then what we gave Him; yea rather, He offered what He took of us, and offered it clean. For of us He took flesh, and this He offered. But where took He it? In the womb of the Virgin Mary, that He might offer it clean for us unclean. He is our King, He is our Priest, in Him let us rejoice.

7. Let them praise His Name in chorus. What meaneth chorus? Many know what a chorus is: nay, as we are speaking in a town, almost all know. A chorus is the union of singers. If we sing in chorus, let us sing in concord. If any one's voice is out of harmony in a chorus of singers, it offendeth the ear, and throweth the chorus into confusion. If the voice of one echoing discordantly troubleth the harmony of them who sing, how doth the discord of heresy throw into confusion the harmony of them who praise. The whole world is now the chorus of Christ. The chorus of Christ soundeth harmoniously from east to west. Let us see whether the chorus of Christ extend as widely as this. From the rising of the sun unto the setting, praise ye the Name of the Lord. Let them praise His Name in chorus.

8. Let them sing a psalm unto Him with timbrel and psaltery. Wherefore taketh he to him the timbrel and psaltery? That not the voice alone may praise, but the works too. When timbrel and psaltery are taken, the hands harmonise with the voice. So too do thou, whensoever thou singest 'Halleluia,' deal forth thy bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, take in the stranger: then doth not only thy voice sound, but thy hand soundeth in harmony with it, for thy deeds agree with thy words. Thou hast taken to thee an instrument, and thy fingers agree with thy tongue. Nor must we keep back the mystical meaning of the timbrel and psaltery. On the timbrel

leather is stretched, on the psaltery gut is stretched; on either instrument the flesh is crucified. How well did he sing a psalm on timbrel and psaltery, who said, the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world? This psaltery or timbrel He wishes thee to take up, Who loveth a new song, Who teacheth thee, saying to thee, Whosoever willeth to be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Let him not set down his psaltery, let him not set down his timbrel, let him stretch himself out on the wood, and be dried from the lust of the flesh. The more the strings are stretched, the more sharply do they sound. The Apostle Paul then, in order that his psaltery might sound sharply, what said he? Forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. He stretched himself: Christ touched him; and the sweetness of truth sounded. Let them sing a psalm unto Him upon timbrel and psaltery.

9. For the Lord hath dealt kindly among His people. What dealing so kindly, as to die for the ungodly? What dealing so kindly, as with righteous Blood to blot out the handwriting against the sinner? What dealing so kindly, as to say, 'I regard not what ye were, be ye now what ye were not? The Lord hath dealt kindly among His people, by forgiving them their sins, by promising them everlasting life. He dealeth kindly in converting him that was turned away, in aiding him that is fighting, in crowning the conqueror. The Lord hath dealt kindly with His people, and the meek He shall lift up in salvation. For the proud too are lifted up, but not in salvation: the meek are lifted in salvation, the proud in death: that is, the proud lift up themselves, and God humbleth them: the meek humble themselves, and God lifteth them up. And He shall lift up the meek in salvation.

10. The saints shall exult in glory. I would say somewhat important: listen very heedfully about the glory of the saints. For there is no one who loveth not glory. But the glory of fools, popular glory as it is called, hath snares to deceive, so that a man, influenced by the praises of vain men, shall be willing to live in such fashion as to be spoken of by men, whosoever they be, in whatsoever way. Hence it is that men, rendered mad, and puffed up with pride, empty within, without swollen, are willing ever to ruin their fortunes by bestowing them on stage-players, actors, men who fight with

wild beasts, charioteers. What sums they give, what sums they spend! They lavish the powers not only of their patrimony, but of their minds too. They scorn the poor, because the people shouteth not that the poor should be given to, but the people do shout that the fighter with wild beasts be given to. When then no shout is raised to them, they refuse to spend; when madmen shout to them, they are mad too: nay, all are mad, both performer, and spectator, and the giver. This mad glory is blamed by the Lord, is offensive in the eyes of the Almighty. And yet, my brethren, Christ thus reproacheth His people, and saith, 'I have not received at your hands as much as they who fight with wild beasts: and in giving to them, ye gave of what was mine; but I was naked, and ye clothed Me not. Then say they, When saw we Thee naked, and clothed Thee not? And He saith, Forasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have not done it unto Me. But thou choosest to clothe him, who pleaseth thee, whereas Christ displeaseth thee. Thou choosest to clothe the fighter with wild beasts, who may be beaten, and make thee blush: Christ is never conquered; He hath conquered the devil, He hath conquered for thee, and to thee, and in thee; such a conqueror as this thou choosest not to clothe. Wherefore? Because there is less shouting, less madness about it. They then who delight in such glory, have an empty conscience. Just as they drain their chests, to send garments as presents, so do they empty their conscience, so as to have nothing precious therein.

11. But the saints who exult in glory, no need is there for us to say how they exult: just hear the verse of the Psalm which followeth: The saints shall exult in glory, they shall rejoice in their beds: not in theatres, or amphitheatres, or circuses, or follies, or market places, but in their beds. What is, in their beds? In their hearts. Hear the Apostle Paul exulting in his bed: For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience. On the other hand, there is reason to fear lest any be pleasing to himself, and so seem to be proud, and boast of his conscience. For every one ought to exult with fear, for that wherein he exulteth is God's gift, not his own desert. For there be many that please themselves, and think themselves righteous; and there is another passage which goeth against them, which saith, Who shall boast that he hath a clean heart, and that he is pure from sin? There is then, so to speak, a limit to glorying in our conscience, namely, to know that thy faith

is sincere, thy hope sure, thy love without dissimulation. But since there are still many things which may offend the eyes of God, praise God Who hath given what thou hast; so shall He perfect what He hath given. Wherefore when He had said, they shall rejoice in their beds, lest they should seem as it were self-satisfied, he added at once, the exultations of God are in their mouths. In such wise shall they rejoice in their beds, as not to attribute to themselves that they are good, but praise Him from Whom they have what they are, by Whom they are called to attain to what they are not, and from Whom they hope for perfection, to Whom they give thanks, because He hath begun. The exultations of God are in their mouths. Now behold the saints, behold their glory, behold throughout the whole world, behold that the exultations of God are in their mouths.

11. And swords sharpened on both sides in their hands. That is called a sword (framea) which is commonly called 'spata.' For there are swords sharpened only on one side, which are called 'machærae.' But these 'frameæ' are also called 'romphææ' and 'spatæ.' This sort of weapon contains a great mystical meaning, in that it is sharp on both sides. These swords are sharpened on both sides in their hands. By swords sharpened on both sides, we understand the Word of the Lord: it is one sword, but therefore are they called many, because there are many mouths and many tongues of the saints. The Word of the Lord then is a two-edged sword. How is it two-edged? It speaks of things temporal, it speaks also of things eternal. In both cases it proveth what it saith, and him whom it strikes, it severeth from the world. Is not this the sword whereof the Lord said, I am not come to send peace upon earth, but a sword? Observe how He came to divide, how He came to sever. He divideth the saints, He divideth the ungodly, He severeth from thee that which hindereth thee. The son willeth to serve God, the father willeth not: the sword cometh, the Word of God cometh, and severeth the son from the father. The daughter willeth, the mother willeth not; by the sword they are divided from one another. The daughter-in-law willeth, the mother-in-law willeth not; let the sword sharpened on both sides come, let it bring the promise of the present and future life, comfort in this life, enjoyment in eternity. Behold the sword sharpened on both sides promising things both temporal and eternal. Wherein hath it deceived us? Was there not a time when the Church of God

was not spread throughout the whole world? Lo, now it is. Before, it was read of, not seen: now, as it is read of, so also is it seen. Whatsoever is promised to us in this world belongeth to one side of the sword: whatever is promised for everlasting, belongeth to the other side. Thou hast hope for the future, comfort for the present; be not thou drawn back from Him Who would draw thee to Him; be it father, mother, sister, wife, friend, let him not draw thee back: so shall the sword sharpened on both sides profit thee. To thy profit doth it sever thee, to thy harm dost thou bind thyself to them. Our Lord then came bearing the sword sharpened on both sides, promising things of eternity, fulfilling those of this life. For therefore also are they called two Testaments. What then were the swords sharpened on both sides in their hands? Have the two Testaments to do with the swords sharpened on both sides? The Old Testament containeth temporal promises, the New, eternal. In both is found the Word of God, as a sword twice sharpened. Wherefore then is it in their hands, not in their tongues? And swords, it saith, sharpened on both sides in their hands. By in their hands, he meaneth in power. They received then the Word of God in power, to speak where they would, to whom they would, neither to fear power, nor to despise poverty. For they had in their hands a sword; where they would they brandished it, handled it, smote with it: and all this was in the power of the preachers. For if the Word be not in their hands, (lest perhaps some one should say, 'How is the Word a sword sharpened on both sides, and yet in their hands?') if the Word, I say, be not in their hands, why is it written, The Word of the Lord was put in the hand of the Prophet Haggai? Surely, brethren, God set not His Word in His fingers. What is meant by, was put in his hand? It was put into his power to preach the Word of the Lord. Lastly, we can understand these hands in another way also. For they who spake had the Word of God in their tongues, they who wrote, in their hands. And swords sharpened on both sides in their hands.

12. Now, brethren, ye see the saints armed: observe the slaughter, observe their glorious battles. For if there be a commander, there must be soldiers; if soldiers, an enemy; if a warfare, a victory. What have these done who had in their hands swords sharpened on both sides? To do vengeance on the nations. See whether vengeance have not been done on the nations. Daily is it done: we do it ourselves by speaking. Observe how the nations of

Babylon are slain. She is repaid twofold: for so is it written of her, repay her double for what she hath done. How is she repaid double? The saints wage war, they draw their swords twice sharpened; thence come defeats, slaughters, severances: how is she repaid double? When she had power to persecute the Christians, she slew the flesh indeed, but she crushed not God: now she is repaid double, for the Pagans are extinguished and the idols are broken. How, thou wilt say, are the Pagans slain? How, save when they become Christians? I seek a Pagan: I find him not, he is a Christian: the Pagan then is dead. For if they be not slain, how came it to be said to Peter, slay and eat? Whence was Saul the persecutor slain, and Paul the preacher raised up? I seek Saul the persecutor, and I find him not: he is slain. Wherewith? With the sword twice sharpened. But because he was slain in himself and quickened again in Christ, therefore he is bold to say, so then it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. As was done to him, so has been done through him. For when made a preacher, he also had put into his hand the sword twice sharpened, to do vengeance on the nations. And lest thou shouldest think that men are really smitten with the sword, blood really shed, wounds made in the flesh, he goeth on and explaineth, upbraidings among the peoples. What is upbraidings? Reproof. Let the sword twice sharpened go forth from you, delay not: God hath given it to you according to your measure. ‘What kind of man art thou, who worshippest idols?’ Say to thy friend, if yet thou hast one left to whom to say it, ‘What kind of man art thou, who hast abandoned Him by Whom thou wast made, and worshippest what He made? Better is the Workman, than that which He worketh; if thou blushest to worship the Workman, blushest thou not to worship what the Workman hath wrought?’ When he beginneth to blush, when he beginneth to feel compunction, thou hast made a wound with thy sword, it hath reached the heart, he is about to die, that he may live. Swords twice sharpened are in their hands, to do vengeance on the nations, reproofs among the peoples.

13. That they may bind their kings in fetters, and their nobles in bonds of iron. To execute upon them the judgment written. We have easily explained how by the sword they fall that they may rise, are severed that they may be gathered, wounded that they may be made whole, die that they may live: but what shall we do now? how are we to explain, to bind their kings in

fetters? The kings of the Gentiles are to be bound in fetters, and their nobles in fetters, and that of iron. Give me your attention, that ye may recognise what ye already know. For these verses which we are beginning to explain are obscure, but what I am about to say upon them is not new. It is already known to you: ye have need now not to learn, but to remember. For for this purpose God willed to set down some of His verses obscurely, not that any thing new should be dug out of them, but that what was already well known, might be made new by being obscurely set forth. We know that kings have been made Christians; we know that the nobles of the Gentiles have been made Christians. They are being made so at this day, they have been, they shall be; the swords twice sharpened are not idle in the hands of the saints. How then do we understand their being bound in fetters and chains of iron? Ye know, beloved and learned brethren, (learned I call you, for ye have been nourished in the Church, and are accustomed to hear God's Word read,) that God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things of the world hath God chosen to confound the wise, and things which are not, just as things which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought. For thus saith the Apostle: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, and the weak things of the world, to confound the strong, and the ignoble and mean things hath God chosen, and things which are not, like as things which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought. Christ, Who is God, came to benefit all, but He chose to benefit the emperor by means of the fisherman, not the fisherman by means of the emperor: and He chose those things which were of no weight in the world. Them He filled with His Spirit, to them He gave swords twice sharpened. He commanded them 'to spread the Gospel, and to go throughout the whole world.' The world roared, the lion lifted himself up against the Lamb, but the Lamb was found stronger than the lion. The lion was conquered in his rage, the Lamb conquered in His suffering. The hearts of men were turned to fear Christ; kings and nobles began to be moved by miracles, to be troubled at the fulfilment of prophecy, to see the whole race of mankind hurrying together to one Name. And what should they do? Many chose to become ignoble, they gave up their house, they distributed their goods to the poor, they hastened on to perfection. For to such an one

when imperfect it is said by the Lord, If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me, and thou shall have treasure in heaven. Many of the nobles did this, but they ceased to be nobles of the Gentiles, they chose rather to be poor in this world, noble in Christ. But many retain their former nobility, retain their royal powers, and yet are Christians. These are, as it were, in fetters and in bonds of iron. How so? they received fetters, to keep them from going to things unlawful, the fetters of wisdom, the fetters of the Word of God.

14. Wherefore then are they bonds of iron and not bonds of gold? They are iron so long as they fear: let them love, and they shall be golden. Observe, beloved, what I say. Ye have heard just now the Apostle John, There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. This is the bond of iron. And yet unless a man begin through fear to worship God, he will not attain to love. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The beginning then is bonds of iron, the end a collar of gold. For it is said of wisdom, a collar of gold around thy neck. She would not put on thee a collar of gold, unless first she had bound thee in bonds of iron. Thou beginnest with fear, thou attainest at last to wisdom. How many are there, who are unwilling to do evil because they fear hell, because they fear torment. As yet they love not righteousness. If they were promised impunity, and it were said to them, ‘Do what ye will without fear, ye shall not be punished for it,’ they would let loose their lust, to run on into all that is most vile. And especially so, my brethren, specially kings and nobles, to whom it is not easily said, What hast thou done? For the poor man, though he fear not God, yet because he hath no strength, nought to rely on, lest when he proceed to act he be hurried to punishment, ceaseth through fear of man, though not of God. But the powerful of the world, kings and nobles, if they fear not God, what shall they fear? But the Word is preached to them, and they are smitten with the sword twice sharpened. It is said to them, that there is One Who setteth some on His right hand, others on His left, that He may say to those who are on the left, Go ye into everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels. As yet they love not righteousness, but they fear punishment, and fearing punishment, they have already received fetters, and are being disciplined in bonds of iron. There cometh to us a man powerful in this world, his wife offendeth

him, and perhaps he hath desired another man's wife who is more beautiful, or another woman who is richer, he wisheth to put away the one he hath, yet he doeth it not. He heareth the words of the servant of God, he heareth the Prophet, he heareth the Apostle, and he doeth it not; he is told by one in whose hands is a sword twice sharpened, 'Thou shalt not do it: it is not lawful for thee: God alloweth thee not to put away thy wife, save for the cause of fornication. He heareth this, he feareth, and doeth it not. His slippery feet were already beginning to slide; they are held with fetters; he hath bonds of iron, he feareth God. It is said to him, 'God will condemn thee if thou doest it: He is a Judge above all, He heareth the groanings of thy wife; thou wilt be held guilty in His sight.' On one side lust allureth, on the other fear deterreth. He would go on to consent to an evil desire, were it not that bonds of iron held him back. Now further, if he were to say, 'I desire now to be continent, I would have no wife,' this is impossible. What if thou wishest, and she be unwilling? Should she by thy continence be made to commit fornication? If she marry another while thou art alive, she shall be an adulteress. God willeth not to purchase such a gain by such a loss. Pay that which is due: though thou exactest not what is thy due, yet pay. God will reckon it unto thee for perfect sanctification, if thou exactest not what she owes to thee, and yet payest what is due to her. Thou fearest; thou doest it not; thy bonds are shaken. Hear that thou art bound with bonds of iron: Art thou bound unto a wife, seek not to be freed. It is a hard bond, it is of iron. For when the Lord saith this, He sheweth that it is a bond of iron. Listen, young men; the bonds are of iron, seek not to set your feet within them; if ye do, ye shall be bound more tightly with fetters. Such fetters the hands of the Bishop make strong for you. Do not men who are thus fettered fly to the Church, and are here loosed? Men do fly hither, desiring to be rid of their wives: here they are more tightly bound: no man looseth these fetters. What God joined together, let not man put asunder. But these bonds are hard. Who but knows it? This hardness the Apostles grieved at, and said, If this be the case with a wife, it is not good to marry. If the bonds be of iron, it is not good to set our feet within them. And the Lord said, All men cannot receive this saying, but let him that can receive it, receive it. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be freed, for thou art bound with bonds of iron. Art thou free from a wife, seek not a wife; bind not thyself with bonds of iron.

15. To do in them the judgment that is written. This is the judgment which the saints do throughout all nations. Wherefore written? Because these things were before written, and now are fulfilled. Behold now they are being done: erst they were read, and were not done. And he hath concluded thus, this glory have all His saints. Throughout the whole world, throughout entire nations, thus the saints do, thus are they glorified, thus do they exalt God with their mouths, thus do they rejoice in their beds, thus do they exult in their glory, thus are they lifted up in salvation, thus do they sing a new song, thus in heart and voice and life they say Halleluia. Amen.

PSALM 150

Exposition

1. Although the arrangement of the Psalms, which seems to me to contain the secret of a mighty mystery, hath not yet been revealed unto me, yet, by the fact that they in all amount to one hundred and fifty, they suggest somewhat even to us, who have not as yet pierced with the eye of our mind the depth of their entire arrangement, whereon we may without being over bold, so far as God giveth, be able to speak. Firstly, the number fifteen, whereof it is a multiple; (for one hundred and fifty is of the same value in the order of tens, as fifteen is in the order of units, for it is made up of fifteen times ten; and the same is the value of one thousand five hundred in the order of hundreds, for it is fifteen times one hundred; and of fifteen thousand in the order of thousands, for it is fifteen times one thousand;) this number fifteen, I say, signifieth the agreement of the two Testaments. For in the former is observed the Sabbath, which signifieth rest; in the latter the Lord's Day, which signifieth resurrection. The Sabbath is the seventh day, but the Lord's Day, coming after the seventh, must needs be the eighth, and is also to be reckoned the first. For it is called the first day of the week, and so from it are reckoned the second, third, fourth, and so on to the seventh day of the week, which is the Sabbath. But from Lord's Day to Lord's Day is eight days, wherein is declared the revelation of the New Testament, which in the Old was as it were veiled under earthly promises. Further, seven and eight make fifteen. Of the same number too are the Psalms which are called 'of the steps,' because that was the number of the steps of the Temple. Further too, the number fifty in itself also containeth a great mystery. For it consisteth of a week of weeks, with the addition of one as an eighth to complete the number of fifty. For seven times seven make forty-nine, whereto one is added to make fifty. And this number fifty is of so great meaning, that it was after the completion of that number of days from

the Lord's Resurrection, that, on the fiftieth day exactly, the Holy Spirit came upon those who were gathered together in Christ. And this Holy Spirit is in Scripture especially spoken of by the number seven, whether in Isaiah or in the Apocalypse, where the seven Spirits of God are most directly mentioned, on account of the sevenfold operation of one and the self-same Spirit. And this sevenfold operation is thus mentioned in Isaiah: The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of strength, the Spirit of knowledge and of goodness, the Spirit of the fear of the Lord. By this should be understood the fear of the Lord, which is clean, and endureth for ever. But perfect love casteth out slavish fear, and maketh us free, so that we do no servile works, which are forbidden on the Sabbath: and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Which is given us. Hence also the Holy Spirit is spoken of under the number seven. But this period of fifty the Lord divided into forty and ten: for on the fortieth day after His Resurrection He ascended into heaven, and then after ten days were completed He sent the Holy Spirit: under the number forty setting forth to us the period of temporal sojourn in this world. For the number four prevaieth in forty; and the world and the year have each four parts; and by the addition of the number ten, as a sort of reward added for the fulfilment of the law in good works, eternity itself is figured. The number one hundred and fifty containeth this fifty three times, as though it were multiplied by the Trinity. Wherefore for this reason too we make out that this number of the Psalm is not unsuitable. For in the number of the fishes too which were caught in the nets which were let down after the Resurrection, by the adding of three to one hundred and fifty, we seem to have a kind of suggestion given us, into how many parts that number ought to be divided, namely, that it should contain three fifties. Though there is another account too of that number of fishes, one much more deep and pleasing, namely, that we arrive at that same number, by setting down seventeen in a column, and adding all the numbers from one to seventeen together. But in the number ten is signified the Law, in seven, Grace; for nought fulfilleth the Law save love spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is set forth under the number seven.

2. Now in that some have believed that the Psalms are divided into five books, they have been led by the fact, that so often at the end of Psalms are the words, so be it, so be it. But when I endeavoured to make out the principle of this division, I was not able; for neither are the five parts equal one to another, neither in quantity of contents, nor yet even in number of Psalms, so as for each to contain thirty. And if each book end with, so be it, so be it, we may reasonably ask, why the fifth and last book hath not the same conclusion. We however, following the authority of canonical Scripture, where it is said, For it is written in the book of Psalms, know that there is but one book of Psalms. And I see indeed how this can be true, and yet the other be true also, without contravening it. For it may be that there was some custom in Hebrew literature, whereby that is called one book which yet consists of more than one, just as of many churches one church consisteth, and of many heavens one heaven, (for he passed not over any of the heavens, who said, My help is in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth: and, again, although Scripture saith, And God called the firmament heaven, and bade the waters to be above the firmament, that is, above the heaven, yet the same Scripture is not wrong when it saith, And let the waters that are above the heavens praise the Name of the Lord, in not saying, above heaven,) and one land of many lands. For it is our every-day habit to say, ‘the globe of the earth,’ and ‘the globe of the lands.’ And when it is said, it is written in the book of Psalms, though the customary way of speaking is such that he seem to have wished to suggest that there is but one book, yet to this it may be answered, that the words mean ‘in a book of the Psalms,’ that is, ‘in any one of those five books.’ And this is in common language so unprecedented, or at least so rare, that we are only convinced that the twelve Prophets make one book, because we read in like manner, As it is written in the book of the Prophets. There are some too who call all the canonical Scriptures together one book, because they agree in a very wondrous and divine unity; and they say, that this is why it is said, In the head of the book it is written of Me, that I should do Thy Will; that so it may be understood that it was by the Son that the Father made the world, Whose creation is the beginning of Scripture in the book of Genesis, or rather because it seems to be prophecy, not relating things done, but foreannouncing things to come, (for He saith not, that I have done, but, that I may do, or, that I should do, Thy Will,) this passage should be referred to

that which is written in the first part of the same book, they twain shall be in one flesh; which the Apostle saith is a great mystery, in Christ and the Church. However, this book of the Psalms may be understood to be meant, when it is said, In the head of the book it is written of Me, that I should do Thy Will: for it goeth on, My God, I am willing, and Thy Law is within My Heart. For the very first Psalm, which stands in the head of this book, is understood to be a prophecy of Him; Blessed is the Man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, and hath not sat in the seat of pestilence: but in the Law of the Lord is His Will, and in His Law will He exercise Himself day and night: so that this is what is meant by, My God, I am willing, and Thy Law is in the midst of My Heart: but that which comes next, I have declared the good tidings of Thy Righteousness in the great congregation, is more suitably referred to the other passage, they shall be twain in one flesh.

3. Whichever then of these is understood by the words, in the head of the book, this book of the Psalms, in its parts of fifty Psalms each, if it be questioned by these very divisions of fifties, gives an answer important and very worthy of consideration. For it seems to me not without significance, that the fiftieth is of penitence, the hundredth of mercy and judgment, the hundred and fiftieth of the praise of God in His saints. For thus do we advance to an everlasting life of happiness, first by condemning our own sins, then by living aright, that, having condemned our ill life, and lived a good life, we may attain to everlasting life. For God, according to the purpose of His hidden righteousness and goodness, whom He predestined, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Our predestination is not wrought in ourselves, but in secret with Him, in His foreknowledge. But the three which remain are wrought in us, calling, justifying, glorifying. We are called by the preaching of repentance; for thus began the Lord to preach the Gospel, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. We are justified in the calling of mercy and fear of judgment; hence it is said, Save me, O God, in Thy Name, and judge me in Thy strength. He feareth not judgment, who hath previously attained salvation. Being called, we renounce the devil by repentance, that we may not continue under his yoke: being justified, we are healed by mercy, that we may not fear judgment: being glorified, we pass

into everlasting life, where we praise God without end. Hereto, I think, belongeth what the Lord saith, Behold, I cast out devils, and work cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected. And this He also shewed in the three days of His passion, His sleeping, His awakening. For He was crucified, buried, rose again. On the cross He triumphed over principalities and powers, in the tomb He rested, in His resurrection He exulted. Penitence crucifieth, righteousness soothed, life eternal glorifieth. The voice of penitence is, Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy, and according to the multitude of Thy compassions do away mine iniquity: penitence offereth to God as a sacrifice a broken spirit, a contrite and humbled heart. The voice of the righteousness of Christ in His elect is this; I will sing unto Thee, O Lord, of mercy and judgment; I will sing, and understand in the undefiled way, when Thou shalt come unto me. For by mercy we are aided to do righteousness, that we may come without fear to judgment, where are destroyed out of the city of the Lord all who work iniquity. The verse wherewith this Psalm concludeth is the voice of life everlasting.

4. Praise the Lord in His saints, that is, in those whom He hath glorified: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him in His deeds of strength; or, as others have explained it, in His deeds of power: praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness. All these His saints are; as the Apostle saith, But we may be the righteousness of God in Him. If then they be the righteousness of God, which He hath wrought in them, why are they not also the strength of Christ which He hath wrought in them, that they should rise again from the dead? For in Christ's resurrection, strength is especially set forth to us, for in His Passion was weakness, as the Apostle saith, though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God: and in another place, to know Him, and the power of His resurrection. And well doth it say, the firmament of His power. For it is the firmament of His power that He dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him. Why should not they also be called the works of God's strength, which He hath done in them: yea rather, they themselves are the works of His strength; just as it is said, We are the righteousness of God in Him. For what more powerful than that He should reign for ever, with all His enemies put under His feet? Why should not they also be the multitude

of His greatness? not that whereby He is great, but whereby He hath made them great, many as they are, that is, thousands of thousands. Just as righteousness too is understood in two ways, that whereby He is righteous, and that which He worketh in us, so as to make us His righteousness.

5. These same saints are signified by all the musical instruments in succession, to praise God in. For what the Psalmist began with, saying, Praise the Lord in His saints, that he carrieth out, signifying in various ways these same saints of His.

6. Praise Him in the sound of the trumpet: on account of the surpassing clearness of note of their praise. Praise Him in the psaltery and harp. The psaltery praiseth God from things above, the harp praiseth God from things below; I mean, from things in heaven, and things in earth, as He Who made heaven and earth. We have already in another Psalm, explained that the psaltery hath that board, whereon the series of strings rests that it may give a better sound, above, whereas the harp has it below.

7. Praise Him in the timbrel and choir. The timbrel praiseth God when the flesh is now changed, so that there is in it no weakness of earthly corruption. For the timbrel is made of leather dried and strengthened. The choir praiseth God when society made peaceful praiseth Him. Praise Him on the strings and organ. Both psaltery and harp, which have been mentioned above, have strings. But organ is a general name for all instruments of music, although usage has now obtained that those are specially called organ which are inflated with bellows: but I do not think that this kind is meant here. For since organ is a Greek word, applied generally, as I have said, to all musical instruments, this instrument, to which bellows are applied, is called by the Greeks by another name: but it being called organ is rather a Latin and conversational usage. When then he saith, on the strings and organ, he seemeth to me to have intended to signify some instrument which hath strings. For it is not psalteries and harps only that have strings: but, because in the psaltery and harp, on account of the sound from things below and things above, somewhat has been found which can be understood after this distinction, he hath suggested to us to seek some other meaning in the strings themselves: for they too are flesh, but flesh now set free from corruption. And to those, it may be, he added

the organ, to signify that they sound not each separately, but sound together in most harmonious diversity, just as they are arranged in a musical instrument. For even then the saints of God will have their differences, accordant, not discordant, that is, agreeing, not disagreeing, just as sweetest harmony arises from sounds differing indeed, but not opposed to one another: for one star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead.

8. Praise Him on the well-sounding cymbals, praise Him on cymbals of jubilation. Cymbals touch one another in order to sound, and therefore are by some compared to our lips. But I think it better to understand that God is in a manner praised on the cymbal, when each is honoured by his neighbour, not by himself, and then honouring one another, they give praise to God. But lest any should understand such cymbals as sound without life, therefore I think he added, on cymbals of jubilation. For jubilation, that is, unspeakable praise, proceedeth not, save from life. Nor do I think that I should pass over what musicians say, that there are three kinds of sounds, by voice, by breath, by striking: by voice, uttered by throat and windpipe, when man singeth without any instrument; by breath, as by pipe, or any thing of that sort: by striking, as by harp, or any thing of that kind. None then of these kinds is omitted here: for there is voice in the choir, breath in the trumpet, striking in the harp, representing mind, spirit, body, but by similitudes, not in the proper sense of the words. When then he proposed, Praise God in His saints, to whom said he this, save to themselves? And in whom are they to praise God, save in themselves? For ye, saith he, are His saints; ye are His strength, but that which He wrought in you; ye are His mighty works, and the multitude of His greatness, which He hath wrought and set forth in you. Ye are trumpet, psaltery, harp, timbrel, choir, strings, and organ, cymbals of jubilation sounding well, because sounding in harmony. All these are ye: let nought that is vile, nought that is transitory, nought that is ludicrous, be here thought of. And since to savour of the flesh is death, let every spirit praise the Lord.

PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Which he was wont to use after his Sermons and Lectures.

Turn we to the Lord God, the Father Almighty, and with pure hearts offer to Him, so far as our meanness can, great and true thanks, with all our hearts praying His exceeding kindness, that of His good pleasure He would deign to hear our prayers, that by His Power He would drive out the enemy from our deeds and thoughts, that He would increase our faith, guide our understandings, give us spiritual thoughts, and lead us to His bliss, through Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Him, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.